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**Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., D.Litt.,
 Editor**

**Select Papers of the International Conference on
*Paradigms of Marginality in Literature -
 Exploring the Nuances***

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Greetings from the Registrar: Dr. R. Sudha M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

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Greetings from the Vice-Chancellor



Prof. Dr. M. Krishnan M.Sc., Ph.D.

I'm very glad to note that many research articles were presented and discussed in detail in the International Conference on **Paradigms of Marginality in Literature - Exploring the Nuances** conducted by our Department of English and Comparative Literature. I'm also glad to note that selected papers presented in the International Conference are compiled in several volumes and that several selected articles are now being published for the benefit of scholars around the world. Marginality is a very important topic for discussion and is also a matter of great concern. Creative writers have focused on the marginality around the world including India in their creative works. Such discussions create in us great concern for those who are marginalized for various reasons, and such discussions will help us to improve the social, economic and psychological condition of people and communities around us.

Our Department of English and Comparative Literature is well-known for their continued significant involvement in the study of literature from around the world and compare these literatures with our own great traditional and modern literary works. I wish continued great success for the activities of Department of English and Comparative Literature under the leadership of Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., D.Litt. My greetings and thanks are due to all the participants of the International Conference as well as the academic and administrative staff of the Department of English and Comparative Literature.



Greetings from the Registrar



Dr. R. Sudha, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

I am greatly impressed by the success of the International Conference on **Paradigms of Marginality in Literature - Exploring the Nuances** conducted by our Department of English and Comparative Literature. Both the academic and administrative staff of the Department worked hard to make the conference a notable success.

I am glad to note that the papers presented in the conference are now compiled and published in several volumes. Select papers presented in the conference are now published for the benefit of scholars both in India and abroad. We always need to be concerned about the marginality that prevails in our societies in several forms. Creative writers have described such marginality in so many heart-rending stories. Such creative works instigate in us a keen desire to seek suitable changes, and research on such creative works enable our young scholars to look forward to a future wherein such social, economic and psychological concerns are positively minimized.

My greetings and thanks to all who participated in the conference organized under the dynamic leadership of Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., D.Litt. I am sure that the Department of English and Comparative Literature will continue to have such significant conferences in the future also.



Editor's Note



Dr. S. Chelliah, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.
Dean of Arts, Humanities & Languages
Professor, Head
Department of English & Comparative Literature

The International Conference on **Paradigms of Marginality in Literature - Exploring the Nuances** conducted by the Department of English and Comparative Literature received an excellent response from faculty members and research scholars from around the country. Very insightful research papers on many creative writers from around the world were presented. We already published one large volume of papers as part of the conference activities. In the present volume, selected papers presented in the conference are compiled together and published. There are more than fifty articles in this compilation, dealing with a range of themes such as Discourse and Context of Marginalism, Marginalisation of Children, Suffering of Women, Marginalization and Social Media and Marginalization depicted in the works of several leading creative authors from around the world, including creative works written by Indian writers.

My grateful thanks are due to the Vice-Chancellor **Prof. Dr. M. Krishnan, M.Sc., Ph.D.** and the Registrar **Dr. R. Sudha M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.** for their encouragement and support in all the activities of the Department of English and Comparative Literature. I am grateful for the excellent cooperation I received from the academic and administrative staff of the Department of English and Comparative Literature. Research Scholars and students of the Department actively participated in all the deliberations of the Conference. The participants came from many

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Colleges and Universities and they were very glad to exchange their ideas with one another. It has been a great encouraging experience for all.

We hope that this volume of Selected Papers from the International Conference **Paradigms of Marginality in Literature - Exploring the Nuances** will help further research on various dimensions of Marginality and how marginalization may be avoided by all individuals, societies and economic and psychological and health care institutions, etc. in the days to come.

Deconstructing Gender Stereotypes in Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*

Athma Priya S. S.

M.Phil Scholar

Department of English and Comparative Literature

Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai

Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

The question of gender-based identities and sexuality has always attracted many theorists and they became the primary instruments of disciplining the personal as well as the public body with the politicization of sex around the nineteenth century. As gender is understood to be a social and cultural construct, the patriarchal notion of gender could be subverted by contesting patriarchy's grand narratives of gender. Caryl Churchill's feminist play *Top Girls* subverts such patriarchal and heteronormative grand narratives by challenging the accepted role of women as the appendage of man with the aim of vindicating subjective power for women. With an all-women cast, Churchill dramatises the torturous fate of women and their gradual ascendancy to the position of 'top girls' literally an Employment Agency, but metaphorically a space for women's liberation. Each of them has their own story to tell, as they have all been victimized by the patriarchal system in the century they lived and have resisted the system with different strategies. The present paper is an attempt to examine how *Top Girls* deconstructs the taken-for-granted assumptions concerning the notions of gender and overthrows the patriarchal hierarchy that restrains women from occupying central positions in theater and in society as a whole.

Keywords: Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls*, Deconstruction, Gender, Stereotype, Sexuality, Patriarchy, Subjectivity

Caryl Churchill, an ardent supporter of women rights and an iconoclast, owns a unique position among the contemporary dramatists of post-war British drama. As a twentieth century artist in modern era, Churchill defies tradition and rejects both the respectable morality and the conventions and formulas of literary success. She wanted to deconstruct the traditional systems of representation and gender politics often find its place in the works of Caryl Churchill. Her plays explore the values set by patriarchal society, and examine gender roles and power relationships in the society and thereby brings forth such issues which tend to deconstruct traditional ideas of sex and gender. Churchill is unique in her own way in illustrating the position of women along with their struggle to social oppression. Focusing most of her plays from women experiences, Churchill vividly retells the representation of women and the realities of their living in a patriarchal society.

Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* (1982), a play with an all-women cast, portrays a clear picture of woman's world. The play tries to investigate the oppressive forces of patriarchy on woman throughout history by giving a real depiction of the position of woman in male-dominated societies and her struggle against the oppressive patriarchal agents. The play is slotted into three Acts

initiating at a restaurant on a Saturday night where Marlene, the main protagonist of the play, hosts a dinner party to celebrate her promotion as the Managing Director of 'Top Girls' Employment Agency. The long opening scene is a package of overlapping and interrupting conversation among the five guests who recount their individual histories with horror, dismay, humour and celebration. In Act Two the scene shifts from the restaurant to her office where Marlene interviews Jeanine, Win questions Louise and Nell interrogates Shona projecting the theme of women and work that constitutes the crux of the play. If Act Two forms the traditional domain of the male taken over by females, Act Three locates the spaces of the women where they can express themselves freely. The play closes with Joyce's kitchen, a symbol of women domination, where Marlene pays a visit a year earlier. The play is a tale told or rather re-told by a group of females who have experienced almost the same torture or pain by their male counterparts – husbands, priests or office-bosses. All of them attempt to violate the patriarchal system either by adopting or by revolting against it.

Churchill places her women in sharp contrast with the traditional or classical representation of women in plays where they are to perform certain stereotype roles – wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and lovers – all parasites to men, rarely having their individual or independent identity. The play is thus original in giving a voice and allowing the women to speak for themselves. They open up a world of experience new to the British stage and also to the world of patriarchy. Patriarchy might explain why the top salary earners in Britain are all men. It has a strong relevance to *Top Girls*, both regarding the play's sexual politics and its treatment of the subject of employment. The playwright seems to project that employment is a necessary mode of survival for the women against the oppression and the subjugation of the male world. The professional women would find it rather easy to place them in the process of evolution – both social and cultural. Marlene is a 'victor' not that she is the Manager of the Company but because she has been able to form a constellation of women in which they can live and express themselves positively. They can at least think freely.

Marlene, being the central character of the play, experiences domestic violence herself from early childhood. She suffers because her mother is being abused by her father. At the same time her mother doesn't show any opposition to overcome such ill treatment. Like many voiceless women, her mother doesn't consider such mistreatment as something unnatural. To her it is normal for a wife. So this acceptance and blind obedience encourages the husband to continue with his brutality as part of his right. Such unhealthy environment leaves a great impression on the children's mind and identity. Marlene decides not to be like her mother. She is the representation of the new, liberated and modern woman. Though Marlene and Joyce are sisters and grown up in the same environment, they choose to live differently. Joyce symbolises the traditional woman who doesn't try to enjoy none of the benefits yielded by the women's liberation movement. She prefers to remain as a hard- working labourer woman.

Marlene's guests, who attend the dinner in Act one, have all achieved a certain iconic status in history or myth and are all from radically different times and cultures: the 19th century Scottish world traveller, Isabella Bird; Lady Nijo, a 13th century Japanese courtesan who was forced to become a nun after losing her master's favour and who then travelled all over Japan; and the 9th century Roman Pope, Joan, who disguised herself as a man and attained the highest ecclesiastical rank in the Empire. There are also two very different fictional characters, archetypes who were

both invented by male writers and artists: Griselda, the medieval good wife whose husband Walter subjects her to all kinds of tests including forced marriage, banishment and separation from her children, and who was written about approvingly by Chaucer, Boccaccio and Petrarch; and Dull Gret, a heroic folk figure painted by the Flemish artist Breughel as a woman who leads other peasant women to the mouth of hell to fight demons, symbolically resisting the constant wars and invasions in 16th century Holland, armed with pots and pans from the home.

It can be assumed that all institutions are constructed for man's benefit. For example, church as the most holy place, is constructed to support masculinity. Pope Joan succeeds to defeat all barriers and proves that woman can occupy position. Though she achieves her goal and becomes a Pope, unconsciously she internalises the patriarchal norms. She holds herself responsible for every bad thing that had happened. Her ignorance and little knowledge about her body as a woman constructed her tragic downfall. The physical weakness of woman makes her inferior to a man since her body will show the result of the action. Woman's action makes her naturally responsible for it. Hence, she deserves the social and natural punishment. On the other hand, man is free from any responsibility; no one asks or blames him for any action because he is superior. Joan protests about all such unjust norms against her as a woman, which is the result of her biological weakness saying "If it hadn't been for the baby I expect I'd have lived to an old age like Theodora of Alexandria. Who lived as a monk" (TG 16) It explores how her physical form has sealed her tragic destiny. In the patriarchal society, sex can determine the individual's worth and destiny rather than talent, hard working and intelligence. Joan suffers the consequences of the physical relationship alone. The physical form of woman makes her inferior to man and liable for social punishment. Joan protests against the entire system where human being face all unjust based on the individual's gender.

Griselda is another character representing the 13th century life. She is from poor family and got married to Marquis. She got unusual chance to be the Marquis's wife and enjoyed wealth and higher position in the society. The dramatist attempts to highlight the difference and consequences of being obedient and of being rebel in the patriarchal society through the characters of Joan and Griselda. In a patriarchal society woman is tamed to obey their husband and follow all norms unconditionally. The Marquis asks for the complete obedience. She accepts all Marquis's conditions because she considers it as something natural and a man's right. Though she becomes Marquis's wife, her status would never be equal to her husband because of her gender and her class. Griselda's husband asks her to prove her loyalty to him by allowing her children to be killed. She doesn't have any other option but to obey him. When her husband takes her children away she doesn't show any kind of objection from her side. Such an acceptance shows that woman considers her man as something more important than her children and her own life. She finds the system strongly rooted in the psyche of society. Finally, she is rewarded after passing all tests, and proved her loyalty and obedience. "And he stayed behind and put his arms round me and kissed me. I felt half asleep with shock..... Well I fainted. Then I cried and kissed the children..... of course, I loved them." (TG 27)

The patriarchal system maintains its power by using punishment and rewarding. Griselda is rewarded for her obedience. However, she has to suffer psychologically to get her husband's favour and rewards at the end. The same thing happened to lady Nijo, the Japanese woman of the thirteen century. Her father sent her to serve the ex-emperor at the age of fourteen. He orders her

to be respectful and obedient to receive his favours. In the patriarchal society, man has all rights to do whatever he wants with his woman. So, Nijo sees the emperor's oppression as something natural and part of his right. She violates the system by taking another lover as a revenge on the entire system. This system empowers man to have many women and at the same time illegalises woman to do so. Nijo thinks that she is taking revenge by cheating the emperor. Noticeably, she is the one who suffers psychologically and physically from her deed because she lost her children. When Nijo takes other lovers secretly; she expresses her objection to the entire system she lives in. She is helpless to resist it because it is too strong to uproot or change. Her deeds can be understood as unconscious protest against the injustice values in the patriarchal society.

Nijo bears the mark of her deed since she becomes pregnant. Thus, she has to sacrifice her child to save her position. This baby may end her life as the emperor's woman and as a respectable woman in the society. So, she has to pay for her action. She doesn't have any option but to suppress her affection for the survival of the baby. Her question to Griselda about her feeling when her children were taken away from her reveals her dilemma. "But did you feel anything for them. Did you feel anything for the children?... Nobody gave me back my children" (TG 27). She wishes to know what is Griselda's feeling when her husband took her children away from her. Noticeably, she feels jealous of Griselda who got her children back. From these two experiences of Nijo and Griselda, it can be said that Griselda remains submissive and obedient so she is rewarded. Besides, she can get her children back and live with respect and love from her husband and society. On the other hand, Nijo has dared to go against the system so she is punished. She is deprived of her children, her lovers and everything she has and finally she has to live alone as a nun.

Such stories aim to strengthen the system and implant the desirable and undesirable qualities in a woman in the patriarchal society. Isabella is another female character who Marlene introduces as the Victorian traveller. The ideal woman of the Victorian time is supposed to circle around home and family. It is unnatural for women during the Victorian times to practice any activities outside the home. By her father's death, Isabella becomes free from the male domination in her life. Home is the expected place for women. Isabella tries to fit with the conventional norms in the society, but she finds it too hard since she has health problems. So, she starts her journey again as soon as her husband dies. With his death, she sets out on a journey that will lead her to a sense of fulfilment. She travels and gets a lot of experience of this world. But she could not set herself free from the patriarchal ideology that moulds every woman's psyche. Though Isabella seems free from the male supremacy in her life, unconsciously she still appears trapped in the conventional norms. Furthermore, she feels unsatisfied with herself because she dares to break the constructed norms. She considers the enjoyments of life are not meant for woman. By violating norms, she feels guilty. Dull Gret is an important female character in the play, who articulates less and believes in action. To her thinking and speaking for the rights of the woman is not as important as the action for the same. Hers is a case of a woman who doesn't complain against the oppressors; instead, wish to work out the action plan. It is her believe that action yields fruits. To her, nothing can be changed through crying and regretting. The problems can be changed only through action and unity. There is no guarantee that the action will yield victory, but its continuation is essential.

There are several similarities between these six characters. They live in the patriarchal society and try to survive by using different strategies. Though they are aware of their right in the

patriarchal society, they are subjugated, exploited and paid for their successes. Marlene achieves her success by scarifying her motherhood, giving her daughter away and her family. She pursues her success in the patriarchal society and attains personhood. Griselda has to scarify her children and her emotion to be an ideal woman and to keep her social status. Nijo also sacrifices her children for the social status. Isabella pays with her comfort and feeling. Gret scarifies all her children. Churchill depicts the negative effects when woman breaks the norms. Furthermore, she attempts to illustrate through the experiences of these women characters that the patriarchal system has existed since centuries and passed down to the generations.

Churchill advocates women to be aware of her position in the society. To overcome any kind of marginalisation, she must rethink and re examine her way of struggling against all odd norms in the society. Churchill also attempts to highlight the importance of unity among women to achieve their liberation. They must know that individual struggle will never and ever uproot and defeat the unjust system, since the system is deeply rooted. To attack such well constructed system, women should reorganize and redesign their way of struggling against the patriarchal system. She has to reject the pro-male social structure. The blind imitation of the oppressive structure is of no use to her. She has to reconstruct a new one, recalling her own nature and identity.

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Race and Ethnicity in *Things Fall Apart*

Ajith Philip Ebenazer W.

Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai – 625021
India
ape27061997@gmail.com

Abstract

This article is to project the original state of Nigerian tribes, who were suppressed by discrimination in race and culture. In *Things Fall Apart*, the author depicts the real suppression and oppression of Nigerian community and examines the effect of British colonialism on Igbo society from an African perspective. Achebe's intention was, he tries to expose the value and culture of African society to the readers. The British invasion has force to marginalize from every aspect of Igbo society from religion, traditional values, gender roles etc.

Keywords: Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, Racial Discrimination, Cultural Bias, Colonialism, Marginalization, Suppression.

Things Fall Apart, written by Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, was published in 1958. It is an Archetypal African novel in English which deals with the effects of colonisation that destroyed the originality of Nigerian tribes. Set during the period of colonisation, it takes place in the village of Umuofia, one among the Cluster of nine tribes in Igbo. The title of this work expresses the destruction of the Igbo race and ethnicity. Our living world is a mixture of different people from different cultures. Some people try to spread their cultural habits through fantasies.

The Nigerians are Dark in colour with tightly stuffed curly hairs. Their Dresses, Foods, Dances, Rules and Habits are unique as their environment. Spoken language is Igbo. They cultivate Yams which seems like Beets, which is a symbol of Masculinity. Men married many women. Most of the men are wrestlers and are conscious of their masculinity. They focus on their acts of bravery. They have certain unusual rules and regulations like, if someone offends someone, it is repaid by Sacrifice and Gifting virgins. These are cultural practices of Nigerians.

As a cultural person, Okonkwo who enjoys the beauty of Africa is a Roaring Flame. He is best in wrestling, married to three ladies, respects the elders in his village and he strongly believes in Gods of their culture. Even he sacrifices his adopted son Ikemefuna who stays in his house for the sacrifice. He wants to follow and protect the myths and rituals of the village. He accidentally

shoots a boy at an important person's funeral. That is the starting point of his fall. He and his family are separated from that village. He obeys the law of Umuofia and leaves his village.

Being occupied by Whites creates a conflict between the Black and White cultures. British men enter Umuofia in the name of Christianity. They start institutions and later they form administration there. They see Africans as aliens because of the contrasting features. That's why the author mentions English as Locusts, which are destroying insects. It is an image of English destroying African culture. They are not ready to accept or allow the native people to praise their own gods. The English change people's habits, dressings and regulations. People are brainwashed by the pleasures of English culture. Nwoye, the son of Okonkwo converts to Christianity. Actually, he is an easygoing young man who does not mingle with their troop, loses his native beliefs after the sacrifice of Ikemefuna, whom he loves as his own brother. His conversion makes Okonkwo think of his son's action is feminine. Masculine Okonkwo cannot tolerate his son's action. Likewise, the Eastern culture corrupts the core natives of Nigerian tribes.

The Whites decide to build a Church at Umuofia. The people try a lot to avoid that, but they are all vain. The church is built, and it is destroyed by the people of Umuofia to protect their God's rituality. They are imprisoned and beaten up in police station. Huge fine is also collected from people. In my perception, Whites dislike the race of Nigerian, that's why they force the white culture among people. Sometimes it results in positive things like Being educated, Well mannered, and Disciplined. Even though they are civilized with the modern culture, they lose their freedom due to the encounter on Native's race and ethnicity. The main reason for the destruction of African ethnicity is their easy going attitude, fantasy for foreign cultures and disunity among people. Everyone desires to protect their own culture. Okonkwo wants to fight again but others are not ready to fight again and die. So they decide to surrender themselves. At last Okonkwo commits suicide to avoid his death under white rule and his own culture's destruction.

The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is one of the unequal relationships. If somebody forces any culture on the English, they can't accept that, but all others should accept their culture and praise them. The fact is that the Blacks are stronger than White, if Blacks try, they may avoid those things that happened in Umuofia. But due to the Disunity and Easy going attitude the Nigerians allow themselves to fall apart.

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Racism Faced by Natives with Reference to Gabriel Okara's *You Laughed And Laughed And Laughed*

M. Ajitha, II M.A. English

**Department of English and Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai**

Abstract

This paper throws light on the poem *You laughed and laughed and laughed* which depicts the life of African people who faced on racism by white. They were laughed by white for their songs, dance and music which brought out their inner feelings of black natives which also brought out their emotions. Then at end, the black gave a sizzling attack on white as frozen and death. All the parts of their body become frozen. The black natives had a contact with natural elements such as to warmth with Sun, swim deep inside the sea and facing an ablaze fire which made them strong and brave. This gave them an extra ordinary power. These things melted the frozen heart of white people and these whites wanted to know the secret of their powers and their merriment. Black replied that their contact with natural element and walking with bare-foot all over the land made them strong which was not done by white.

Keywords: Gabriel Okara, *You Laughed And Laughed And Laughed*, racism, barbarian, ablaze, wrathful, noxious, sizzling attack, dominations.

African literature is a literature about the African people and that continent. It contains various languages and genres. The major themes of the African literature are culture, conflict, religion, colonialism, modernism and racism. Nigerian poet Gabriel Okara's poem '*You laughed and laughed and laughed*' brings out an emotion, feeling and pain faced by black people. This poem also brings out the sufferings faced by black people. This poem is as discussion between the black natives and white people which brings an rules, beliefs and practice of African. Okara brought out the suffering faced by the native people in this poem.

Gabriel Imomotimc Gbalngbain Okara was his full name. He was born on April 24, 1921 in Bomoudi at Nigeria. He was a poet and novelist. He brought out the problems of African people in both his poem and prose. His notable works include *The Voice*. He died in March 26, 2019 at age of 97.

Mostly African poetry deals with a problems and suffering faced by black people and they were always dominated by the white. The native black people were not allowed to move freely around their land. This poem '*You laughed and laughed and laughed*' deals with the olden tradition that arouse from various countries of Africa which paved way to African literature. The

original language of Africa which resulted in noxious effect of slavery and colonization were led way to European language that spread all over continent. The African poem mainly concentrate on the domination, slavery, racism, marginalization, colour discrimination of black natives.

The author named his poem *You laughed and laughed and laughed* because in this poem the black Africans were laughed and mocked by white people. They were laughed for their song, dance and music. These were considering to be an cultural norms of black people and also they were discriminated for their colour. Throughout the poem it portrays the domination of white people. Okara used the word ‘laughed in this poem, denoting the white, who dominated the native for their abnormal actions. As an African poet Okara brought this concept in his poem and named it so.

The poet mainly focuses on the theme racism faced by the people in Africa and also brought out the problems and suffering faced by black, created by white, they did not understand the feeling of black people who suffered with pain given by white. The entry of European language paved way to the white people to enter Africa and the try to make African’s as their slave.

The white people laughed at black natives for whatever things they do. They sing song which brought out the pain, emotion of the people was not understood by the white people, its sounds them as misfiring and choking of car which has stopped. The sound of song was harsh, and it was criticized and laughed by white.

“In your ears my song
Is motor car misfiring
Stopping with a choking cough
And you laughed and laughed and laughed”
(lines no: 1-4)

The natives are not stylish are modern when compared to white people, they have a clumsy figure. They were mocked for their walk and it was said has an ‘Ante natal ‘which is an immature man’s walk. The clumsy figure was overwhelmed by the extraordinary power which they gained naturally, that was not noticed by white and laughed for their appearance.

“In your eyes my ante –
Natal walk was inhuman, passing
Your ‘omnivorous understanding”
(line no:6-7)

Again, they were teased for their mad furious dance along with heavy beating of drums, which was considering to be a traditional and cultural rituals. The drum beaten in curious and wild

way which made them to look as if barbarians. The sound which produce, reveals the mood of the people of native. the sound produces by drum made them to dance which brought out the inner feeling of the black people. The white people shut their eyes and ears which was considered to be a clumsy one and laughed at them.

“You laughed at my dance
 You laughed at my inside
 You laughed and laughed and laughed”
 (line no:18-20)

The white people did not treat the natives as a ordinary human they did not understand the inner feeling of native and dominate by their appearance, colour and their actions. Black natives were laughed by the white people.

The narrator, by seeing all problems faced by his natives, gives an enormous attack a white people and described them as frozen. All the parts of the body were frozen like eyes, ears, tongue, heart and was considered to be an death one because they does not have the mind to understand the inner feeling of native. Their conduct with natural elements like warming their body in sun, moving deep into sea, facing burning fire made their body strong and brave. The white wonder by the action of black, who was filled with merriment. This fire of merriment melted the ear, eye, heart of white and was excited to know the secret of the strength.

The white awed by the manual action of black, one who laughed at black. They were interest to know the secret behind their strength. They replied that they have contact with natural elements like sun, sea, air and fire. The walk in bare footed all over the land but the whites have contact only with machine, not with nature.

“And I answered;
 Because my father and I
 Are owned by the living
 Warmth of the earth
 Through our naked feet.”
 (line no 40-45)

In the poem *You laughed and laughed and laughed*, Gabriel Okara brought out the suffering of black natives by white which was the cause of racism. Okara brought the problems faced by the African people. Being an African poet, he supported his native people and fight for the rights of his people to lead peaceful and happy life.

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Woman and Marginality in the Novels of Manju Kapur

Ms. Anagha A. Tak (Mrs. Anagha A. Gawande) Ph.D.

J. D. P. S. College, Daryapur, Dist. Amravati MS 444803

anaghag2@gmail.com Phone: 8806609989

Abstract

Marginality in context of woman prevails in the society from ages. No woman was and is supposed to be free to live, to think, to do anything at her own. Many woman novelists had focused on the same theme in their works. They had written about woman and the society that had been dominating her. Manju Kapur had given her views about woman and her condition in society. She is author of five novels *Difficult Daughters*, *A Married Woman*, *Home*, *Immigrant*, and *Custody*. Her woman protagonists stand against the male dominated society and try to be on their own. Manju Kapur emphasized on how a woman is marginalized and is never given any importance. *Difficult Daughters* deals with life of Virmati, a girl who wants to get educated and thus she goes against her family norms of not educating a girl child. She marries a married professor who never allows her to be successful in her life. He always wanted to marginalize her life. She rebels and shapes her life. *A Married Woman* deals with education and a girl named Aastha, wants to be educated rebels against her mother who is a victim of society and its rules. *Home* tells us about Nisha who faces all the odds and achieves her dream to be a successful businesswoman. *Immigrant's* protagonist is a highly educated woman, her husband never loved her and in need of love, her life is scattered. *Custody* is different in theme which deals with extra marital affair.

Keywords: Manju Kapur, Marginality, Woman Protagonists, Male Dominance, Identity Crisis.

Introduction

We celebrate woman's day at an international level, but society never accepts that woman must be respected and treated equally. They must be respected and must be honored. They are discriminated on the basis of gender. No equality in health related needs is provided. Woman is seen only to be used and to be an object of entertainment. Educating a girl child is denied most of the time or less preferred. No male dominated society ever wanted to educate their wives, daughters. Immediately after their birth the gender bias shows up. Boys are provided better health care, all the facilities are given them, but no care is extended towards girls.

Literature reflects the condition of women in all over the country. Nowhere woman is supposed to be free. The great Indian scripture *Manusmriti* also focuses on the condition of woman that

“PitahRakshatiKaumare
PatiRakshatiYouvanne
PutroRakshatiVardhaky
Na streeswatantramarhati.” [1]

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Manu told that no woman must be at her own, she must be protected by her father in her adolescence, husband to protect her after her marriage, son must look after her in her old age, thus as she is a meek and fragile one she should never be at her own, no freedom is accepted to her by the society. The lines illustrate how women lost their identity and are never permitted to break the chains of customs.

The women novelists like Manju Kapur have focused on the matter of freedom in regards of a woman. Today we are able to see women soaring high in every strata of life but still there is a threat to her chastity. Manju Kapur through her woman protagonists try to show how she abandons the margins set for her by the society.

Dr. John (2012) *A Critical view on Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters* is a critical study of the novel *Difficult Daughters* by Manju Kapur. It is a story of two daughters, Virmati and Ida. Through the story Kapur criticizes on mentality of society. A society accepts man's guilt and also forgives him, but it does not happen with woman. Manju Kapur wants to tell how Virmati and Ida both become difficult daughters without any mistake to their parents. Harish and Virmati both fall in love, but the punishment bears only Virmati.' [2]

The protagonist of *Difficult Daughters*, Virmati is a born rebel. She never accepted family to be her first duty to perform. Familial bondages set by society that a woman must give priority to her family her children were of no significance for her. Kasturi, Viru's mother always tried to make her realize that education is not meant for a girl. She should look after her younger siblings. Kasturi always is in pains as she had delivered eleven children. She is always in an unhealthy condition. Virmati being the eldest one was supposed to look after her younger siblings though she never was interested in such domestic duties.

As family is a dominant milieu, she was supposed to get married before her age. Virmati was in love with a married professor of her college, Harish who always supported her in her studies. He also loved her in return. Virmati opposes her family members to marry a boy of their choice and tries to attempt suicide. When asked about her attempt to suicide she tells that she wants to study and goes to Lahore. The professor follows her there too. She gets pregnant and aborts the illegal child. Harish never asks her about her abortion.

After her studies she marries Harish and becomes his second wife, as a second wife she can't get any rites of a married woman. Harish too ignores her. After she gets humiliated by her family she wants to go back to her mother's place but is humiliated and the people consider her dead as she had made the family name spoiled by marrying a married man. She gives birth to a baby girl. She tries to treat her in the same way her mother Kasturi wanted her to. Ida, her daughter doesn't like her mother and says, "I don't want to be like you."

Virmati the protagonist, who tries to get educated, loves a person but is unable to get love. She becomes a mother but her only child never loves and cares for her. Chhikara, (2010) in the article, ‘Manju Kapur’s *Difficult Daughters*: A Saga of Feminist Autonomy and Separate Identity’ critically analyses feminism in Kapur’s novels. The writer thinks that Manju Kapur presents the yearning for autonomy and separate identity in her women protagonists. In *Difficult Daughters* in the chain growth of the events, Virmati becomes the difficult daughter for her mother as well as Ida for her. [3]

Society prevails everywhere. No value is given to a woman who tries to pursue her dreams and tries to go against the social norms. A woman is always accepted if she remains in margins set for her by the society.

A Married Woman, the second novel, deals with the life of Aastha, who is married but is married without love. She wants to get educated though her mother never wants her to study. She wants to groom her in a way that is accepted by the patriarchal society.

Aastha was “brought up properly, as befits a woman with large supplements of fear.” [AMW]

Aastha wants to be in love. Kapur captures Aastha’s fantasy as a teenage girl about a “romantic somewhat shadowy man holding her in his manly embrace.” [AMW] She loves a boy who seduces her and leaves her. Finally, after many attempts her parents find a suitable boy for her. She gets married with Hemant, a businessman who is engrossed in his business and is not able to pay attention to his wife. She joins a school as a teacher, and she meets a man who later on dies in Babari Masjid riots. Aastha eventually meets Pipalika and both get involved into a lesbian relationship. Aastha gets love and feels satisfied. She joins the CAR –SEVAKS. She becomes a social worker. Meanwhile her love with Pipeee gets her involved much that she needs no one to be with her. She as a housewife loses her attention and interest towards her family, her children and her husband. Aastha is an artist too. She as a teacher is a salaried person. But she is bound to her family ties. Her life is marginalized by her family duties. Pipee at times would suggest her to leave her family and to be with her always. They will lead a happy life together but Aastha ignores Pipee though she is her ticket to happiness and freedom. Aastha realizes and accepts the margins of her family. Sometimes women themselves are obstacles of their way to freedom.

Manju Kapur’s novels explore the difficulties of reconciling the devotion to family expected of middle class Indian women with their aspirations and desires for a life outside. As she said “I am interested in the lives of women whether in the political arena or in domestic spaces. One of the main preoccupation in all my books is how women manage to negotiate both inner and outer spaces in their lives- what sacrifices do they make in order to keep the home burning – and at what cost to their personal lives, do they find some kind of fulfillment outside the home.[AMW]

Aastha by returning to her family represents those women who want to be free but still need to be in ties of society.

Nisha, the protagonist of Home is abused as a child by her own cousin. Her childhood had seen the troubles of child abusing. In spite she stands, as her uncle and aunt help her and support her. She is a brilliant child, but education is denied to her. Her patriarchal family never allowed her to go and play outside with other children. She rebels and gets educated. While she is in college, a boy named Ramesh enters her life. She gets physically and emotionally involved in him. Her family denies marrying Ramesh as he belonged to a lower caste family. She is unable to get the person whom she loved. Afterwards she develops a skin infection, her skin looks as if it is burnt. Her parents could not find a perfect match for her to marry. She decides to start a business at home. Her mother refuses to start a business as no family would be ready to marry a girl who had her own business. Her father allow her only if she will be able to return the money lent by him twice the amount. Nisha starts the business and becomes successful. Her marriage is arranged with a widower, twice her age as Nisha is a Mangli. She gives birth to twins and this is supposed to be a perfect end of a woman's life. She cannot pursue her dream to be successful and free. It is thought to be better for a woman to be in bondages led on her by society. N.S Warake says,

Though Manju Kapur has portrayed the character of Nisha as an educated, confident, self-assured, bold and independent, high spirited new woman, paying honor to Indian tradition, like Ezekiel believes 'Home is where we have to gather grace.' [4]

She accepts to live by the margins set by the society. Even if a woman rises against her oddities, society never allows her to soar high.

Immigrant tells us about another highly educated girl Nina, she had no father; all she was able to look upon was her mother who looked after her needs made her grow to a position as a professor of English. The novel is about two women Nina and her mother, after the death of Nina's father her mother was left alone. Nina's grandparents never supported the two ladies. After completion of Nina's education both the ladies shift to Delhi. There too her mother never spent a carefree life.

Seven years and six months to find this room in Jangpura Extension and bring her mother to live with her. In Delhi Nina hoped her mother would lead a fuller life; in Delhi her mother imagined a husband could be found who would give her darling the home she deserved.' (IMMI).

She was always worried for Nina's marriage. They find a boy named Ananda who was a dentist at Canada. After her marriage Nina understands that her husband is not able to satisfy her womanly need. Kapur says:

“Distance grew between them. Nina felt imprisoned by the stress and assured him there were other things besides sex in marriage. Relationship had to develop, feelings had to be shared, and surely, he understood that? Everything she said made it worse” [IMMI]

She is destroyed as Anand never takes interest in spending time with Nina. She meets a man called Anton who loves Nina’s body more than her. She breaks up with both the men as they give no priority to her and seduce her only for their satisfaction. Society functions in the same way always. It never allows a woman to be free and to be happy.

Custody is a touching story of separation of children from their parents. Shagun is a beautiful lady with ambitions. Her husband Raman loves her unconditionally, still is of a patriarchal mindset. He never allows Shagun to pursue her dreams. As Shagun says in her criticism of the older world- “It was part of the Indian disease. Ashok was always going on about stultifying tradition. The great Indian family, which rested on the sacrifices of its women.” [C]

She always wanted to be a successful model. Needed to find her own identity along with being a good wife and a good mother. Raman’s boss Ashok enters in Shagun’s life. He starts flirting with Shagun and she is attracted towards him easily. As all the men think that woman is a doll in their hands Ashok plays with the emotions of Shagun. Ashok, who is smart enough to manipulate people and get the best out of them, - “Ashok’s reputation was based on his ability to get the best out of people.” [C] Eventually she divorces Raman and leaves her house without caring for her two children. Jaidev explains in the article *Problematizing Feminism* –

“Indeed, any sophisticated system today operates not by a direct and visible exploitation of people but by making them retain an illusion of freedom and free choice, by making them willingly give into its imperatives, and by subtly ensuring that they do not see that they are dupes or victims.[5]

Suddenly Raman is introduced to Ishita, a divorcee, and come close to each other. The two little children are shown suffering through the novel as their parents are always against each other. Shagun though is never fulfilled her dream, Ishita is shown searching for love. They never are satisfied and follow the quest for freedom and love throughout their life.

Conclusion

Thus, the women are marginalized throughout their lives. Sometime traditions play a vital part in setting limits for them. Sometimes woman feel marginalized as family plays an important role in their lives and leave their dreams unfulfilled.

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Narrative Technique in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*

Ms. V. Anushya Devi

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Mangayarkarasi College of Arts & Science for Women

Madurai-02

9629311772

anushyadevi2020@gmail.com

Abstract

Weep Not, Child is indeed a historical novel. Ngugi's fictional world outlook presents his socialist thinking through historical elements. He wants to bring liberation that they cannot ignore legends and past heroes as it is from them, they get inspiration. Ngugi's structuring of novel as a *Bildungsroman* also a valid novelistic convention intended to invite readers to identify with the protagonist's struggle to establish his identity and to understand this aggressive world. The employment of this myth in Ngugi's novels is symbolic not only in the author's desire to present genuine history of his people, but also in his secret attempt to act like the elders noted above to provoke Kenyans to the realization of their deprivations. Ngugi purposely fictionalizes real historical heroes of the Mau Mau uprising and investing them with legendary qualities by making their exploits and personalities go beyond historical reality. The form of the dissent found in Ngugi is determined by the relative hegemony the Gikuyu 'tribe' holds within the Kenyan superstructure, and the extent to which the Gikuyu dominated the Mau-Mau struggle.

Keywords: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*, historical, liberation, hegemony, superstructure

Introduction

Africa's political, economic and social systems were loaded with the struggle of slavery and colonialism, even though their cultures and aesthetic sensibilities remain unchanged and energetic, particularly in the oral based forms of cultural expression. Though African societies have found development in writing traditions, Africans are primarily known as an oral people and it is that tradition that has dominated the cultural forms and also created that continent. Artistic expression plays a vital role in the lives of African peoples because it provides an opportunity to participate in the community and for exploring the mysteries of humanity.

African literature never attained popularity or fame in the early years because its literary texts were offered orally. The texts reflect the ties that the Africans enjoyed with the Plants and animals, the rivers and rocks for every aspect of nature was significant in the life of African people.

Tribal members were taught by example; those guiding principles were not memorized in formal lessons but were internalized from childhood and became a part of their daily lives. Their literary expresses were oral in nature for they did not have formal written script.

Thus, oral literature derives its form from its tradition of performances, which incorporated stylistic devices used by these narrators who skillfully captured and held the attention of their audience. Ngugi's fiction portrays oral traditions of his culture. He makes use of myths, legends and folklores. Ngugi explores devices of oral traditions for the purpose of the preservation and projection of socio-cultural heritage and to teach moral values.

Discussion

Weep, Not Child (1964) is the most autobiographical of Ngugi's novels. It focuses on the period at the end of World War II and explains the causes of the Mau Mau struggle. Njorge is the protagonist who is a bright student, a self-centered youth with mission-school education and messianic ambition. His hopes are destroyed when his brothers' involvement in Mau Mau forces him out of school. His father Ngotho has religious attachment to the land of his ancestors taken from him by Mr. Howlands. Ngotho is the only a tenant farmer who works for the White settler Mr. Howlands. His son, Boro, who had fought the British in the World War II, returns home embittered by his experience, the death of his brother Mwangi in the war and the loss of their ancestral land. He despises the passive attitudes of the elders and resolves upon action joining the Mau Mau guerrillas. Jacobo is a betrayer of people who is killed by Boro. Ngotho offers himself to the authorities and confesses to the murder. He is tortured and dies. Howlands is killed by Boro and finally he surrenders. The novel depicts all Ngugi's major themes - land, religion, leadership, and the travails of a people struggling against colonialism.

Njorge's life and education so closely compared to that of the author. Many local readers who had grown up under the state of emergency, found it very difficult to tell where to draw the line between fact and fiction. But by analyzing from the autobiographical dimension of this novel, it is not to be suggested that Njorge's life is exactly like Hgugi's. The early stage many readers established their view in an autobiographical point of view. Because it is obvious that Ngugi had presented this novel in this manner to his readers early in his career. Ngugi's structuring of novel as a *Bildungsroman* also a valid novelistic convention intended to invite readers to identify with the protagonist's struggle to establish his identity and to understand this aggressive world.

Weep Not, Child is indeed a historical novel. Ngugi's fictional world outlook presents his socialist thinking through historical elements. He wants to bring liberation that they cannot ignore legends and past heroes as it is from them, they get inspiration. *Weep Not, Child* traces the history of Kenyan people in general and of the Gikuyu. The story brings together history, legends and folklores as a way of tracing the range from past.

Conclusion

The use of myth in Ngugi's novels, is a sign of the author's interest in history of his country, Kenya and his people. More importantly it is also a means through which he celebrates his people's belief in the land as a divine patrimonial inheritance. For this reason, the land must not be passed to any invader, no matter how strong they are. When the white man comes to Kenya and begins to use Kenyan lands, the mere chant of this myth in the novels condemns this action and reassures the people of the authority of their demand for the full ownership of their land. In *Weep Not, child*, Ngotho brings the same myth to the children who had gathered in his Thingira to listen to stories. He told them;

And the creator who is also called Murungu took
Mumbi from his holy mountain ... Yes, God showed
Gikuyu and Mumbi all the land and told them, this
land I-hand over to you. It's yours to rule and till in
serenity sacrificing only to me, your God, under my
sacred tree (*Weep Not, Child*, p. 24).

The employment of this myth in Ngugi's novels is symbolic not only in the author's desire to present genuine history of his people, but also in his secret attempt to act like the elders noted above to provoke Kenyans to the realization of their deprivations. This device is used to emphasize the Kenyans' divine ownership over the Kenyan lands as well as to keep Kenya's history alive in the minds of the Kenyan public. Ngugi finds this tremendously essential in order to fight the wave of misrepresentation inherent in a situation where the colonizer is the sole historian.

As Ngugi shows in his novels, the mere knowledge of history without firm efforts at making things straight is only the lame excuses of a coward. This explains the fact that why most of the author's heroes are always fighting for the liberty and when they cannot archive this, they try to rebel against an oppressive authority against their beliefs. Ngugi seems to expect his Kenyan readers to act in the same way as his heroes. By the skillful use of myth, he makes his reader share the feelings and attitudes of the fictional heroes or characters. For example, in *Weep Not Child*, after Ngotho has finished narrating the myth of divine patrimony of the land to the children, Njoroe's direct reaction is a question which even embarrasses Ngotho: "where did the land go?" (*Weep Not, Child*, p. 25). As for Boro, his anger can neither be controlled nor calmed. He cannot nourish why the black man could have allowed his land to be taken while he sticks to a superstitious belief in a prophecy, and he faces Ngotho, his father:

How can you continue working for a man who has
taken your land? How can you go on serving him?
He walked out without waiting for an answer.
(*Weep Not, Child*, p. 27).

As can be expected, such reactions which this myth invokes in the minds of the fictional characters may also be their effect on the reader and the reader has been encouraged to share the

character's feelings and beliefs. The questions rose by Ngoroge and Boro are the major issues which Ngugi imports into the naive consciousness of the reader.

Ngugi purposely fictionalizes real historical heroes of the Mau Mau uprising and investing them with legendary qualities by making their exploits and personalities go beyond historical reality. They assume legendary status and their actions become another version of the novel's legendary story. Dedan Kimathi, a real historical leader of the Mau Mau war is fictionalized in this sense. The stories that are told about him by other characters in the novel makes him appear super-human. Karanga tells of how Dedan Kimathi changed into a white police officer and deceived a whole police fort into replacing his old motor bike for a new one, when in fact they had intensified their vigilance in order to catch him.

As his listeners express doubt at the truth of this story, Karanga reaffirms in *Weep Not, Child*;

That's the point. Dedan can change himself into anything; a white man, a bird, or a tree. He can also turn himself into an aeroplane. He learnt all these things in the big war. (*Weep Not, Child*, p. 18.)

Through their extraordinary feats and ideal behavior, these heroes inspire their fellow fictional characters as much as they do the reader. By presenting their efforts as patriots in such legitimate cause, Ngugi idolizes them as a commander of the liberation struggle and makes the readers admire not only their dedication and invincibility but also the cause for which they stand. By the use of these myths and legends and their sequential presentation in his novels which tends to record the stages of Kenyan's gradual colonization and alienation from their ancestral lands. Ngugi hopes to draw the sympathy of his readers for the black man's experience in that country.

Ngugi himself believes that Kenyan people find that their fears are confirmed in the Bible, Biblical allusions become the device with which he strikes the chords of their innermost feelings equating their sufferings to those of the Israelites and strengthening their belief in the justice of their cause in their bid to regain what the settler has taken from them. His Kenyan readers see themselves and their traditions presented in identifiable terms in *Weep Not, Child* where Ngoroge equates other fictional characters' identities and positions to these of the Biblical Israelites. As the narrator relates in *Weep Not, Child*,

It did not make much difference that he, Njoroge, had come to identify Gikuyu with Adam and Munbi with Eve ... there was growing up in his heart a feeling that the Gikuyu people, whose land had been taken by white men, were no other than the children t

of Israel about whom he read in the Bible. This explains his brother's remark that Jomo was the Black Moses (*Weep Not, Child*, p. 49).

Here, Njoroge's ready appropriation of the identity of the Israelites to his people further shows Ngugi's subtle use of sheer narrative expediency to arouse patriotic zeal in his Kenyan audience. His experiment with this device further indicates his assumption of an articulator of the Kenyan nationalist sentiments through his art, for the Biblical allusions now reveal an attempt to turn the white man's own religion against him by using same to establish colonial atmosphere and also to criticize the white man.

This oppression depicted above is intensified by the declaration of a state of emergency over Kenya. By describing the Mau Mau War, the taking of the oaths of loyalty and the refusal to operate with the white colonizer. Ngugi portrays the Kenyan people as living up to their words as depicted in the above except. In this way, the sympathy educed in the minds of the Christian readers becomes more strengthened. The arousing of this sense of identification in the mind of the reader is Ngugi's aim in his employment of the Biblical allusions.

Christianity inculcates in its Africa adherents, a shallowness of mind. That makes them lose their rationality and the characteristic commitment which the African shows to the welfare of his community. This explains why his 'good' African Christian character teacher Isaka in *Weep Not, Child*, often possesses sterling qualities that contribute so much to the welfare of others. The Biblical allusions are used as a two dimensional device. One is to judge the actions of a people who found themselves in an oppressive position similar to that of the Israelites and who had to fight back in order to liberate themselves. Ngugi's use of the Biblical allusions are used as a satiric weapon against the Christian religion and its white colonizers.

Here, the individuals referred to existed in history and their actions are historical. Therefore, while contributing to the success of Ngugi's stories, the use of historical allusion enhances a detailed re-examination of the events of history and also promotes these events to an international scope. Since the facts and figures alluded to have been fictionalized in their contents, they become satirical.

The above action of rain is symbolic of the physical and psychological disposition of Kenyans on the eve of independence. It is true that independence is now a reality, but Kenyan Africans will never forget the sufferings that attended their colonial experience, particularly those of the Emergency period and the Mau Mau war. Those of them who survived those waves of violence surely caught the pathetic figures of maize plants whose leaves were lacerated into numerous shreds. The rain could also symbolize peace, luxuriance and triumph. In *Weep Not, Child*, for instance, rain ushers in a ray of hope, of victory and triumph for the Africans of Kenya who were going to stand trial the next day. As the narrator relates:

Much rain fell at Kipanga and the country around on the eve of the judgment day. People were happy in all the land. The rain was a good omen. Black folk were on trial (*Weep Not, Child*, p. 72).

The effect of the author's use of symbols is the wide range of associations and handiness to reveal hidden message are also expressive of the author's thematic vision. Ngugi's use of symbols also strengthens the active reader by posing little challenges of interpretation, the unraveling of which makes him enjoy the novels as mature works of art. The use of symbols also makes for a firmness of structure as they save the author from wordiness.

Finally, the title of the novels are also symbolic. *Weep Not, Child* symbolizes the disillusionment of the hero, Njoroge who suffers of a result of the imperialist and his dreams are frustrated. Another device Ngugi uses in his novels is motif. The dominant motifs that run through Ngugi's novels is the messianic or Saviour and land motifs. In each novel the bone of controversy is the people's lands which have been taken by first the white colonizers and then the black imperialist.

The struggle centres around how to get the land back because to the Kenyans, loss of land is equated with loss of manhood. A man is worthless without a piece of land. The messianic motif is also common to his novels. In *Weep Not, Child*, Jomo Kenyatta is the 'Black Moses'. Just as Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, he will deliver his people from the hands of the imperialists. The young Njorogo envisions himself as Jomo's successor as he feels that education will serve as a weapon for this mission. Ngotho believes in an age old prophecy of a Saviour that will come to recover the lost land from the colonialist.

The form of the dissent found in Ngugi is determined by the relative hegemony the Gikuyu 'tribe' holds within the Kenyan superstructure, and the extent to which the Gikuyu dominated the Mau-Mau struggle. This relative hegemony allows Ngugi to present Gikuyu traditions and symbols as a general Kenyan nationalism.

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Marginalisation as an Impediment to the Progress of the Society: An Analysis Of Preethi Shenoy's *The Rule Breakers*

Aparna. B

Assistant Professor

Anna Adarsh College for Women, Annanagar

Chennai – 50

Abstract

Literature of the oppressed is gaining prominence in the present literary scenario as subaltern studies. The exploitation, grief, suppression, subjugation and enslavement of a particular group of people are termed as marginalization. It is an act of assuming that particular race, caste, community, ethnicity and gender are superior, and others are inferior. The marginalization results from various stereotypes and preconceived notions. Some people are pushed to the edge of the society and accorded lesser importance and their needs and desires are ignored totally. The urban cultural setup appears to be an egalitarian society on the surface level, but in reality, there is imbalance in power structure. The hegemony of patriarchy subjugates women as the marginalised. This paper aims to trace the ramifications of marginalization in Preethi Shenoy's *The Rule Breakers*. Myriads of marginalization are mirrored in the novel like – women treated as the other, fear of a man to expose his homosexuality and psyche of the people in the lower social strata. This paper looks into various dimensions of marginalization prevalent in the Indian cultural setup and points out the necessity of annihilating the bias.

Keywords: Preethi Shenoy, *The Rule Breakers*, Marginalization, subjugation, patriarchy, gender bias, homosexuality.

The literature of the oppressed is gaining prominence in the present literary scenario as subaltern studies. The exploitation, grief, suppression, subjugation, and enslavement of a particular group of people are termed as marginalization. It is an act of assuming that particular race, caste, community, ethnicity, and gender are superior, and others are inferior. The marginalization results from various stereotypes and preconceived notions. Some people are pushed to the edge of society and accorded lesser importance and their needs and desires are ignored totally. They are pushed to the margins drawn away from the centre of privilege and excluded from society. The idea and nature of marginalization varies and is not universal. Marginalization is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and there is no single rule to comprehend it. In socio-cultural view, there are numerous people in the periphery like Dalits in India, Black slaves, Native Americans, and even Muslims. The centre and periphery are the key terms of marginalization. They are the paradigms of a hegemonic structure. Writers have taken up the role of reformers by giving voice to the voiceless people.

Gender discrimination is discussed elaborately by the theorists in the present day. Women are always seen as the weaker sex and are a burden to the family. Women are pushed to the periphery and are always treated as the other. By and large, women are denied privilege and power in society. In some cases, men whose sexual orientation otherwise have a fear to expose the same in society. They are in constant anxiety that if their gay status is revealed, they will be excluded from society. Homosexuals are looked down by the people and are treated as an outcast. There is a great rift in the economic status of the people. The people from the slums lack money and education which further pushes them to a demeaning state. Marginalization due to gender bias, sexual orientation, and economic and educational status are discussed in Preethi Shenoy's novel *The Rule Breakers*.

Shenoy gives the story of a typical middle-class family, with four daughters and a son in a mountainous town of Joshimath. The story revolves around the eldest daughter Veda, a studious quiet and obedient girl. She has great dreams about her career that goes unheeded and is married even before completing her degree. She becomes a prey into the family with a terrible mother-in-law and a non-committal husband Bhuwan. Though she shifts from her parental home of Joshimath to Pune, she feels lonely and isolated. She fails in her exams due to her domestic duties. With the help of her neighbour Kanika, she joins the school called Sankalp, which teaches the underprivileged children. Finally, she ventures and starts a school Rocket along with her friends Kanika and Ron.

Gender discrimination is grounded in Indian soil from time immemorial. Glancing through the Vedas and Histories, women are side-lined, occupying a secondary status. Indian family treats a boy child as a treasure and female child as a liability. In the book *The Rule Breakers*, the family is with four daughters Veda, Vidya, Vandana, and Vishali – finally, the youngest one being Animesh celebrated as the prince of the house. Veda the eldest daughter of the family is a responsible and studious girl. But her father never cares about her grades in college, on contrary if Animesh's grade falters he questions Veda, "Didn't you help your brother? What is the use of getting high marks? You have to ultimately get married and go away. He has to earn" (RB9). Veda is thoroughly irritated by this partial treatment, but she never questions her father in the name of respect and listens to him quietly.

The patriarchal ideology is deeply rooted in Indian society. Since the girl child is the subordinate position, parents do not consider education or career of their daughters as a priority. Society conditions women to perform domestic duties and set aside her dreams and visions. Simon De Beauvoir throws light, "The heavy curse weighing on her is that the very meaning of existence is not in her hand" (550). Marriage is the sole purpose of a woman's life, so when a girl gets a prospective groom, her education comes to a halt. Veda has dreams of becoming college lecturer, but with the supposed good proposal, her education and career take a back seat. Rajender, Veda's father is elated by the proposal as it sufficed the rules of the society:

Veda, the boy is earning very well. He is working in a multinational company in Pune. They are a very good family. The boy's father is a very good academician. They have their

own home too in Pune. More than anything, he is a single child. So, everything they have will automatically go to him. I think this is an excellent match. (RB25)

Veda is left without a choice but to get married, as there are three more daughters in the family. Additionally, Bhuwan's family never demands any dowry. This criterion brought a sigh of relief from Rajender. In India, marriages are made on the societal norms and condition and are not based on love between the two individuals.

Marriage as an institution makes life more miserable for women, as they undergo a series of changes. The change in place, people and customs bring a shock to a woman. Veda is shifted to Pune from her hometown. The urban cultural setup of small apartments and house help, doing mechanical works are different from the way she lived in Joshimath. Veda starts attending college in Pune and finds it very different from her college. Since she joins in the final year as a married woman, she is side-lined, which she confesses, "I am a wallflower here, always on the side-lines" (RB68). She feels so embarrassed as a married girl in the college, as others treat her differently, "The way the girls screamed when they discovered the fact – it was like I have a disease or something" (RB68). The marital status protected Veda like a fence and she is further alienated and isolated.

Domestic violence is a great threat to Indian women. Women are abused not only by men but also by women in the family. Women fall into a muted group not able to articulate their sufferings, "Mutedness results from lack of power and might lead to being overlooked, muffled and invisible" (Emory A). The hegemony or the power structure prevalent in the family setup gains a dominant position for a mother-in-law and submissive position for a daughter-in-law. Domestication is a terrain of patriarchy where the intra-woman relationship is strained. Older women abuse younger women verbally and physically. Veda is one such victim of domestic violence, as she is assaulted by the scathing words of her mother-in-law Padma Devi. Padma constantly reprimands Veda about everything like cutting vegetables and cooking. Veda's father-in-law is a considerate man and he consoles her saying that his wife has a sharp tongue. But Padma treats Veda like a puppet in her hands and resents as Veda expresses in her letter to Vidya, "I don't know what responsibility she wants me to take on. She decides everything that has to be cooked. I do whatever she tells me to do. What more she wants from me?" (RB71). The miseries of Veda piles-up by her father-in-law's sudden demise. Veda is blamed about as a bad omen by her mother-in-law for the death of her father-in-law. Padma accuses Veda has brought a curse to the family and asks her to perform pooja daily early in the morning. Due to the domestic responsibilities Veda lags in her academics and this early morning pooja is yet another blow to education. When Veda tries to voice her suffering, Padma Devi fumes with anger and her temper frightens Veda. Veda being soft natured girl obeys her mother-in-law out of fear. She approaches Bhuwan for support but in vain. Veda accepts her fate and undergoes the torment within herself with her dreams fading away with time, as she writes to her sister Vidya, "My mother-in-law thinks I am to blame for my father-in-law's death. I wish Bhuwan would stand up for me. He doesn't. I kind of feel alone" (RB80). She starts accusing herself of her father-in-law's demise.

The verbal assault blows up to physical abuse for Veda. When Veda stays back in the college library for studying, Padma Devi's anger grows out of proportions. She could not bear her daughter-in-law coming back home late in the evening. Padma grabs Veda's hair and threw all her books in the corridor. She shouts on top of her voice and speaks demeaning. After abusing her she asks Veda to prepare tea for her and press her leg. Veda is shattered by the humiliation and is broken beyond redemption. Veda is denied any parental support as Veda's mother advises her to adjust and it is a common problem that would slow down with time. Veda feels all the more depressed and her only lifeline is her letters to her sister Vidya.

Sexual orientation of a human being has a strong influence on society. Due to the fear of rejection and social stigma, people fear to expose their sexual orientation. To keep up in society's streamline, they mask their real identity. In doing this they tend to spoil another person's life by getting married for society's sake. Bhuwan outwardly appears to be a normal man, but actually, he is gay. The fear to keep up the family honour and the exclusion from the society, he agrees to the wedding proposal. Bhuwan does not show any interest in marriage and is non-committal in his relationship with Veda. Bhuwan is in a homosexual relationship with his college friend Vikram. Padma Devi also likes Vikram, so there is no suspicion when they spent time together. Veda discovers a pile of letters while cleaning the house and is shocked to find the truth. Waking up from her shock, Veda confronts Bhuwan about his relationship. Bhuwan confesses his sexual leanings:

Like any other group of people, we homosexual men are attracted only to a certain type of men who spark our interest. Everyone thinks that first because we are gay. We will have a sexual desire for all men. That is absurd! Straight men think they should be afraid of us as we hit on them, which is ridiculous. Gay men are NOT predatory and it's not like we cannot control our desires and that we lust after every man. (RB297)

Veda is compassionate about this confession and for the first time, they feel connected and friendly towards each other. Veda sympathises Bhuwan for leading a secretive life and she shares her goals and ambitions.

The fear of social exclusion remains the primary reason for people to reveal their sexual orientation. Even the own family abhor the LGBT people and treats them differently. In the case of Bhuwan, his mother avoids speaking to him when she discovers his sexual orientation. Veda counsels her mother-in-law to talk to Bhuwan. Veda is even happy to see Bhuwan and Vikki together, and they volunteer for The Rocket school of Veda, during weekends. Bhuwan and Veda are tangled in a web of marriage for societal compulsion. They both have a sigh of relief after opening up and accepting each other. They carve their paths in life, erasing the boundaries and overcoming the marginalization.

Social inequalities result due to the difference in economic status. There is a rift in the society due to the unequal economic system. Majority of the people who belong to lower social

strata feel exploited and alienated. The objective of Marxism is to destroy such segregation and create a classless society. Many ventures are undertaken by the government as well as the NGO's following Marxist ideals. In the novel, Shenoy gives a clear picture of a ghetto, Sitawadi in Pune, where the poor people reside. Shakubhai the house help of Veda resides in Sitawadi in a small house. Shakubhai's husband is a drunkard who beats her and abuses her verbally. He resents his job of a servant in multinational companies. He would vent out his loathing, when drunk, "To slog like servants in city? Do you know I wash toilets? I clean the shit of office goers" (RB110). He detests the upper-class people and would throw up all the anger on his wife Shakubhai. She has a smart and clever child named Kajol. In spite of going to school, Kajol helped her mother by doing her work as domestic help, when she was sick. People of the lower social class invested in their children's education for their upliftment. Shakubhai also sent Kajol to an English medium school, as she wanted her daughter's life to be without any suffering.

Many NGOs are working for the betterment of society and the upliftment of the downtrodden people. 'Sankalp' is one such organization that teaches the children from the slums. Kanika, a friend and neighbour of Bhuwan works for 'Sankalp'. Due to the domestic duties and depression, Veda fails in her exam and she feels dejected. When an opportunity is lost, it is replaced by another, as Veda meets Kanika and gets to know about the school. Kajol, who accompanies her mother to Veda's house is also a student of Sankalp. So, Veda is motivated to work for Sankalp along with Kanika. With the help of Bhuwan and Kanika, she convinces her mother-in-law and starts her career. Veda loves her profession and breathes freedom after her wedding. Sankalp earned good friends for Veda like Kanika and a Britisher Ronald. He visits India for a contract with Sankalp, interested with their projects he willingly assists them in teaching for tenth class board exams. The trio Ron, Kanika and Veda work untiringly for the poor children to excel in their board exams. In spite of their good intentions, they are caught up in a huge quandary, as a boy named Sanju dies. Sanju tries to get the board exam question paper by bribing the goondas of the city. In the process, they beat up Sanju and he loses his life. The father of Sanju complains about them and an investigation is fixed. The inquiry blames them for motivating Sanju to get the question papers by unlawful means. Veda explodes before the inquiry commission and three of them walkout quitting their job. Veda, Kanika and Ron work hard with students and their labour becomes fruitful, as all the students clear the board exam. They feel happy about their accomplishments. Ron is a part of Carman Foundation that funded for the Sankalp. Ron is extremely frustrated about the treatment met at Sankalp, so he writes a long report regarding the dispute. He attaches the mark sheet of the students who appeared for the board exam, stating that he would like to start a new school. The rocket is launched in Veda's life too, as she moves away from Bhuwan's house. She shifts her residence to the first floor of the Rocket school. Veda emerges from the ordeals and develops into an empowered and brave individual.

Preeti Shenoy decodes the marginality in a present-day progressive society, that is believed to be with democratic ideals. Shenoy gives voice to the muted group through her narrative voice. She employs various types of narrations – first person, third person and epistolary narration. She delves deep into the psyche of human minds and brings out the trauma faced by the subjugated

people. The hierarchy of power structure elucidates the subjugation prevalent in society. The people in the periphery are subjugated by the dominant ones at the centre with power. The paradigms of power need to shuffle creating an egalitarian society. Shenoy looks into the marginality, paving the way for liberation and tapping the consciousness in deconstructing the marginality.

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Subaltern Liberation: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Writings

Dr. K. R. Athista

Guest Faculty

Department of English and Comparative Literature

Madurai Kamaraj University

Madurai

Abstract:

The tribes own individual identity as 'adivasis' with their own language, religion, festivals, dance and music. Tribal history shows elements of subjugation, passive acceptance of suffering, humiliation and starvation. 'Subaltern' refers to the lower rank in the military. In literature subaltern studies mirror the sufferings of the voiceless sections of the society. Mahasweta Devi, (1926-2016) is a chronicler and social activists documenting the sufferings of the *adivasis*. She explores troubling motifs in contemporary Indian life through the figures and narratives of the indigenous tribes of India. Her stories map, in both delicate and violent style, the experience of the tribals and their lives under decolonization. She links the specific fate of the tribals in India to that of the marginalised peoples everywhere in the world. The moneylenders, the landlords, the bureaucrats and the politicians benefit from the welfare schemes and push the tribals to lead lives of poverty, suffering, humiliation, oppression and exploitation. The aim of the paper is to show attempts for liberation of tribals subalternity through resistances by individuals, groups and intellectual thinking. The social activist touch of Devi incorporates the consciousness of the individual raising a voice of revolt against the oppressors. The possible solution to end tribal afflictions is the collective revolt driving the tribals to liberate themselves and their race. Devi's "Aajir", "Water", *Titu Mir, Chotti Munda and his Arrow*, "Seed" and *Dust on the Road* bear testimony to this consciousness.

Keywords: Mahasweta Devi, Subaltern Liberation, decolonization, oppression, collective revolt, resistance, liberate

The tribes own individual identity as 'adivasis' with their own language, religion, festivals, dance and music. With an enigmatic culture and hospitality, they also significantly hold contrasting patriarchal and matriarchal societies. 'Tribe' is derived from the Middle English having Latin roots *Tribuz* which means a nomadic group of Roman races. According to Oxford dictionary, a 'tribe' is a group of people of primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having common ancestors.

Indian tribes fall into four main divisions: 1. Tribal: Those who still live away from the civilised world in the forest and still maintain their primitive patterns of life. 2. Semi-Tribal: Those who have more or less settled in rural areas and taken to agriculture and allied occupation. 3. Accelerated: Those who have migrated to towns and semi urban areas and engaged

themselves in ordinary occupations and have adopted the culture of the civilised population and at the same time continuing contacts with their tribal culture. 4. Totally assimilated: Those who have been totally assimilated in the normal urban ways of life.

Anthropologists and sociologists have identified certain common features emerging from the definitions of the tribals. They are:

- a. Living away from the civilized world in inaccessible forests and hills
- b. Speaking their own dialects
- c. Professing primitive religious animism
- d. Following primitive occupations such as gardening, hunting and gathering of forest produce
- e. Living either naked/ semi naked using tree barks and leaves for clothing, having nomadic habits and love for drink and dance.

The term 'subaltern' refers to the lower rank officer in the British army below the rank of Captain, especially a Second Lieutenant. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, a feminist critic, labelled oppressed sections of the society as 'Subaltern'. Spivak terms 'subalternity' as "The social groups and elements included in this category represent the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the 'elite'." (*The Spivak Reader*, 203) The word 'subaltern' loosely derived from the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci designates non elite or subordinated social groups. In post-colonial terms it can mean someone who has been marginalized or oppressed. The sufferings of the tribals continue unabated even after seven decades of Indian independence.

Mahasweta Devi (1926-2016), a Bengali writer, explores troubling motifs in contemporary Indian life through the figures and narratives of the indigenous tribes of India. The stories of Devi map in both delicate and violent style the experiences of the tribals and their lives under decolonization. Devi links the specific fate of the tribals in India to that of the marginalised peoples everywhere in the world. Originally written in Bengali, her works have been translated into English by translators such as Spivak, R. B. Chatterjee, Samik Bandhopadhyay and so on.

The literary oeuvre of Devi portrays characters who are the products of inhuman exploitation. The sufferings of the tribals as quoted by Devi are:

"After thirty-one years of Independence, I (Devi) find many people still groaning under hunger, landlessness, indebtedness and bonded labour."

(Introduction: *Five Plays*, X)

Devi had the fortune of encountering a handful of contemporary tribal intellectuals such as Chuni Kotal and Jaladhar Sabar. The sufferings of the tribals in India continue unabated even after seven decades of independence.

The subaltern tribes are imposed restrictions by the Indian Forest Act of 1878. The act radically has changed the ownership of the forest. It denies them the right over forest land and produce. The encroachment of the outsiders into the forest area has not only implied land loss to the tribes but also to the tribal languages, especially their folklore.

Devi turns her attention to the marginalized tribals and untouchable of India, particularly Bihar and West Bengal. She has made remarkable contributions to literary and cultural studies in India. Her powerful, haunting tales of exploitation and struggle have been seen as rich sites of tribal discourse by leading scholars. The landlords, the bureaucrats, the moneylenders and the politicians push the tribals to a life of poverty, suffering, bonded labour, oppression and exploitation. Devi pens the tribal sufferings in her literary oeuvre.

The trauma of inhuman subjugation by the landlords against the innocent tribes reflects her firsthand experience with bonded labourers. Devi's interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak included in "Notes for Anveshi/ Subaltern Studies Conference", an unpublished work, states,

"In 1965, I started going to Palamu ...an inaccessible district, the poorest in the state of Bihar.... In such backward, feudally oppressed districts, the bonded labour system survives... (which) was introduced by the British.... I have covered all of the (Bihar) district on foot Thus, bonded labour system, in its naked savagery and its bloody exploitation ... became clear to me. (4)

In "Aajir" included in *Five Plays*, Paatan seeks identity for himself in a world which has for ages suppressed his kind. He confronts a society that denies him a right to live a life of a human being on the principle of equality with his fellow human beings. He is forced to do a work he hates. Unlike his forefathers, Paatan craves for a free-life. He is a descendant of a great family of slaves that "lived in the Bengali era 1101, corresponding to 1072 of the Hijra era" (48). He thinks of escaping into a world where there is no master and he can have a family of his own. He speaks,

PAATAN. ... The aajir's bond! I'll tear it to pieces and scatter them to the winds. Then? ... Then I'll be a man. I'll marry Bhumidasi.
Bhumidasi! I'll be an aajir no longer. (55-56)

As a silent protester, Paatan meekly undergoes all sorts of humiliations at the hands of his master, Maatang. Enslaved for life, he is not entitled to human joy. The repetition of the voice "The term *aajir* stands for one who has sold himself into slavery for a paltry sum" (45) reverberates the predicament of humanity which has been exploited and marginalized from time immemorial. The bonded slave, Paatan gets whipping at the hands of his master, Maatang at every alternate hour or day. The conversation between the mistress and the master illustrates the treacherous life the aajir is forced to lead.

THE MISTRESS. Were you beating Paatan?

MAATANG. I had told He's a horrible sinner.

THE MISTRESS. Why?

He MAATANG. Why does he forget he's an aajir? His forefathers sold him away. He wouldn't keep that in mind, he'd dream of marrying, having a family of his own Is there anyone who'd give away a daughter in marriage to an aajir?

(49-50)

The initial seed of getting married develops a revolt against the traditional constraints in Paatan. Ranjit Guha echoes a similar view in *Subaltern Studies*. He writes,

When a peasant rose in revolt or any time or place ... he did so necessarily and explicitly in violation of a series of codes which defined his very existence as a member of that ... semi-feudal society. (1)

Paatan rebels not only against the tradition but also against the dictates of his conscience. Desire to live a human life in a world without class status and distinction, drives him to elope with the mistress. When Paatan demands the Mistress to show the bond, the fact that the bond is nonexistent is revealed. She speaks,

THE MISTRESS. It is just a gaamchha (takes it out, shakes it) with the bond long turned to dust. There's no bond any longer. (66)

Unable to accept the truth regarding the non-existence of the *gaamchha*, Paatan brutally murders the Mistress. Shocked at the unexpected turn of events, he becomes very assertive in his final confrontation with Maatang admitting that there has not been any aajir's bond:

MAATANG. I haven't seen it myself, my father hadn't seen it, it had turned to dust long ago in this *gaamchha* in which it had been once upon a time. (67)

A fictitious and nonexistent bond has kept three generations of Paatan as bonded labourers. Realizing that there is no bond binding him to his master, Paatan walks proudly to the police station speaking,

PAATAN. Like everyone else in the world, I was a free man (stating a fact), and I alone didn't know. (67)

The thirst for liberty forces the bonded slave Paatan to become a murderer to grab the bond believed to have been executed by his forefathers. The life-like portrayal of the sufferings of bonded slavery that exists among the tribes in Bengal is presented poignantly by Devi in "Aajir". Paatan is a subaltern fighting individually for his liberation.

Devi's "Water" included in *Five Plays* explores the sufferings of a tribal community that is socially, politically and economically oppressed. The drama deals with an untouchable, Maghai Dome, a water-diviner. He is in conflict with the feudal society. The exploiter, Santhosh Babu keeps for himself a large amount of relief material meant for the tribals during the famine. In addition, he does not allow the untouchables to draw water from the well. In spite of Maghai's own water divining skill, he fails to provide water for his people. Jiten, a selfless servicer inspires the community by constructing a dam across the river to quench the eternal thirst. Foreseeing a threat to his existence, Santhosh Babu informs the authorities that all the untouchables have become Naxalites. Marching along with the police, Babu breaks the dam. The drama ends with Maghai being carried away on the crest of the waves of the furious *Charasa*.

Untouchability is a social evil in India being perpetuated down the ages. The drama opens with the characters openly admitting that they are untouchables. Dhura says "We're untouchables". Also, the upper caste people segregated the tribal community by not allowing them to stay near their huts. Dhura explains the pathetic life of the tribes thus:

DHURA. . . . When we (tribal people) go to distribute the 'prasad' from the Dharam Puja, in the village they wouldn't let us stand under the ledges of their huts. (126)

The attitude of the bureaucrats is callous and against the interest of the tribals. Maghai speaks,

MAGHAI. . . . We have been told that there's no untouchability in our subdivision, and yet Santosh Babu, you your caste brothers and your relations won't let us draw water from any well.(138)

Santosh represents the upper class society. He claims himself to be pious. According to him, the Domes who rear pigs for their living are supposed to be unclean and thereby will pollute the water in the well.

Although law dissuades any discrimination in the society, untouchability persists in India. The gap between the legal sanction against untouchability and its actual practice is indicated thus:

SANTOSH. Maghai, it's not a question of untouchability. You know already that the government has discredited that there'll be no untouchability. I've nothing to say about that . . . We worship our gods in our house instead of pigs and fowls . . . isn't the water polluted if you touch it? (138)

The final speech of Maghai who appears tottering one hand on his bleeding chest is heart breaking. Not to die an ordinary death, he declares:

MAGHAI. . . . I can't let them carry me as a corpse into a bloody morgue.
My last journey will be with the water. . . (198)

The passive acceptance of the fact of being an untouchable acquires a turn when Dhura makes an appeal to his father to stop serving the upper-caste people. He says,

DHURA. . . . Why does father have to act the water-diviner for Santosh whenever he asks him- to? . . . for him, the shadow of a Dome pollutes his pitcher, and he'd throw away the water. (143)

Maghai and his son Dhura resist upper caste restrictions individually. Maghai, the water-diviner, is denied water for consumption. He is carried away by the River Chara finally. Dhura objects to his father serving as water diviner for the upper castes. The revolt of the tribes in "Water" suggests the importance of the collective force against humiliation, oppression and exploitation. Devi's foreward to **Rakasi Kora** in *The Plays of Mahasweta Devi* runs thus: "When they (the oppressed) rise, get organized and fight back, only then history can be changed" (qtd. in E. Satyanarayana 127).

In addition to the bonded labour system, the landlords get wageless labour from the tribals. Devi provides case histories of tribals turned landless in her *Dust on the Road*. In India, the tribes are continuously humiliated, oppressed and exploited. The government welfare schemes do not benefit them. The bureaucrats and the politicians are really benefitted by the welfare schemes. Hence, the condition of the tribal communities remains status quo. The tribals are underprivileged and disadvantaged and they suffer from penury.

Titu Mir pens the emergence of the tribal heroes long subjected to acute torture and suffering by British rulers. The charismatic hero Titu Mir organizes a collective revolt against the Indigo plantations which eats up fertile agricultural land. The natural leader defends the rural poor against the exploitation by landlords and the British at the risk of his own life. References to the Wahabi doctrine, the Sanyasi Revolt and the Narkelberia Revolt (1830-31) in *Titu Mir* resurrect the tribal role in the Indian freedom struggle. The revolt of Bisra Munda documented in *Chotti Munda and his Arrow* turns out to be a voice for the liberation of the tribals. *Ulgulan* is a great tumult led by Bisra Munda in Ranchi and northern Singhbhum district of Bihar from December 1899 to January 1900. The movement led by Munda is against land alienation, an attempt by the moneylenders and the traders. The rebellions of the adivasis highlight their claim to the forest land. In the publishers' blurb Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak documents thus:

"After *Chotti*, the text of tribality frees itself from the burden of a merely 'Indian' history . . . *Chotti Munda* repeatedly dramatizes subaltern solidarity: Munda,

a Oraon, and the Hindu outcastes must work together. Today such a solidarity has name: Dalit.”

In “Seeds” [Bichhan] included in *Bitter Soil* Lachman Singh, the landlord has nexus with the BDO (Block Development Officer), SDO (Sub Divisional Officer) and the police officer and threatens the tribals for forced labour. He gives them twenty five paise each whereas the tribals expect eight annas. They say, “He’s (Singh) giving four annas. This will be our 25 – paise battle for an additional four annas.” (34). Singh kills six tribals – Karan, Asrafi, Bulaki, Mohar, Mahuban and Para – who demanded additional wages and objected to his hiring contract labourers from outside for harvesting. Dulan Ganju meets Singh alone and takes revenge against him. He smashes Singh’s head with a piece of rock and kills him. Dulan distributes paddy to his fellow men for cultivation and apostrophises “Dhatua, I’ve turned you all into seed” (58). Thus, seed becomes a symbol of revenge against oppression and exploitation. *Titu Mir*, “Seeds” and *Chotti Munda and his Arrow* suggest collective revolt for subaltern liberation.

Devi, a champion of the tribals, voices for tribal uplift in her writings. She implicitly and at times explicitly suggests subaltern solidarity to end tribal sufferings. The ending of her narratives is gripping and they suggest the ways for liberating tribals from their endless serfdom and subjugation. To ameliorate the sufferings and to preserve the tribal identity, individuals uprise from tribal groups. Although the mainstream society accuses their struggle against exploitation as secessionist activities, the seeds for liberation continue to exist. Generally, individual uprisings are curbed by the manoeuvrings of the rich people, politicians, the bureaucrats and the police. Devi suggests collective revolt as a measure to end tribal sufferings. Intellectually, Devi has prepared the tribals for their liberation. From 1980 Devi edited *Bortika*, a quarterly magazine, inviting articles from tribal contributors. The magazine functions as a platform for the downtrodden tribals in Indian society — the dispossessed tribals and the marginalised segments like the landless labourers of Eastern India. The tribals articulate their sufferings for redressal. *Bortika* documents Devi’s research on tribes conducted through unconventional means such as oral history.

In *Dust on the Road*, Devi suggests the formation of *Samithis* (a grassroot level organisation) to implement the Government sponsored Welfare programmes for tribal uplift. According to Devi, the village panchayat administration, the Block Development Office and the Revenue Departments usually have callous attitude to tribal uplift. Programmes carried out by these offices exclude tribal participation and involvement. *Samithis* on the other hand involve the tribals in development programmes meant for them. Discussions precede prioritization of programmes. The implementation of the programmes takes place with tribal participation. These may include digging wells, farming vegetables, maintaining aqua culture, establishing cottage industries, preparing art and handicraft and so on. Hence, the tribals get due payments for their labour. Middlemen cannot exploit their labour. There is avoidance of misuse and wastage of funds on administrative machinery.

To sum up, tribal afflictions continue unabated in India. The mainstream society absolves the tribal culture of its distinctive vitality and identity by oppressive forces. Devi is a concerned and committed social activist writer who has documented in her writings tribal oppression and ways to liberate themselves. “Aajir” shows the emergence of individual heroes to liberate the tribals. “Water”, *Titu Mir* and *Chotti Munda and his Arrow* show collective revolt to end tribal afflictions. *Bortica* edited by Devi triggers the tribal contributors of articles to reflect on their problems and intellectually resolve issues. Devi suggests samithis as an alternative to Government machinery for effectively implementing welfare programmes meant for the tribals.

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Identifying Self in Margaret Atwood's *The Journals Of Susanna Moodie*

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| Ms. J. Augustina Ph.D. Research Scholar Seethalakshmi Achi College for Women Pallathur, Alagappa University, Karaikudi | Dr. B. Kavitha Assistant Professor, Research Supervisor Seethalakshmi Achi College for Women Pallathur, Alagappa University, Karaikudi |
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Abstract

The basic Self and Other binary make sense in which one can see another person and recognizes that individual is separated both physically and mentally, then one can understand that the separate person is not the Self, is the Other. Susanna Moodie, an English settler, walks self-consciously and diffidently into the new place where she seems to be in out of place: "I am a word / in a foreign language". Every immigrant becomes as Other in their new land. This paper focusses on Moodie 's physical and mental experience in her new land discussed by Atwood in *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*. She is entangled with the Canadian wilderness, civilization, language and culture. Though she creates her "self", she fails in that and become as Other to her new land. The Other is a state of being different from and alien to the social identity of the self. According to Atwood, Moodie's doubleness persists in all Canadians who came as immigrants to Canada (a marginalised country). In short, this paper attempts to convey how Mrs. Moodie identifies her "self" in Other.

Keywords: Margaret Atwood, *The Journals Of Susanna Moodie*, identification of self, other, immigrants, identity.

Introduction

Margaret Atwood, a prolific Canadian Writer is a leading Canadian Poet, Short Story Writer, Novelist and Critic. Her contribution in Canadian literature is enormous. She is the recipient of President's Award, Governor General Award, won the first prize at the Centennial Commission Poetry, Union Poetry Prize and Booker Prize in 2000 for her novel, *The Blind Assassin* and again her name is on the longlist of this year's 2019 Booker Prize for the work *The Testaments*.

In Atwood's writing one can witness the experience of victimization, belittlement and subordination which bring forth in their wake, concomitant reaction of pain, rage and rebellion. The women in Atwood's poetry are very articulate than the women in her fiction. This Paper articulates the journey of 'Self' through the character Mrs. Moodie, a European immigrant.

Atwood through her characterisation of Susanna Moodie focusses the reader attention on the double alienation of woman from her own self and society. *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* is divided into three journals. *The First Journal* (1832-1840) describes Mrs. Moodie's arrival at Quebec and her life in the wilderness. The Second Journal (1840-1871) gives an account of Mrs. Moodie's Psychological degeneration and bereavement. The Third Journal (1871-1969) encounter

her descent into old age, her enfeeblement and her visit to the Toronto lunatic asylum and her solipsist fantasies as a dying woman.

Discussion and Interpretation

The poem "Disembarking at Quebec" illustrates Mrs. Moodie's hardship experiences after her disembarkation at Quebec, a French speaking province in eastern Canada. She finds herself as an inappropriate person who is standing in Canada like her "incongruous pink" of her shawl. She finds desolated in that place where the environment and weather look wilderness to her. "It is my own lack/ of conviction which makes these visitors of desolation/ long hills, the swamps, the barren sand, the glare/ of sun on the bone-white drift logs, omens of winter/ the moon alien daytime a thin refusal". (54). K.S Vaishali in her *Prisoning Rhythms: A Study of Margaret Atwood's Poetry*, "Wrinkled as a pickled Baby": In search of the Alternative self," reiterates that, If 'self' can be conceived as a construction of language (42), the woman is "a word in a foreign language." (DQ 54). August Fry in his comparison of Canadian and American literature, he states that the meaning aspects of native in "...Canada was more extreme, more inimical to man and to settlement..." (qtd. in Dick Harrison 72).

Moodie says that they have entered into the "darkness of their own ignorance." She adds that "We left behind one by one/ the cities rotting with cholera, / one by one our civilized/ distinctions//and entered a large darkness. // It was our own/ ignorance we entered." She herself admits that she has not "come out yet" of her inner darkness. She groups in the night and "demands lamps" the artificial light of society to see her way but she is aware of that she needs, "Wolf's eyes to see the truth." "My brain gropes nervous/ tentacles in the night sends out/ fears hairy as bears, / demands lamps; or waiting/ for my shadowy husband, bears/ malice in the trees' whispers/ I need Wolf's eyes to see/ the truth." She realises that "Whether the wilderness is/ real or not/depends on who lives there." (FA 55). Susanna finds uncertain of her place and also refuses to look into her inner self.

In the poem 'First Neighbours' Moodie tries to adjust herself in the new land and gets used to be a "minor invalid." The language and the dialect sound strange to her ears, but still she manages to communicate with useless features to express herself:

The people I live among, unforgivingly
previous to me, grudging
the way I breathe their
property, the air,
speaking a twisted dialect to my differently –
shaped ears
though I tried to adapt. (56).

Moodie "got used to being/ a minor invalid, expected to make/ inept remarks/ futile and spastic gestures". She is eventually successfully to find out from a Red Indian that the "... Squat

thing on a stick/ drying by the fire: Is that a toad?" Later she finds it is a deer liver. Moodie's psychic entrapment in fear is the outcome of her "loss of subjectivity." In due course of time Moodie grew a "Chapped tarpaulin skin" which acts as a protective layer for both physical and her psyche. These lines state her loss of self in other. She is also aware that "the forest can still trick" her and so she also records this as a problem of language with its strange meaning to negotiate: "in this area where my damaged/ knowing of the language means/ prediction is forever impossible." (56, 57). She feels as if she is entrapped into the darkness which represents her loss of self. She is "... surrounded, stormed, broken/ in upon by branches, roots, tendrils, the dark/ side of light/ as I am." (TP 58). Even though, Moodie tries hard to fit into her new land she fails in her attempt because of the sense of alienation, displacement and her mental agony which torments her about losing her "self".

Atwood tries to defend the mind and body of Mrs. Moodie from alienation and oppression. But Moodie utters that, "I am watched like an invader." (PT 60). Though she longs for the rebirth into wholeness she finds that, "... (bits / of surface broken by my foot/ step) will without moving move/ around me/ into its place. She develops a fear that her own identity seems to be alienated than her husband with whom, "she walks in the frosted field/ and, a concept/ defined against a blank;/ he swerves, enters the forest/ is blotted out". (W 58).

Moodie feels that her 'shadowy' husband may change into a German. She finds very difficult to exist for herself. Her "self" makes her to feel even more alienated and experience the sense of self-disintegration. She thinks about her husband. Later, Moodie questions herself after the arrival of her husband whether, "He may change me also/ with the fox eye, the owl/eye, the eightfold / eye of the spider. Moodie unable to predict anything sits with fear about her transformation: I can't think/ what he will see/ when he opens the door." (W 58, 59). She finds that she is alienated whereas her husband has changed as a man. Dick Harrison, says that Mrs. Moodie finds her hardship aggravated because of "the discontinuity of accepted civilized patterns of life." Moodie finds her skin thickened/ with bark." She also utters that her, "heirloom face" has become a "crushed eggshell." She is unable to reconcile herself to her body which is badly disfigured:

Hands grown stiff, the fingers
brittle as twigs
eyes bewildered after
seven years,
.....
only the wind
the mouth cracking
open like a rock in fire. (LM 62).

Moodie has made an attempt to the transformation which was alien to her. She changed her heirloom face, language and form but still she feels alienated and losing her self. She concludes her sense of pain by stating:

(you find only
 the shape you already are
 but what
 if you have forgotten that
 or discover you
 have never known. (63)

Though she tries to fuse with her encounters she feels that her “self” has been consumed by other but, “There was something they almost taught me/ I came away not having learned”. She couldn't learn anything from that land because she is unwilling to transform her ‘self’ to the new land. Immigrants finds very difficult to adjust themselves in the new land because of their unwillingness to change their order in the new land. They expect that land to change its nature which is impossible. Likewise, Moodie who is unwilling to change recognizes “...each danger/becomes a haven.” (TW 61). The danger has compelled her to accept the wilderness and the fires have left charred marks/now around which I/try to grow". (61)

Moodie understands that her transformation is partial because she still has the fear of the land and of the animals; “I was frightened/by their eyes (green or/amber) glowing out from inside me". She has not “come out yet” of the darkness and also, she acclaims that: “I was not completed; at night/ I could not see without lanterns” (DB 64).

In *Journal II* (1840-1871) Moodie finds hard to acquaint with her new insights in the new land, and, gradually she accepts the changes and moves on. Atwood tries to create a change within Moodie in the opening poem, “Death of a Young Son by Drowning”. Moodie losing her son looks bereaved. She reiterates that at first, she didn't have any connection with this land, but her son's death has made a link with this land. “... the land I floated on/but could not touch to claim.” But after the death of her son didn't feel slid on the bank/ the currents took him;/ he swirled with ice and trees in the swollen water / and plunged into distant regions.” After he drowned, he made a connection with this land, “he was hung in the river like a heart.” She “planted him in this country/like a flag”, (65, 66) which shows the acceptance and claiming of new land by Moodie.

Moodie changed her mind and ended her dream about returning to England. This drastic change occurred in Moodie after her son's death. She gradually realises that the idea of returning to her old country is shattered. She understands that old country's order cannot be implemented in the new land, instead it is from here she must find her own Self:

the old countries recede, become
 perfect, thumbnail castles preserved
 like gall stones in a glass bottle, the
 towns dwindle upon the hillsides
 in a light paperweight-clear.” (I 66)

After the momentary of confusion disappears, she is prepared to respond to the landscape positively:

I shook my head. There were no clouds, the flowers
 deep red and feathered, short from among
 the dry stones,
 the air
 was about to tell me
 all kinds of answers (78)

In the poem, “Solipsism while dying”, she creates her ‘self’, “... lying in the bed/being regretted//added: what will they do now/that I, that all/depending on me disappears?”.

She confesses in the poems, “Thoughts from underground”, “A bus along St. Clair: December”, that the country which she hated : “When I first reached this country/ I hated it”, but later it has become as her kingdom, “ It would take more than that to banish/ me: this is my kingdom still.” (80, 83).

Conclusion

Susanna Moodie's life in Canada reveals that she was stuck on to the Canadian wilderness when she landed with her own reason and civilised culture, she lost the connectivity with the land. As a result, she undergoes alienation and geographical displacement. When she started to transform her “Self”, she gained harmony both physically and psychologically. Atwood through this poem explores the self which is embedded within Susanna Moodie.

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Marginalization and Social Media

R. Avinash
M.A. English
Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai – 625021

Abstract

This research article sheds lights on the concept of marginality in the life of youths. Social media is the emerging power among adolescents and youth adults. The role and function of the social media in the life of the youths have socially marginalized them. Youths have faced many different types of challenges than their mainstream peers. The outcome of these situations brings the serious obstacles among their friendships and relationships. It is important to explore the significance of relationships during adolescence and adulthood. Emerging adulthood is defined as the period of development where there is “relative independence from social roles and normative expectations. Analysis on social media and relationships perfectly represent the experiences of youth who have experienced social marginalisation. Many themes emerged after the analysis. Themes included positive and negative influences, awareness of risks, suggestions, and also break-Ups. Conclusions provide the information and an understanding about how youth experiencing marginalization by social media and how suggestions and counselling can be developed to suit their mental health needs and concerns.

Keywords: Social Media, Marginalization, Youth, Relationships, Emerging Adults and Social Networking.

Twenty-first century born with a lot of inventions in the field of communication or it is called a ‘Satellite World’. The wide range of communication and social media has placed its existence in this world. In the past ten years social media and communication technology live in the lives of adolescents and young adults. There is profusion in the life of the young people. A wide change in the lifestyle, difficulties and experiences faced by the youth and it socially marginalized them. There is need for counsellors, researchers, and mental health professionals to better understand this process as there are many challenges and also essential benefits associated with social media which are unique from the experiences of their mainstream peers. These youth often face different obstacles, than their mainstream peers when it comes to the development and outcomes of their relationships. Therefore, a need for scrutiny of these experiences of youth, considering the broader landscape of rapidly developing communication technologies and the general discussion of the social media’s impact on young psychological prosperity. Social media has been defined as “*Digital platform that facilitate information sharing user-created content and collaboration across people*” (McFarland 2015 p.1654).

The whole mobile based technologies developed the distribution of digital contents and communication (i.e. photos, texts, videos, messages, texts, memes, emails etc.). SNS social networking sites are varying types of social media platforms. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snap chat, and micro blogging sites like twitter and tumbler are the varying social media. Boyd and Ellison defined SNS as, “*It allows the people to create their own public profile which makes a system*”. Privacy setting helps the people to secure their profile and also their data. Use of social media among young people and adolescents became omnipresent. There are around 3.010 billion internet users in the world and the estimated global internet penetration is 42% as compared to 84.2% in US.

Internet usage in India has exceeded half a billion people for first time, pegged at 566 million, driven by rural internet growth and usage. The report found that 97% of users use mobile phones as one of the devices to access internet. It is now estimated that there are 251 million internet users in rural India, and this is expected to reach 290 million by the end of 2019. The portion of young people aged (15-24) using the internet, (71%) is significantly higher than the proportion of the total population using the internet (48%) young people represent almost one-fourth of the total number of individuals using the internet worldwide. If an individual not using any social media, it is virtually impossible. There have been mixed feelings about these networks which created an impact in the lives of youth. It has both positive and negative impacts in their life. Social media has reduced the world to a global village, as youth can interact with people from other parts of the earth by just a click of the button. Young people share their ideas, collect information, make new friends and maintain their old friends.

Social media is also an avenue that they can use to showcase their talents. Even they can run business through social media. As it is a cheaper means of communication, it is just internet bandwidth and users can communicate virtually with anyone on the earth. It made possible to from anywhere on the earth.

On the flip side, the internet is growing as an unregulated world that has no moral or laws. Young people are exposed to gore images of murder victims, rape cases, and video footages of gun shootings, violence, nudism, and explicit sexual content. These kinds of content are among young people and when it is consumed for a long time it can lead to serious mental breakdowns. They will start having anxiety attacks and fear of the world. Everything they see is registered in their minds and they predict and believe that the world is a bad place to live in.

Dr. Uma S. Singh in the book *Social Media and Indian Youth* has detailed that majority people spend their time using social media. The addiction can be seen mostly in boys more than the girls. Half the teenagers use social media daily about two hours a day checking their profiles in the networking sites and the participation mostly takes place between 9pm-10pm. They update their profiles regularly and this shows that such activities will stimulate the neurological problem; it shows their addiction and indulgence in social media. The interrupt of the sleep pattern and several health issues would start causing trouble to them. Often people are busy with their phones

and they won't talk to each other, but they stare at their phones. Mostly youths are spending their time with their social media friends than with their families, friends and loved ones. Every day they wake up they check up their social media accounts. Due to sleepless nights they have too many distractions that they cannot concentrate on their day to day activities in their lives. If we take away social media for a day and the effects will start to kick in, like drug addicts they will be moved to the darker side of their life. They feel as if they are severely marginalized.

People now a day's obsessed with getting likes and comments for their posts in the social media. Some people adopt fake profile and misuse other user's profile, collecting data, photos, and videos. Discovery of applications increases day by day. People who love taking photos and posting in the social media use many different kinds of apps like Beauty plus, B612, YouCam Perfect, etc. Some apps receive data from the user's phones, and it would be backed up in the app creator's data. There might be chance to rob primary photos and videos from the users mobile through these kinds of apps.

Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. According to WHO in the year 2019, approximately 1.53 million people die by committing suicide. There is a great change in the behaviour of the teenagers. They are desensitized to the mental and emotional issues. The First social media suicide in Paris is on Tuesday 29 Aug 2017, a teenager in a dreary suburb of Paris live-streamed her own suicide. Oceane Ebem, an eighteen year teenager from Paris, explicitly said, "I want to communicate a message, and I want it to be passed around, even if it's very shocking" (The Guardian, Rana Dasgupta). Another risk that has been more prevalent over the years been suicide challenges from different "games" such as 'momo', 'the blue whale challenge'.

People who are excluded from the society and also from resources, they need to participate equally as others do in the society. People who are bounded with social media have excluded themselves from other resources. Young people they make themselves to be as slaves to their mobiles and mostly they are thinking about their posts. Sharing posts and spreading news are necessary but also they have to participate in all resources in the society. In recent time tik-tok becomes most popular among the people, and young people have been addicted to that spending most of the time in dubs mashing. The main thing behind all these things is that they look forward for the fame to become famous. It is also same in the case of 'Oceane Ebem'. People who use these kinds of apps in wrong way have lost their respect in the society. Though social media is beneficial in many other ways, it becomes a great barrier to the young people now on its flip side. The term to '*marginalize*' is define by Merriam Webster dictionary "to put or keep someone in a powerless or unimportant position within a society or a group.(Merriam Webster 2016).in the review of the literature the social media can enhance belonging, identity development and psychosocial wellbeing, but at the same time young people are exposed to the negative outcomes. A study says that Facebook makes the young people lonelier, but another says that makes them more socially connected. There are many problems which have been aroused by Facebook.

Adolescent is a time of change in social and relational areas of life. There is a relative from social roles and from normative expectations. Youth have to know their roles in this society and should be responsible to everything. Spending more time with family, friends, is more significant than spending their time chatting with the social media friends. Using phone in night time increases many serious issues both physically and mentally and also it reduces the concentration power. Social media has both positive and negative faces; we should be aware of the risks in the social media and should be in control in everything. Many sites are there to hack our data and we should shield ourselves from these kinds of sites. The worst thing now a day is that if a person is met with accident some people use to take photos rather than helping him. Saving a human life is more important than getting more like and comments to our posts. We should know how to use social media and make use of it for education and for many purposes.

A wide range of communication has both positive side and negative side. We have seen many people losing their mental health, good conduct, and also humanity. There are many impacts on using social media in a wrong way, the breakdown of relationships; excluding us from society, loss of humanity, loss of mental health are the worst results of social media. Saving our relationships and spending time with our beloved ones is most significant. We should use social media in the perfect manner, using the knife in the perfect way is the right thing. We have to look before we leap.

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Bulawayo NoViolet's Vision of Otherness in *We Need New Names*

Dr. (Mrs.) G. Beulah, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Sri Meenakshi Govt. Arts College for Women (A)

Madurai 625002

Tamilnadu, India

beulahbeatrice11@gmail.com

Abstract

The term “Otherness” is used by the cultural theorist Edward W Said to notify the condition of the minority group with different culture and belief from the mainstream, completely alien to the social apprehension, giving way to social and racial exclusion with the label of subordination and marginalization from the rest of the society. Darling is used as a voice to depict the subordination of the African community which is alienated and separated from the mainstream with its social, racial, and economical subjugation in *We Need New Names*.

Bulawayo purposefully uses “Displacement” as a key term to integrate with Postcolonial theory which applies to all migrant situations. It refers both to physical displacement and a sense of being socially or culturally “out of place”. Darling’s migration to America is associated with an acute sense of dislocation that is rendered analogous to the destruction of her embodied self. The innocent children the “other” and the victims are displaced, dislocated, and dominated distinctly in the novel. Things are stolen from them: their happiness, freedom, individuality, their community living, and their future as they are considered the “other” the insignificant living beings. This situation to be changed as the whole world is moving towards multiculturalism, globalization, and uni-culturalism.

Keywords: Bulawayo NoViolet, *We Need New Names*, Otherness, subjugation, displacement, migration, dislocation.

Introduction

African Literature has many notable writers focusing on issues such as black community, black people’s suffering, and displacement as slaves, double consciousness, colour line, racism, negritude, and subaltern. African literature is enriched with the upcoming of numerous women writers to produce works portraying the reality of the African society, women condition, displacement, rootlessness, identity, feminist view upon the society and so on. Bessie Head, Nadaine Gordimer, Aminatta Forna, Buchi Emecheta, Nawal El Saadawi, Margaret Busby, NoViolet Bulawayo, and Doreen Baingana are some notable African women writers in the current scenario. *We Need New Names* was included in the 2013 Man Booker Prize, making Bulawayo the first black African woman and the first Zimbabwean to be shortlisted for the Priza. Bulawayo sat on the board of trustees of the Pan-African literary initiative Writivism between 2014 and 2018. *Snapshots* by Bulawayo published in *New Writing from Africa 2009*. *Hitting Budapest* was published in *Boston Review* and *The Caine Prize for African Writing 2011*.

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Prof. Dr. S. Chelliah, Editor: Select Papers of the International Conference on *Paradigms of Marginality in Literature - Exploring the Nuances*

Discussion

Paradise is a fictitious city that Darling and many others were forced by the government to live in after their homes were destroyed. Bulawayo could have chosen a real village in Zimbabwe or named Paradise something like “tin-shack Ville” but chose to use indirection with associating a village of poverty with a synonym for heaven. In naming Paradise as Darling’s land Bulawayo summons the reader to see this space as home and a form of paradise its own to entire Darling. *We Need New Names* opens up the door to discuss and see a side of Zimbabwean history, not through the lens of the media or Western textbooks, and to read an experience of a girl who, at times, painfully finds a voice and identity in a Western sphere who just thinks “she’s another girl from poor Africa”.

The term “Otherness” is used by the cultural theorist Edward W Said to notify the condition of the minority group with different culture and belief from the mainstream, completely alien to the social apprehension, giving way to social and racial exclusion with the label of subordination and marginalization from the rest of the society. The representation of Zimbabwe depicted in the novel does address the topic of Othering through the names used to describe the economic, social, and historical aspects of Zimbabwe. Darling is used as a voice to depict the subordination of the African community which is alienated and separated from the mainstream with its social, racial, and economical subjugation. As Edward Said in the discourse of “Orientalism” discussing the Western oppression that “an absolute distinction being made between the dominant colonizing West and other peoples or ‘underground selves’ not only ‘Orientals’ as such, but also Africans...” (Waugh 351).

Bulawayo purposefully uses “Displacement” as a key term to integrate with Postcolonial theory which applies to all migrant situations. It refers both to physical displacement and a sense of being socially or culturally “out of place.” In literature of second generation migrants, a location “between” two cultures, sometimes called an “interstitial” space. This is often mentioned as a way of expressing a sense of belonging in neither the guest nor the host community. Those whose experience has been more positive may reject the notion of “between” and feel that they live, rather, in the cultural overlap, not a void but a place of particular richness. The world as a global village is both multi-ethnic and multi-cultural and so Africans have to compromise neither their ethnicity nor their cultural values to belong to the cosmopolitan society of the modern world. In fact, African festivals and diasporic gatherings are increasingly getting highlighted in the West. Bulawayo portrays the diasporic experience through the central character, Darling to highlight the concept of subjectification to pour out the sufferings and hardships of the subaltern woman in America.

The binary opposition employed in terms of class, gender, ethnicity, and race on a dichotomy, the representation of opposing the value of “self” defining with norms and significant discriminations in lieu with feminism, Marxism, and Postcolonialism. Patricia Collins observes that “even though Black women intellectuals have long expressed a unique feminist consciousness about the intersection of race and class in structuring gender, historically we have

not been full participants in white feminist organizations” (7). Black women can never become part of “white feminist organization.” When Women are sidelined as “Others” because of gender dominations, what is the condition of the children belonging to the subaltern? The condition must be worse than the former. Gayatri Spivak talks about “subaltern” the synonymous term to highlight the oppressed state of the Orientals. Spivak in *Can the Subaltern Speak?* strongly proclaims that “everybody thinks the subaltern is just a classy word for oppressed, for other, for somebody who’s not getting a piece of the pie...in postcolonial terms, everything has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism-a space of difference” (45). Bulawayo’s Darling undergoes such immigrant identity while living in America as “she’s another girl from poor Africa” after leaving her native place Paradise forcefully.

Interpretation

Darling migrated to the United States of America not on her own interest but on the external force by abducting her place and bulldozing their home at Budapest with the low economic and social condition which lead Zimbabwe went through a desperate political and economic turmoil. The children “ate like pigs, like wolves, like dignitaries” and “ate like vultures, like stray dogs, like monsters” as they ate for all their past hunger, for their parents and brothers and sisters and relatives and friends who were still back there” and they “uttered their names between mouthfuls, conjured up their hungry faces and chapped lips” and when they “carried” their “dense bodies with the dignity of elephants” in America (Bulawayo 239). Darling and her friend undergo the hardships on their displacement and the want of food and other resources which are the real challenges to lead their lives. As she reached Washington, she could not tolerate the kind of treatment she received from her friends:

When I first arrived at Washington I just wanted to die. The others kids teased me about my name, my accent, my hair, the way I talked or said things...When you are being teased about something, at first you try to fix it so the teasing can stop but then those crazy kids teased me about everything, even things I couldn’t change... I felt wrong in my skin, in my body, in my clothes in my language, in my head, everything. (Bulawayo 165)

Darling’s eleven year old friend Chipso, the victim of gender violence screamed “he did that, my grandfather...my grandfather was there and got on me and pinned me down like that and he clamped a hand over my mouth and was heavy like a mountain” (42-43). She was raped by her grandfather and became pregnant, the postcolonial problem of gender violence “between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but onto a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the “third-world woman” (Spivak 102). The innocent children wanted to “get rid of her stomach” and her announcement puts an end “once for all” (80) with their own tricks avoiding the elders though frightened to do that due to the message overheard that the village woman had died as she delivered a baby. While the process was going on they got their new

names so as to act as people belonging to America with their transformation to do the operation. Boehmer explains how “colonized peoples were represented as lesser: less human, less civilized, as child or savage, wild man, animal, or headless mass” (Boehmer 76). Bulawayo challenges these images of colonized people by presenting the need for new name or identity. Finally, it was Motherlove who came to the rescue of the innocent children and their activities.

Conclusion

Darling’s migration to America is associated with an acute sense of dislocation that is rendered analogous to the destruction of her embodied self. This is topographically represented by the chapter title ‘DESTROYEDMICHYGEN’, deliberately misspelt M-I-C-H-Y-G-E-N with the two words literally smashed together. Their political and social status is nullified by the colonial power as they are crushed in their buds. It is an endless battle between the colonizer and the colonized though amendments have been passed and developments have been attained. As many of the African families, Darling's family is a fractured: more confusing things - her mother is home infrequently, her father has not come home in years, and her aunt and cousin moved to America long ago to lead a life which Darling can only imagine. There are many Darlings in the country who are left without any support. The innocent children, the “other” and the victims are displaced, dislocated, and dominated distinctly in the novel. Things are stolen from them: their happiness, freedom, individuality, their community living, and their future as they are considered the “other” the insignificant living beings. They don’t have proper parenting in shaping their personality. What kind of justification we have when Darling says that she wants to die as the others kids teased her about her name, her accent, her hair, the way she talks or says things and she feels wrong in her skin, in her body, in her clothes in her language, in her head, everything. This situation to be changed as the whole world is moving towards multiculturalism, globalization, and uni-culturalism.

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An Introspection of Struggle and Threat to India Indigenous people in Sujatha Gidla's *Ant among Elephants*

Dr. S. Bharathiraja

Assistant Professor & Head (i/c)

Department of English

Vivekananda College

Tiruvedakam West

Madurai, Tamil Nadu – 625234

bharathieng@yahoo.co.in

Contact No: 8870518474

Abstract

This paper attempts to apply Diaspora and Indigenous life theories to look at the work of Aboriginal/Dalit writer: Sujatha Gidla. It also explores how complexities of discriminations and Aboriginal/Dalit's struggles representation may be analysed by viewing untouchables as members of intra-national diasporas, with the mission sites being fashioned as diaspora spaces. Sujatha Gidla whose recent memoir, *Ant among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and The Making of Modern India*, speaks of her life and her family and the plight of 300 million Dalits. *Ant among Elephants* is the memoir of an Indian woman who was born a so-called untouchable, and now works as a conductor on the New York City Subway.

Gidla's story is one of personal struggle and a certain freedom she has found in America today. She writes that caste is an accursed state in India, especially for Dalits: "Your life is your caste, your caste is your life." With her memoir, Gidla joins the ranks of India's many aboriginal writers who are telling stories to be heard and counted in a system that seeks to keep them down by tradition. Gidla hails from the Dalit community of Kazipet, a small town in southern Telangana state, India

Keywords: Sujatha Gidla, *Ant among Elephants*, Dalit Diaspora, Memoir of a Modern Dalit Indian-American

Introduction

This paper attempts to apply Diaspora and Indigenous life theories to look at the work of Aboriginal/Dalit writer: Sujatha Gidla. It also explores how complexities of discriminations and Aboriginal/Dalit's struggles representation may be analysed by viewing untouchables as members of intra-national diasporas, with the mission sites being fashioned as diaspora spaces. Sujatha Gidla whose recent memoir, *Ant among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and The Making of Modern India*, speaks of her life and her family and the plight of 300 million Aboriginal/Dalit. *Ant among*

Elephants (AaE) is the memoir of an Indian woman who was born a so-called untouchable, and now works as a conductor on the New York City Subway.

Gidla's story is one of personal struggles and a certain freedom she has found in America today. She writes that caste is an accursed state in India, especially for Aboriginal/Dalit: “Your life is your caste, your caste is your life.” With her memoir, Gidla joins the ranks of India’s many aboriginal writers who are telling stories to be heard and counted in a system that seeks to keep them down by tradition. Gidla hails from the Aboriginal/Dalit community of Kazipet, a small town in southern Telangana state, India

Background wrongly Projected

Sujatha Gidla was brought up in Elwin Peta in Kakinada, AP. Her family was an aboriginal of south India. But later she was branded as Dalit. All around her was suffering in abject poverty. When you are surrounded by so much misery, you don’t see it as anything extraordinary. She remembers when one of her friends in the neighbourhood told her that she’d had roast venison (meat of deer) for dinner three days in a row. She laughed along with her, knowing that was her ironic way of saying she’d gone without eating. “I was thinking of the joke she was making and not that some people don’t have anything to eat” (AaE 25).

Childhood Haunting

Yet two things Sujatha Gidla witnessed when she was seven or eight years old especially horrified me. Whenever she thought of Elwin Peta, these moments come back to her. They will haunt her until she dies. A woman named Santhosamma with her two gaunt teenage sons lived across the street from our house under a thatch supported by four posts. She was only in her late thirties or early forties, but her body was so ravaged by starvation that she couldn’t walk anymore. She lay on rags under the thatch, moaning day and night, hungry and in pain. One day she just wanted something to eat.

My mother would hire another woman, named Ruthamma, to do chores in our house. She was washing dishes in a bucket on the kitchen floor. It was the day after Christmas. We could afford apples only at Christmas. A couple of apples for the whole family. Ruthamma looked at the piece of apple in my hand with such a stupid, lustful grin, salivating openly, that she could not eat it anymore. she knew that Ruthamma had never in her life tasted an apple. “Experiences like this made me wish there were no poor people in the world. But how could that be achieved?” (AaE 25).

Sujatha Gidla heard about her uncle (K.G. Satyamurthy - protagonist of this work) and Carey through my mother. She tells us he had sacrificed everything, left his family, and gone off to help the poor. How did he help them? He had a gun. He would threaten rich people, take their money, and give it to those who had nothing. Her uncle was like a cinema hero to me. She wanted

so much to be like him. But we were never going to see him, my mother said, because the police were secretly watching our house. If he tried to visit us, he would be arrested and put in jail. All this made my uncle seem like a mysterious star shining in the sky high above:

K G Satyamurthy, a Maoist ideologue and one of the founders of the People's War Group (PWG), died in Andhra Pradesh's Krishna district on Tuesday. He was 84. Satyamurthy, a Dalit leader and a revolutionary Telugu writer and poet, died after prolonged illness at Kandulapadu of G. Kondur mandal in the district, about 350 km from here. He is survived by two sons and two daughters. Several sympathisers of the Maoist movement and poets, writers and artists are expected to participate in his last rites on Wednesday. He was one of the founders of the Communist Party of India-Marxist Leninist (CPI-ML), popularly known as the PWG. The outfit merged with the Maoist Communist Centre in 2004 to form the Communist Party of India-Maoist.

He was teaching English at Fatima School in Warangal in the late 1960s when he met Kondapalli Seetharamaiah, a Hindi teacher at the same school. The duo joined the Maoist movement in the 1970s but were unhappy with the mainstream Marxist parties. In 1984, they together founded the PWG. Using the pen name Shiv Sagar, Satyamurthy wrote poetry and visited villages to organise squads. Popularly known as SM in PWG ranks, he played a key role in building the outfit. Hailing from Mala caste, he fought against casteism and worked hard for social equality. Following differences with Seetharamaiah and other leaders, he later came out of the PWG. He criticised the domination of the upper caste leaders in the outfit. (Sharma. AP)

Sujatha's mother also told us that he never kept any of the money that he took for himself. He lived a hard life in the jungles. K G Satyamurthy said, "I practiced sleeping on the bare cement floor to prepare myself for the future when I'd have to sleep on the hard ground. I told my friends that I was going to be a Naxalite when I grew up" (AaE 25). One summer afternoon when her mother was fourteen years old, she was riding my bicycle home from my maths tutor's house when she spotted a group of teenagers singing to a small crowd gathered on a street corner. Fascinated, she got off my bicycle. There were singing about poor peasants and workers, how unjust it is that they suffer from want because they are the ones producing the wealth, not the owners of the land and the factories. Never had she heard a song like this before. "Come on peasant brothers," they sang, "come on, all you exploited and impoverished, join the party of the peasants and the poor and let us all stands up to the landlords.

Struggle and Threat

Sujatha became a radical – a member of the Radical Students Union (RUS), the student wing of the People's War Group (PWG). She joined a street-theatre group and was singing about

unemployment, corruption, and the evils of the education system. As an American, she remembered the evil of education in India. After sometimes, supporters of PWG were arrested, and she heard of comrades being shot dead, including many students.

When Sujatha was nineteen, she was doing her master's programme at the Regional Engineering College in Warangal. She was humiliated by an upper-caste professor in the Electronics Engineering. The professor made failing his low-caste students. The students led a strike, but police arrested the low-caste students and workers in the REC. She was tortured and beaten. Later, she faced a different house arrest- no-one talked to her. Sujatha Gidla's family was entirely socially ostracized though her parents were college lecturers. Her sister Anitha also suffered. SM was a legend in the districts of Guntur and Ongole. She finished this *Ants among Elephants* and found her uncle's death on April 2012.

Satyamurthy enrolled in AC College in 1948. On 30th January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was shot by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). But Satyamurthy felt respect for Gandhi. On 13 September 1948, the Indian Army undertook a direct invasion of Hyderabad and Nizam had been disposed. The 224 year old dynasty was overthrown:

In college Satyam became more self-conscious of his caste, but he was a Communist now. As a Communist one was supposed to think only in terms of class and not of caste. When the class struggle was won, discrimination based on caste would disappear. As a Communist, Satyam saw himself as an uplifter of untouchable, not as an untouchable fighting for his own rights. He would continue to take his attitude as long as he remained in the movement. (63)

Satyam had no money to buy books and pay exam fee. Manikya Rao and Hanumayya helped him study and joining Communists Party. Canadian Baptist Missionaries helped the untouchables and educated them. He is from have-nots – the Untouchable-Christian-Communist. Satyam was influenced by social ideologies and literature. His family members are Prasanna Rao (father), Papa (Manjula), Carey, and Marthamma. They lived in Gudivada, Telaprolu villages. Telaprolu is dominated by the landlord caste of Reddys. In 1950s, as soon as the British left India, the power was transferred to the upper caste people. In this village, Satyam joined with his family after college study. By the time he arrived in the village, the communists had all gone underground.

Papa (Manjula) was studying eighth-class. Sujatha Gidla viewed India from USA, "She memorized textbooks, "That's all it takes in India to do well in school, just memorize everything" (97). The first general elections were held at the end of 1951. Nehru was elected and he came to Guntur.

Conclusion

Sujatha Gidla whose recent memoir, *Ants among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and The Making of Modern India*,” speaks of her life and her family and the plight of 300 million Dalits. Gidla who was born a so-called untouchable, and now she works as a conductor on the New York City Subway, USA. By birth, she was brought up in Elwin Peta in Kakinada, AP and hailed from the Dalit community of Kazipet, a small town in southern Telangana state, India. It is true that every Dalit should bring their life suffering to the world. Vasant’s memoir displayed his growth, and his struggle for education and his existential survival. He narrated direct and authentic struggles. His autobiography has full of social message and urges the reader to undertake an ongoing struggle and consciousness of struggle, a consciousness that brings revolutionary changes in the social, cultural, and political realms. Poverty and caste oppression are being woven into autobiographies and show how economic and caste are devastating Dalit’s life. Oliver Mendelsohn and Marika Vicziany claim that “In many regions of India it is poverty rather than social oppression that presents itself as the principal disability of people from the Untouchables castes...” (11).

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Marginalisation Existing in Neo-liberalised India and the Attempts to Subvert the Power Structures: A Reading of the Tamil Movies *Aruvi* and *Super Deluxe*.

Bincy Sebastian, IInd year M.A. English Student, 181307
Newman College, Thodupuzha, Kerala, 685585

Abstract

As neoliberalism and globalisation crept into India, they created a chasm between the rich and the poor, the lower and upper castes. These chasms were gradually occupied by marginalisation which started to operate in different guises and at different levels through the various products of the Cultural Industry. The most effective way to represent the protests against these discriminations experienced by the lower and weaker stratum of the society, who leads a life of prosaic quality under the dreariness of the capitalistic society, is to use these same cultural products as a medium to propagate a counter discourse. Films, being the largest revenue earner in the country and as an important cultural presence, can be employed to voice these protests. This paper discusses the impacts made by two such movies namely, *Aruvi* (2017) directed by Arun Prabu Purushothaman and *Super Deluxe* (2019) directed by Thiagarajan Kumararaja.

Aruvi presents the existential angst of an individual who undergoes multiple levels of marginalisation as she suffers the stigma and the discrimination inflicted upon a HIV patient, along with the exploitations of the patriarchy.

The film *Super Deluxe* shows the society's contempt and disapproval towards sex workers and porn actresses and how they are ostracized as outcasts. The film also contests and deconstructs the "deify versus sluts" binary that exists in the modern society. Also, both these films show the class, caste and social stratification and how sexual differences are demonized by the modern society especially through the representation of transgender characters. This paper attempts to throw light on how both these films address the above mentioned aspects and tries to subvert the power structures and protests against marginalisation through the theoretical framework of Queer theory, Gender studies, Subaltern studies and Deconstructive reading.

Keywords: Tamil Movies *Aruvi* and *Super Deluxe*, Marginalisation, Cultural Industry, Existential Angst, Capitalistic Society, Outcasts, Gender studies, Subaltern studies, Deconstructive reading and Queer theory.

As India stepped into the era of neoliberalism and globalisation, the country witnessed a maelstrom of social changes in its various spheres. From outside these changes appear very progressive. The dominant groups exercise their power and spread their ideologies and politics of

“development for all”. However, whether the modern India was completely successful in achieving this development is a serious question to ponder. As in reality, the term ‘development’ remains confined to the upper stratum of the society and it excludes the people at the grass root level. Globalisation ended up increasing the economic disparities and the religious and cultural differences between people. Though the country has welcomed liberalisation and westernization, the old ideologies of power and inequality still exists in the lives and minds of the Indian people. The only difference from older times is that the power structures have adopted new modus operandi in order to continue marginalisation, discrimination and inequality in this country. In the midst of all these discouraging factors, it gives hope to know that the country is not completely devoid of voices that attempts to subvert the power structures and represent the unrepresented people who are pushed into various margins. This paper throws light into two such endeavours that were produced in the Tamil film industry, specifically in the movies *Aruvi* and *Super Deluxe*.

¹*Aruvi* (meaning stream) is a socio-political drama film, written and directed by Arun Purushothaman and was released on 15th December 2017. The film ²*Super Deluxe* was released on 29th March 2019. *Super Deluxe* is a neo-noir film which was co-written, co-produced and directed by Thiagarajan Kumararaja. Both the films portray marginalisation at multiple levels. In *Aruvi* the one-woman revolution cast out by the eponymous heroine represents the voice of not just women but the entire relegated sections of the society- the voice of the poor against the rich, the voice of the “ashamed” against the “pride” of the society - the voice of a stream (*Aruvi*) against the sea. As the name denotes “*Aruvi*” takes a different path to the tread- a stream that decides not to go with the flow of the society and thereby claiming its individual existence. Whereas *Super Deluxe* reveals the politicization of body, gender, religion and the false and follies of the society. Both the films portray the lives of the weaker sections of the society and the ‘outcasts’ that are devoid of the glamour and splendour of the socially privileged group. The TV show *Yours Truly* that is presented in the movie *Aruvi*, underlies the kind of problems and inequalities faced by the marginalised community in India. It presents a minor girl accusing her uncle for forcefully making her watch porn, a father crying about his son being maltreated at the school because of his caste, the sex workers and physically challenged being rejected by their families, the celebrity obsessions of the youth, a women asking whether she is a machine so as to work according to the demands of her husband, people who claim themselves as Gods, the incidents of honour killing and sexual abuse, the corruption in the government sectors and the hospitals, the suicide of famers and the final question that the students who graduates with marks, do they come out with alternative thinking that can promote social change?

¹ “*Aruvi*”. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/*Aruvi*. Accessed 27 July 2019.

² “*Super Deluxe*”. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/*Super_Deluxe*_(film). Accessed 26 July 2019.

The extensive influence of a particular idea, ³Antonio Gramsci argues, operated not through the brute application of force in nontotalitarian societies, but by consent- a tacit, unwritten agreement often passed off as conventional wisdom or common sense. This paper with the aid of Cultural studies, analyses how the consumeristic and capitalistic industry deceives the masses in India. It attempts to identify the exploitation of women and transgender using gender studies and feministic reading of the films. This paper with the help of the theory of Deconstruction attempts to find how these films subvert the ideologies of various power structures and protest against the different levels of marginalisation. According to Barbara Johnson: “The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion [generalized skepticism], but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself” (Johnson 173) The deconstruction of various binaries and social stigmas reveals that they are not natural and inevitable, but a construction made by the dominant group. It is a construction produced by a discourse that actually depends on it for its meaning. Deconstruction seeks to dismantle and re-inscribe it.

With globalisation, consumerism and new commodity patterns entered into the lives of the Indian people. The prosaic quality of life under the dreariness of capitalism, and how the capitalistic society exploits the poor and downtrodden is very well portrayed in both these films. The film *Aruvi*, begins by showing the happy moments that Aruvi spends with her family at her home in the countryside. Their life is closely related to nature and is characterised by simplicity and innocence. There she receives the warmth and love of her family and nature. The young Aruvi is reluctant to leave the countryside when her family decides to move to the city. Her father promises her, that the city has “the parks, beaches, the sand and everything” (*Aruvi* 00:06:51). However, the later part of the movie shows the hypocrisy and the deceptive mannerisms of the city life as the family shifts their home from the lap of the nature to the four walls of a flat. The lines of the song *Cement Kaadu* aptly describes the lives of the city dwellers, “with wheels on our feet, Blind folded with eyes wide open” “In this world of money life ceases to exist” (*Aruvi* 00:20:30-00:21:33). The products of Cultural Industry become the media operandi of ideologies that favour the existing status quo and it is through these products that the dominant group exercises their power on the masses. ⁴Adorno in his *Culture Industry Reconsidered* says that,

“the culture industry undeniably speculates on the conscious and unconscious state of the millions towards which it is directed, the masses are not primary, but secondary, they are an object of calculation; an appendage of the machinery. The

³Bayoumi, Moustafa, and Andrew Rubin. *The Edward Said Reader*. Vintage Book, 2000.

⁴ Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford University Press, 2000

customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object.” (Adorno 3)

Aruvi voices her protest and dislike towards the consumerism of the capitalistic society. She deconstructs the sentence, “to live happily in the society” revealing the vicious circle of consumerism and capitalism that entraps the masses and how the Culture Industry acts as an omnipresent phenomenon by saying that

“You can buy how much ever you want, and you are bound to buy them. You don’t have to think what you have to buy. Wherever you are, you are surrounded by TV, newspaper, radio, mobile, internet, roads that are filled with shops, and advertisements with ‘exciting offers that blow you away’. There is only one rule here and that is money. The society says that I will respect you only if you are rich. Or else you will not be respected, simple. Work wherever you want, snatch from anyone’s plate, flatter anyone, be a slave, be cruel, kill or coerce or rape anyone, fool as many people as you wish, run a multi crore. There is only one rule here and that is money.” (Aruvi 01:06:24-01:07:03)

Aruvi expresses the agony and existential angst of an individual being cheated physically, mentally and emotionally by this capitalistic society. When she is asked what is that she needs, she replies, that “Like in the Hollywood films, some bomber virus must destroy all humans” (Aruvi 01:01:11). The film also shows how the ⁵‘petrified relations’ and even the emotions of the people are transformed as commodities in order to increase the profit of the producers. In *Aruvi*, the TV show ‘Yours Truly’ is the best example to portray this. The show makes profit by triggering the emotions of people by making them believe that the sole concern of the show is to reveal the truth and provide solutions to their problems, when in reality their only concern is increasing the TRP rating of the show. As ⁶Adorno says, “The culture industry misuses its concern for the masses in order to duplicate, reinforce, and strengthen their mentality, which it presumes is given and unchangeable”. (Adorno 3)

Though the neo-liberalised India have favoured the women to join the huge working force, the dual responsibilities of preserving the sanctity of home and heart remains the responsibility of women. The Indian family can be viewed as a dystopic space where familial authority constructs the female gender and her subjectivity. The women characters in both the films, namely, *Aruvi*, *Vaambu*, *Jyothi* and *Leelea* reveal this aspect about the India families.

⁵ Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford University Press, 2000

⁶ Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford University Press, 2000

Aruvi exposes the exploitation and marginalization of women and AIDS patients while *Super Deluxe* deals with the plights of the modern Indian women.⁷ Amartya Sen in his work *The Argumentative Indian* describes gender inequality as,

“Inequality between women and men can appear in many different forms - it has many faces. Gender disparity is, in fact, not one affliction but a multitude of problems. Sometimes the different asymmetries are quite unrelated to each other. Indeed, there may be no significant inequality in one sphere but a great deal of inequality in another”

Aruvi approaches the TV show ‘Yours Truly’ demanding an apology from the three men who sexually abused her. The TV host describes Aruvi’s incident in the beginning of the show as “the 3 beasts who cheated an innocent and beautiful girl”. (*Aruvi* 00:44:13) However, as the show progresses, she makes the revelation that she is infected by HIV. This information changes the attitude of the host and other people towards her. The host describes Aruvi as a “girl” who has “tried to infect these men with the most dreaded disease of AIDS through her relationship with them” and calls her as “the cruel minded Aruvi”. (*Aruvi* 01:00:41)

Both the films effectively contest and deconstruct the⁸ ‘deify versus slut’ binary that exists in the modern Indian society. Similar to the⁹ ‘Angel in the house’ pointed out by Virginia Woolf, the patriarchy of India advocates deification. The Angel versus Monster binary that dominated the 19th Century literary imagination and lives of the women in the west, appears in a different guise in the neo-liberalised India and that is the ‘deify versus slut’ binary. This complex metaphor simply reflects not just the fierce nature of the patriarchy but also the underpinning of misogyny upon which that severe patriarchy has stood. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in their work¹⁰ *The Madwoman in the Attic* describes women as, “she becomes herself an embodiment of those extreme mysterious and intransigent otherness which culture confronts with worship or fear, love or loathing.” In the movie *Aruvi*’s childhood is presented through a song called *Kukkotti Kunaatti* (*Aruvi* 00:03:43-00:05:47) and a line in the song refers her as a ‘deity’. Later when the director of the TV show comments about her as, “logically, if she has been with three men, then she definitely is not a holy virgin”. (*Aruvi*00:47:58) Also the host asks Aruvi that “Why do you ask them to apologize as though you are a holy virgin.” To which she replies, “I

⁷ Sen, Amartya. *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity*. Penguin Books, 2005

⁸ Panicker, Joji John. *A Critique of the Psycho-Sexual Dimensions in Select Plays of Mahesh Dattani: A Queer Approach*. Gandhigram Rural University, 2009.

⁹ Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The woman writer and the Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination*. 2nd ed., Yale University Press, 2000.

¹⁰ Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The woman writer and the Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination*. 2nd ed., Yale University Press, 2000

don't trust in the concept of being a holy virgin...Instead of making these men apologize, you question a girl's chastity!" (*Aruvi* 01:03:25- 01:04:01)

The film *Super Deluxe* further problematizes the social notions regarding chastity through the representation of porn actresses who are ostracised by the mainstream society. In this film Leela works as a porn actress and she is the breadwinner of her family. When her son Soori gets to know about his mother's profession he becomes furious. In his rage he runs to kill his mother. Leela's husband also treat her with contempt and disgust. However, Leela deconstructs the stigma associated with her job when she says to her son that, "It's not a big crime. Like a Doctor or a driver, it's just another job. If there are millions who watch films like that, then obviously there will have to be at least a few actors. The world is okay with the people who watch porn. But it shames the actors" (*Super Deluxe* 02:50:00). Defying the deify slut binary Leela claims her identity and emerges above the disgust, disgrace and the contempt of the patriarchal society as she says "Have you heard of a film called Have faith in Goddess Shakthi? I played the role of Goddess in that film. One may see me as a goddess. One may see me as a whore. But ultimately, I am Leela. No more, no less" (*Super Deluxe* 02:50:53). Soori realizes that it is not after all bad or wrong to be regarded as the son of a porn actresses. Because as Leela says, 'righteousness' is constantly manipulated to suit the convenience of the prevailing status quo.

Apart from the class and social stratifications, and female inequalities that appear, another important issue problematized by these movies is how the society treats the Transgender. In both the films transwomen plays a major role. ¹¹Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from their assigned sex (journal subaltern identity phone). Queer theory incorporates the dispositions made by Foucault and it is built upon the feministic challenges to the idea that gender is part of the essential self. It also closely examines the socially constructed nature of the sexual acts and identity. ¹²Donald Hall, in his work called the *Queer Theories*, describes the queer texts as those that "explicitly or implicitly denaturalize notions of sexual normality and that provide evidence of the mutability and variability of human sexual desire and performance in excess of the hetero/homo binary" (Hall 37). In a further expansion of cultural-constructionist theory, ¹³Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of identity* (1990), describes the categories of gender and of sexuality as 'performative', in the sense that the features which a cultural discourse institutes as masculine or feminine, heterosexual and homosexual, the discourse also makes happen, by

¹¹ Jain, Amit Kumar, Upendra Nath Tripathi and Vinita Katiyar. "Subaltern Identity, Problems and Welfare of Transgenders in India". Indian Journal of Human Relations. Vol.52, no.1, 2018, pp. 10-21

¹² Hall, Donald E. *Queer Theories*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

¹³ Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 2007

establishing an identity that the socialized individual assimilates and the patterns of behaviour that he or she proceeds to enact.

However, the elasticity which is one of the fundamental characteristics of the term 'queer' is not often accepted by the Indian society.¹⁴ It is relevant to mention here about Foucault's theoretical dispositions that turned against the system building, and difference excluding tendencies of the structuralist thought. The films show how Transgender are demonized by the Indian society. Despite of the growing awareness and the attempts to include transgender within the parameters of the society by several initiatives from the NGOs and the Government, they end up being relegated to the margins. In *Super Deluxe*, the film shows a family eagerly waiting for the return of Manickam who had left his home 7 years ago leaving his wife Jyothi and his son Rasukutty. However, the family and the village are left transfixed as Manickam returns as Shilpa, a transwoman. People wonders, "Has he gone mad or what" (*Super Deluxe* 00:23:18) while his brother-in-law, violently approaches Shilpa to beat her and uses abusive words at her. Manickam's mother says to Jyothi that, "Instead of waiting for him, you could've eloped with another man". (*Super Deluxe* 00:49:38) The family views Shilpa's arrival as a misfortune in the life of Jyothi. In *Aruvi* the transwoman Emily earns her daily wages by working and is not involved in any anti-social activities. Yet Emily is not accepted by the society, when the TV show host says, "These days transgenders are treated badly in the society", (*Aruvi* 00:46:18) the director then interrupts her telling that "Madam you are getting into unnecessary matters." (*Aruvi* 00:47:21). Later the same lady who spoke high of the transgenders in the show when she meets Emily outside the set, insults her as "look at you face, get lost". (*Aruvi*00:58:21)

Both in *Super Deluxe* and *Aruvi*, there are several instances where the transwomen are addressed often as 'it', dehumanizing their identity. In *Super Deluxe*, we see how Shilpa is insulted at her son's school and is physically abused by the Sub Inspector at the police station. The inadequacies that the transgender community have to face due to the society's lack of acceptance is expressed Rasukutty's question to Shilpa, "Do you use the men's loo or women's loo" and she says, "Ideally the women's loo, but we are not allowed to use it". (*Super Deluxe*01:18:27-01:18:33). But the films subvert and deconstruct the society's notions regarding gender construction, and we see both the transwomen are given their voice in the films. Emily at one instance tells Aruvi that, "these men, they may even overlook an Aishwarya Rai (Indian Actress) but they never fail to ogle a transgender, are we that beautiful!" (*Aruvi* 00:21:42-00:21:50) later in the climax we see Aruvi describing Emily as a person who loved her the most, the person who was there for her when both the society and her family alienated her as an AIDS patient and exploited her as a woman. Whereas in *Super Deluxe*, when Shilpa decides to run away from her family thinking not to cause them any further trouble she is prevented by her wife

¹⁴ Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*. Vintage Books, 1990.

and her son. Her six-year-old tells her “Everybody is mocking you, so you wanted to run away, but mom and I accept you as you are...just be with us”. (*Super Deluxe*02:36:48-02:36:53) Through the love and acceptance that Shilpa finally receives from her family the film brings forth the transwoman from the margins to which she was pushed into.

Deprivations in the wellbeing of the poor and the marginalised are serious and atrocious and they must be removed for the effective rendering of the social justice. Both the films uphold the point made Amartya Sen regarding women that they “are, not passive recipients of welfare-enhancing help brought about by society but are active promoters and facilitators of social transformations. Such transformations influence, of course, the lives and well-being of women, but also those of men and all children - boys as well as girls.” (Sen 222) Both the films end with the images of a new generation who stands for the future India’s hope. In *Super Deluxe*, Rasukutty, the 6-year old who was the first to smile and accept Shilpa to his family presents this hope and the final dialogues of the Seth girl (or the Alien), acts as a call for the eradication of all kinds of marginality. She tells Balaji that she is “waiting for you people to realize, that everything is just one, Man and women soil and stone, Dog and cat and even you and me. You know every cell in your body behaves like it’s an individual, but those cells put together make you an individual. Similarly, all of us are tits and bits of the one.”(*Super Deluxe* 02:47:50-02:48:08) Whereas the climax of *Aruvi* calls forth a generation which does not just believes everything instead, a generation with the courage to think and to ask why. Therefore, in order to instil a change that can eradicate the evils of marginalisation, to ensure a progressive development for all, and to present the voices of subversion against the power structures the hope lies in the hands of the future generation and they are bound to do so. This paper showcases that films can be best employed to fulfil this purpose because of its far fetching reach and influence upon the masses.

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Suffering of Women in the Poems of K. V. Dominic

Ms. N. Divya Bharathi, M.Phil. Scholar

Abstract

Feminism means equal rights for men and women. In our society, rights should be given to women as equal to men. In our society women are discriminated in many ways. They are discriminated against in their family, in their workplace, as well as in their society. They are dominated and reduced to do only household work after marriage. In our Country still, now there are many villages are there who do not allow women to study and to grow up well in their career as well as in their society. In some places, women are stopped up to their higher secondary level education and they are not allowed to continue their higher studies because of their poverty in their family and status problem of education by which girls father was expecting to make marriage with the same status of the Boy which his daughter is having. Whatever measures have been taken by our Government as asking dowry is a punishable offense but still, now it was happening in some places. Some uneducated women are working in our society in many roles like cleaning public places, selling groceries, doing marketing; such women are also discriminated by men in our society in some places. If women are educated, they're also problems arise. They are discriminated in their workplace in the form of sexual discrimination and harassment. It was not happening in every place throughout our country. In some places, the working institution is also taking severe action on such cases. The present paper is an attempt to study the suffering of women as found in the selected poems of K.V. Dominic.

Keywords: K. V. Dominic, Suffering of Women, Discrimination, Domination, Dowry, Society.

Introduction

Indian English Poetry is one of the oldest forms of Indian English Literature. Indian poets write in English and they have succeeded the natives English to reveal typical Indian situations. There are many poets in the 21st century who excel in writing poetry in English. Among them, K. V. Dominic is one of the famous poets in this century. In K. V. Dominic's poems, he narrates about the women sufferings which they are facing in their society as well as in their family life. Women are doing all their household work, and they are taking care of their children. But usually, men are not supporting women. They always blame women for unnecessary reasons. Women are doing hard work the whole day for their families as well as they are very cautious and caring for their men too. But men are not thinking about her hard work and they are not sharing her work and understanding her. Some men are always busy in a liquor shop and they are spoiling their own life itself. The narrator portrays this was the main reason why women are suffering and dominated because of men. **The following poem is one of the best examples by K. V. Dominic regarding the domination of women in society.**

Gender Equality—Still a Dream

Dear my fellow human beings
 there's no discrimination
 of male or female in animal world
 But look at the plight of female
 in human world (1-5)

In the above stanza, the narrator tries to highlight that in animal kingdom there is no discrimination or any preconception like that between men and women in this voracious world. The poet informs the readers about the predicament or suffering of women in the world.

Her birth is ill omen
 Millions are butchered
 before they are born
 Parents receive her
 as burden to the family (6-10)

Here, the births of women are considered as a bad symbol. Many of the people in the family are cursing her for being born as a woman. Parents also consider her as a burden in their family. This is true in the context of many Indian families, where the birth of a female child is unwelcomed and thought of a debt.

She is destined to live
 under her brother's shadows
 Has to live on his leftover (11-13)

After the birth of a girl child, she has to compulsorily live under the shade of her brother till the end of her life. She did not have any freedom to live her life on her own.

She is denied good food
 denied good dress
 denied schooling
 denied entertainments
 Always jailed in kitchen
 compelled to work
 from dawn to midnight (14-20)

The women of the family were forced or compelled to refuse good food. Besides, many things are refused for girl children such as not wearing a good dress, not having the right to study, not having the right to have some entertainment. She was always dominated to be in the kitchen always like a jail, and she was compelled to work forcefully from early morning to midnight for

the sake of others in the family. Nobody cares for her and nobody understands her feelings, emotions, about her health as well as her desire.

None listens to her complaints
but tortures
if she opens her mouth
She has no choice
for her spouse (21-25)

In her family, nobody is ready to listen to her feelings and her soul which was filled with a lot of pain and suffering. But the family members are always ready to discriminate her if she will open her mouth. Even though she was not having the freedom to talk, or to share her feelings with her man in that home.

Often raped by her husband
He never cares
for her desires
Feeding of children
falls on her shoulders (26-30)

The woman was raped by her husband. He was never treated his women as her wife. He never cares about her feelings and desires what she was thinking off. Hence he was such a brutal man for her in her life. The women's duty was to feed her children and make her children fall asleep.

Sacrifices her health
for the entire family
Her struggle starts
from early morning
fights with utensils
in the kitchen
and then goes for
hazardous labour
till the dusk (31-39)

She has sacrificed her physical health for the sake of her entire family. She struggles from early morning when she woke up from her bed and she works hard in the kitchen by making breakfast, lunch, and dinner with the help of her kitchen vessels whole day. Apart from that, she has to do extra work by working in the field up to evening when the sunsets.

She is born with a cry
 goes on crying and crying
 till she reaches
 her destination death (40-43).

Hence from her birth itself, she was cried a lot thinking of her sufferings which she was faced in her family from her childhood, adulthood and after motherhood itself. This sadness continues in her entire life up to her death.

Woman is most venerable
 for she is your mother
 she is nurse and teacher
 and above all
 she is the lamb of house (44-48)

As the narrator can notate that women should be respected in society. She plays a vital role as a mother to her children, as a nurse who cares for each everything like what wants all are needed, she satisfies their wants. She was also a good teacher to make her children study in their academic life as well as she guides her children in their personal life to be always honest and must choose always right path which was the safer side for her children. Finally, she was always a pity, and showing affection to her family always in her house.

Sexism is contemptible
 A product of patriarchy
 Patriarchy reigns supreme
 in families, institutions
 societies, nations
 politics and religion (49-54)

Sexism is a shameful act. Here the elder male members of the families were having the only rights for all positions and to make decisions whenever necessary regarding their all kinds of aspects in the family. While women are not considered even as a human being in the families, in their working institutions in their schools, in their societies, as well as in their country, in their environmental politics and in their religion too.

Woman is exploited everywhere
 Religion aimed at ethics
 discriminates her
 Why can't women be priests
 in churches, mosques and temples?

Can't she enter and pray
in her Heavenly Father's abode? (55-61)

Women were misused in their society in the form of sexual harassment. Many men are taking advantage of this problem among women. They are misusing and making them a week. Religion always tells us moral values and principles but here it leads to female discrimination. The narrator also arises questions that why a woman cannot able to be priests in churches, mosques and temples. Whether they are not having freedom in this society to attain this position? Whether they are not having the rights of freedom for praying in temples to their gods?

Man, woman is your counterpart
Why can't she be taken
as your own body?
Why is she viewed
as a consumer product?
Why do you look at her
with lascivious eyes? (62-68)

The poet tries to drive home the point than men and women are equal. The way of thinking by both of them will always be different. Why women are not accepted by their men as their soul. If men understand his women's soul as his soul he will never hurt his women. Why women are seen at the point of consumer product? Why men are always seeing women in the wrong aspect or wrong perspective?

Hasn't she right over her body?
Why do you dictate her apparel?
Why do you forget
that she is your mother
she is your wife
she is your sister
or she is your daughter? (69-75)

The narrator questions every man that whether his women were not having rights among her body? Is she was always a slave for her men. Why you are not giving her rights for every aspect of her life as well as her taste of dressing in a well mannered? Why you are not realizing that she was your mother that is the reason today you are a man? Why do you forget that your woman was a good wife for you that is the reason she gave birth to your children and she made you proud to become a father to your children? Why do you forget that your sibling was a woman in the role of your sister and that is the reason today she made you in the position of being a good brother for her in this society? Why do you forget that your daughter was a woman who made you

proud forever up to the end of your life, that is the reason you have become a father for her in her life? The narrator finally connotes to men that please realize the value of women and give her freedom and self-respect because she is everything and every cause that you are today.

Discussion and Interpretation

Throughout the poem the poet tries to make the readers understand the suffering undergone by women. When born, the female child is considered as an ill omen due to the burden the girl child brings to the family. Here, the poet indirectly points to the dowry system which has burdened poor families and marrying off their daughters remained a dream. The poet has focused on the evils against women in the Indian Society.

Conclusion

In our society female discrimination must be avoided. To avoid female discrimination and domination by men, they should understand the soul of their women. If every man will think and understand their women's sufferings and situations mean this problem will be reduced automatically in our society. Men should also understand that they should not demand dowry before marriage. They have explained to their parents in which difficulty the bride's family are making marriage arrangements for them.

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Reading of Marginalization in Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder*

Dr. N. Gnanaselvi
Assistant Professor in English
Sri Meenakshi Govt. Arts College for Women(A)
Madurai-2

Abstract

Male dominance and female submissiveness is a continuous process, and it has no end. Oppression and exploitation of women in a patriarchal society has been an ever-present theme in Indian literary field. Women's suffering is portrayed especially by women writers with realism. Only in the post-Independence period the Indian writers have begun to project the feminine consciousness and sensibility. Recent Indian women playwrights like Dina Mehta, tend to present oppression of women with greater self-consciousness, a deeper sense of involvement. In the inception of Indian English Drama, dramatists have taken up contemporary social and political situations for analysis. However, Literature thrives on innovations and experimentalism. The women playwrights in India today try to show an Indian women's orientation towards her sexuality. In postcolonial dialects, the term 'subaltern' or 'marginalized' occupies a prominent place. The act of writing for a woman is an opportunity to break her silence of ages. Drama of late has emerged as a strong medium for highlighting women's issues, an exclusive forum. This paper entitled "**Reading of Marginalization in Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder***" discusses how women are denied the existence of living, as they depend on men for their livelihood. The issue of dehumanization is dealt here with realistic consideration. The sufferings of women continue even after so many decades of Independence. The physical as well as psychological consequences are focused.

Keywords: Dina Mehta, *Getting Away with Murder*, marginalization, chauvinism, dehumanization, forum, subaltern

Literature of any country is the store house of information on culture and sociological aspects of its people. In epics like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, we hear the tales of Draupiti being humiliated in Kaurava court, Sita entering into fire to prove her chastity and Akalya hardened into stones, awaiting her deliverance at the touch of the foot of Rama. A girl child internalizes these tales thinking that this is what it is to be a woman. The attacks on her body seem an inevitable aspect of being a female.

Drama emerged as a strong media for highlighting women's issues and an exclusive forum where women audiences could realize and connect the lives of women in sharing their perspective with the world. Feminist theatre evolved not only to share the tragically under-represented

experience of women living in a patriarchal society, but also to create a theatricality that would subvert traditional theater's most sacred traditions.

Dina Mehta, a prolific writer, is distinguished as a playwright for the stage, radio and television for which she has been awarded several prizes. The play by Dina Mehta, undermines the classical Indian aesthetic in which a single protagonist follows a linear plot by focusing on an ensemble. In which, we have three to four female characters, thus dramatizing the feminist belief that the group is more important than the individual.

Getting away with Murder is a play which deals with a raging social issue, rape and its psychological impact apart from physical. The play strikes an optimistic tone, for the husband himself accepts her after learning about her sad story of his wife, Sonali - a childhood sexual abuse which has left her a nervous wreck. The play reveals the growing awareness of the violence being done to them- physically, mentally, and morally, the violence that women face is multifaceted. Women die many deaths, but death, in fact is very rarely a physical one rather than a moral and psychological one. The playwright confronts the sexist and rapes certain significant issues: why are women sub-ordinate in household hierarchies, kept in seclusion, subjected to discrimination in the job market?

Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder* maps the life of three friends as they undergo the grueling journey through their own private life, as they deal with body blows like childhood sexual abuse, discrimination, infidelity and insecure relationships. They ultimately learn to free themselves of guilt, shame and humiliation to emerge as stronger women at the end of it.

The play *Getting Away with Murder* opens with a conversation of two friends Mallika and Sonali. Sonali's life is in disarray. She expresses her problems with her mother-in-law, to Mallika:

“She is a witch, sly, secretive. She spies on me, I know, she stores up evidence against me-with which to bulgeon me one day (intensely) my mother-in-law, hates me Malu” (58).

A difference in the approach of the male and female characters can be observed in the play that has its roots in human psychology. Women are mentally conditioned to obey their husbands and not to take initiative in any case. Mehta reveals the submission of female character through Sonali. In one of her recombinations Sonali records:

My mother used to exhaust herself over her household tasks- may be because she was grateful to uncle for taking us after father died”. She drove herself and turned me into her opinions, feel her feelings..... of course, Gopal escaped all that because he was born with an extra set of accessories” (59).

These words establish, the traditional Indian mother who shows gender discrimination in her treatment of her son Gopal and her daughter Sonali.

Sonali's childhood sexual abuse has stepped down her psyche as a bad human experience. She wants to get her female foetus aborted. Mallika finds it ironical that even female foeticide is being touched as a sign of liberation.

“Mothers award the death sentence to their unborn daughters in the name of liberation. They thereby prove their women-power! Their Omnipotence! They play God (63)”

Sonali lives under the strain of a serious psychological confusion. When Sonali arranges the death of her molester (her own uncle), her brother Gopal abets her silently. The woman here is not a passive victim, Dina Mehta strikes a note of optimism, men need not be indifferent observer they can help women getting over her trauma just as Anil does. The play takes as its central theme rape and its effects on its victim.

Mallika too has her own tale of woe. Her partner in business is a male chauvinist, Mr. Pankaj Pingalay. Mallika runs an agency for food stuffs, which is with the new processed food in the market. Her partner's contribution towards the progress of the business is nil. He cannot accept nor tolerate women as leading business managers, he often tells Malu,” that women should stick to secretarial work-or, at best, P R work,” Sexual harassment against women remains widespread in farms, factories and workplaces. In *Getting Away with Murder*, Malu's secretary Thelma reveals that she is harassed by Mr. Pankaj Pingalay.

‘he- he makes vulgar talk ... and wicked gestures ... Asking me to accompany him to hotels outside the city. (70)

though he too is aware that Malu is doing the front line business. Mallika wants to have a meaningful relationship with Gopal. But she is not able to shed all the notions into her from childhood, the fact is that she is six years older than Gopal makes her hesitate.

Raziya, a friend of Sonali, has her stockpile of sorrows too. Her husband Habib plans to marry a nineteen- year old girl as her mother- in -law has been agitating about it for a long time.

“You see Malu, I can't give him children” (77).

Raziya is not the one to exonerate her from the guilt, she is prepared to face the situation boldly, and she acknowledge that the villain is not man alone, but women also have been the agents of patriarchy all along .Indian Women find it difficult to break free from the shackles of the oppressive tradition. Raziya relates the position of a woman in a male-dominated society. She laments:

You think I haven't asked myself that? Man's desire for children must be satisfied. ...a man has the right to the body of a woman younger than he (78).

Dina Mehta, an Indian Woman playwright reveals the power imbalance that prevails in our society with the feminist thought. She has proved that, a creative writer should have a social conscience, a duty towards the society. This paper focused on the social awareness, the concern for the women gender. More such plays need to come to the forum, only then the process of empowerment will begin, as Ambai puts it, “a multiplicity of text must happen, and the meaning must descend like a giant mirror before people, reflecting their lives, their cultures”.

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Discourse and Context of Marginalism through *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus* by Louis Althusser

M. Hemalatha, M.Phil. Scholar

**Department of English and Comparative literature
Madurai Kamaraj University**

Abstract

In his essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, Louis Althusser speaks on the structure and functioning of ideology. Before he presents a discussion on ideology, Althusser defines the term as a Theologico-Philosophy and practice of the same which was different from the modern philosophy. So, beyond the growth of economical thoughts in nineteenth century, there lies many social institutions such as education, the churches, family, media, trade unions and law, which served to transmit. To denote institutions, the Marxist theorist Louis Althusser developed a term called *Ideological State Apparatus*. Such ideologies lead humans to marginalize and to be marginalizing through the institutions. Among the mentioned ISAs, religion has a prominent role in influencing human ideas. In primitive societies, religion had its sway over each individual and thereon the society as a whole. From the birth of the child to the death, till the body was cremated or buried, the religious rituals had its clutches on every individual. Those who did not obeyed the church or the priest, was either punished or ostracized from the community. Ideologies are paving the way in every individual's mind to create an illusion order of living, which made them to see other people by means of their class, creed, education, gender, religion, nationality. In order to prove their existence, those ideologized individuals handling the tool called marginalism.

Keywords: Louis Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, structure and functions of ideology, ISA, Marginalization, Existence.

Introduction

Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus is a small but effective essay written by Louis Althusser. In this essay, he discusses the medieval nineteenth century's Feuerbach School of thought on Theologico-philosophy and the theory of production by Karl Marx, both being the contemporaries from the land of Germany. Feuerbach had stronger conviction in the faith of god as responsible for all worldly order including production and labor. Another connection with Feuerbach's mind is the religion is a wishful thinking, which is known as 'felicity principle', is also a kind of assuming the point of being religious to secure the well-being of individuals both here and hereafter. Thus, attaining peace lies in the unquestionable faith in the almighty. Throwing the light on the Theologico-philosophy and its practice, Althusser defines the term 'Ideology'. He acknowledges that, the development of such Theologico-philosophical thoughts gave birth to a number of ideologies. In this essay, Althusser analyses the exact attachment of realities that implicit and latent to an ideology.

Althusser depicts that the real conditions of the existence of an individual is represented by ideologies. By this definition, he classifies the ideologies into two types as ‘positive and ‘negative’ for each of which he formulated his thesis. He defines that the positive ideology represented by the abstract form of man whereas the materiality of man concerned by negative ideology. The ultimate conviction of Althusser is, the ideologies do not correspond to the reality.

Before referring to the Althusserian definitions of ideologies, there is another term we have to think about: ideology. Ideology is a crucial concept in the study of popular culture. Graeme Turner (1996) calls it ‘the most important conceptual category in cultural studies’ (182). James Carey (1996) has even suggested that ‘British cultural studies could be described just as easily and perhaps more accurately as ideological studies’ (65). Like culture, ideology has many competing meanings. An understanding of this concept is often complicated by the fact that in much cultural analysis the concept is used interchangeably with culture itself, and especially popular culture. The fact that ideology has been used to refer to the same conceptual terrain as culture and popular culture makes it an important term in any understanding of the nature of popular culture. What follows is a brief discussion of just five of the many ways of understanding ideology. We will consider only those meanings that have a bearing on the study of popular culture.

First, ideology can refer to a systematic body of ideas articulated by a particular group of people. For example, we could speak of ‘professional ideology’ to refer to the ideas which inform the practices of particular professional groups. We could also speak of the ‘ideology of the Labor Party’. Here we would be referring to the collection of political, economic and social ideas that inform the aspirations and activities of the Party.

A second definition suggests a certain masking, distortion, or concealment. Ideology is used here to indicate how some texts and practices present distorted images of reality. They produce what is sometimes called ‘false consciousnesses’. Such distortions, it is argued, work in the interests of the powerful against the interests of the powerless. Using this definition, we might speak of capitalist ideology. What would be intimated by this usage would be the way in which ideology conceals the reality of domination from those in power: the dominant class do not see themselves as exploiters or oppressors. And, perhaps more importantly, the way in which ideology conceals the reality of subordination from those who are powerless: the subordinate classes do not see themselves as oppressed or exploited.

This definition derives from certain assumptions about the circumstances of the production of texts and practices. It is argued that they are the superstructural ‘reflections’ or ‘expressions’ of the power relations of the economic base of society. This is one of the fundamental assumptions of classical Marxism. According to the first thesis of Althusser, the ideology or the notions represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. The world order and the outlooks have formed a number of ideologies like religious ideology, ethical ideology, legal ideology, political ideology and so on.

These set of ideologies are generally not followed but discussed from a critical point of view by a person who studies about human race and also examining about the myths of a primitive society, according to the beliefs of Althusser. He is of the opinion that the world outlooks are largely imaginary, and it does not correspond to reality.

Ideologies are labeled as illusions as it makes allusion to the reality. It needs to be interpreted to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation. The mechanic types and the hermeneutic interpretation of 18th century as these are the many types of interpretations. Among the types of interpretation, the mechanical type interpretation states that the representation of the real king is God.

Hermeneutic interpretation reaffirms the identical statement as the essence of the real man is God and this belongs to Feuerbach. In essence, the imaginary transposition of ideology paves the way for a determination that the humans represent their real conditions of existence to themselves in an imaginary form. Althusser explains the need of imaginary transposition in two ways. His first answer is the priests and the despots i.e. the cruel defined by Althusser, created a beautiful lie (i.e. god) and made people believe that they were obeying god in order to make them obey. To him, the priests acted according to the political positions of the small number of cynical men dominating and exploiting the people in the name of the concept, god.

The second answer of Althusser lies in the exclusive threadbare presentation of Karl Marx on the analysis of Feuerbach. Marx rejected the theory of Feuerbach on the concept of god as utterly false. Marx did not accept the active imagination of the priests or the passive imagination of the victims i.e. the common man. Thus, it is according to Marx, the superstitious or the godly beliefs is a material alienation otherwise termed as alienated labor, thus generating a labor class in society to work and contribute to the church in the name of god. The conditions of existence of men in the real world represents the imaging of the world thought in ideologies is resulting in the claims of this section.

So, this is the relation, which is the centre of any ideological, imaginary representation of the real world. It is the imaginary nature of the relation that underlies all the imaginary distortion in all the ideologies. Althusser considers every ideology is an imaginary distortion otherwise a false account. Man has been taught to consider ideology as a higher order of thinking and made to believe ideology in one's action. There is a class of men in the posts of agents of production, exploitation, repression, the process of ideology and scientific practice. The presence of these posts is the results of the relations of production. The real conditions of existence of individuals are not real as presumed in the imaginary relations described in ideologies.

Ideology is not just a phenomenon that exists and functions in the minds of human beings, is the thing which Althusser tries to explain further in his essay time and again. He reveals that ideology is always present in apparatus and the practices rather that it has material existence that has associated with it. Here Althusser traces the reason behind certain beliefs of people in the

presence of some or the other *Ideological State Apparatuses*. These beliefs are in turn governed by the institutions that form the material apparatuses. Thus, it can be said for Althusser, ideas are the consequence of the situations of the individual subjects in a society within specific ISAs (Ideological state apparatuses).

We can also use ideology in this general sense to refer to power relations outside those of class. For instance, feminists speak of the power of patriarchal ideology, and how it operates to conceal, mask and distort gender relations in our society. How it operates to conceal, mask and distort gender relations in our society. Principally, what Althusser has in mind is the way in which certain rituals and customs have the effect of binding us to the social order: a social order that is marked by enormous inequalities of wealth, status and power.

Using this definition, we could describe the seaside holiday or the celebration of Christmas as examples of ideological practices. This would point to the way in which they offer pleasure and release from the usual demands of the social order, but that, ultimately, they return us to our places in the social order, refreshed and ready to tolerate our exploitation and oppression until the next official break comes along. In this sense, ideology works to reproduce the social conditions and social relations necessary for the economic conditions and economic relations of capitalism to continue.

Ideological subjects are produced by acts of ‘hailing’ or ‘interpellation’. Althusser uses the analogy of a police officer hailing an individual: ‘Hey, you there!’ When the individual hailed turns in response, he or she has been interpellated, has become a subject of the police officer’s discourse. In this way, ideology is a material practice that creates subjects who are in turn subjected to its specific patterns of thought and modes of behavior. This definition of ideology has had a significant effect on the field of cultural studies and the study of popular culture. Instead of class distinctions based on our role in the process of production, advertising continually suggests that what really matters are distinctions based on the consumption of particular goods. Thus, social identity becomes a question of what we consume rather than what we produce.

Like all ideology, advertising functions by interpellation: it creates subjects who in turn are subjected to its meanings and its patterns of consumption. The consumer is interpellated to make meaning and ultimately to purchase and consume and purchase and consume again. For example, the people of popular culture considering themselves as ‘self’ and points the remaining people as ‘Others’. Althusser’s concept of ideology can be related to any type of the contexts and discourses of marginalism of contemporary society. The family ideological concept of Althusser is an example for the hegemonic patriarchal society and the trade union ISAs is a representation of the contemporary corporal tricks whereas the cultural ISAs stands for the geographical, gender and the considering social tabooed (LGBT) marginalism and racial and ethnical marginalism, also his concept of educational ISAs is an example for linguistic marginalism. Thus, the ultimate concept of either ideology or marginalism is used as a tool by every individual at least once in their lifetime in order to prove their existence.

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Abbreviation: ISAs - Ideological State Apparatuses

Marginalisation of Children with Reference to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *The Cry of the Children*

P. Ishwariya, II M.A. English

Department of English and Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to expose the marginalization of children in England due to industrialization. Analysing the painful lines of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, this paper tells how children are forced to undergo sufferings and haunting pains. From denial of proper food to facing fatal disease, the abandoned children of England suffer much, and it is evident through the words of Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her poem *THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN*. Thus, this paper walks into her lines and brings out the ideas discussed by the poet in a thoughtful way.

Keywords: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *The Cry of the Children*, marginalisation, industrialisation, loss of faith, health issues, suppress, lack of freedom, screaming cry of the children.

This paper is a projection of Marginal position of children. This paper tells how children are getting marginalised in society. This paper also deals with sufferings including child labour system, slavery, etc. The exposure unbelievable pain they suffer as children are the main intention of this paper.

Literature is an art of compiling our thoughts and imagination into a whole idea. Literature is also called as the process of creativity. Literature is derived from the Latin word "*litera*" which means "*acquainted with letters*". It is also procedure of analysing a work of art which includes prose, poetry, drama, fiction, short story, essays. Literature educates to know about life, culture, tradition, experience. It also shows invisible part of life which we can only feel and imagine. Literature also gives entertainment and aesthetic pleasure.

Poetry is an amazing process of expressing our thoughts, emotions, ideas. Poetry includes personal experience and feelings. Poems portray different feelings: some poems are happy, and some may be in a sad note. It depends upon the mind of the poet. Poetry needs creativity, emotion and feelings, imaginative power, aesthetic thoughts and artistic quality. Poetry follows

patterns like rhyme scheme, figure of speech etc. This paper deals with the emotions and feelings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning was famous Victorian poet. Her major themes are based on social issues, slavery, oppression of women, child labour and political issues. She was born on 6th March 1802 and died on 29th June 1861. She was more popular in England and America. She worked to eradicate slavery and child labour. Elizabeth volume poems (1884) were a successful complication of Browning's poetry. Her works are influence by author like Edger Allan Poe and Emily Dickinson. One of her best poems was *How do I love thee?* She concentrated more on the social and slavery issues. She pictures the pain and suffering in her poem.

The title itself signifies the cry and suffering of the Children. The children are forced to do heavy works at industry and factory. They worked for 14 hours continuous without any break. They feel their pain in every part of their body. So, their cry is filled with torment. This was portrayed by Elizabeth in her poetry "*The cry of the children*".

The cry of the children is a thoughtful poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning. It was published in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine in the year 1843. The poem is about child labour and suppression of child. The poem consists of 13 stanzas with the rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF.

In this poem, 'The Cry of the Children', the poet finds the hardship of the children who are working at mines, industries and factories. The children toil day and night, they are working like slaves. It is because of Industrialism the children are compelled and forced to work. The children are so tired and need a break from their work in factory. But these children are not giving any freedom. They work because of poverty, lack of awareness and compulsion.

The small children were forced to do work continuously. They toil everyday and wail with lot of pain. At young age the usual habit of children is to play and wander around. All other creatures are playing and enjoying but these children are toiling every day. In the spare time also, they shed tears and did not have time to play. Parents never felt this suffering of their children, but their children continue their work because they adder fear of their mother's safety in the country.

"They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see" (lines 25 & 26).

The above lines depict that the faces of the children are sunken because of their suffering, theirs tired eyes look sad and filled with pain. These lines perfectly clarify that they are marginalised.

“Crying, ‘Get up, little Alice! it is day.’
If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,
With your ear down, little Alice never cries;” (lines 44-46)

The children are in pathetic condition because they suffer from serious health issues like lung cancer, heart disease and some other fatal diseases. The death of Alice is told by author because all children die before their time.

The children in mines and other factories don't want to go out and enjoy because they are too weak. Their only need is some peace of time to take rest. Their eyes are so tired, and they cannot run or leap. They are utterly filled with tiredness. Their eyelids are so heavy because they need some rest. They are continuously driving the wheels of iron round and round.

Everything in the world is changing but the spontaneous work of the children never changed. So with all tiredness they wanted the wheels to stop for a day. “Stop be silent for today” the children started to lose hope towards God, and they think that is their fate to work continuously. When these children cry, passing human hear those screaming voice of children but they just pass away. The children became hopeless, the people can hear the voice of the children, but they do not feel for them to tired to help them. Instead they just passed away. This shows the loss of humanity. So, the children started to lose hope in God.

“They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun.” (lines 125&126)

These children only live in darkness and continuous work burden. They never see the beautiful and glorious sun. Because for several hours these children are working like a slave without any rest. The children started enquiring how long they are going to undergo the pain. And these pains of the children are because of industrialization. They call England as a cruel nation. The pain and suffering are still continuing. The children once cried loudly became silent. Because in their point of view. Their nothing is going to change screaming would not help them and they understood that.

In this poem the children undergo a lot of pain and suffering. They are marginalised because, they were abandoned and provided heavy works and could not take rest for a while. They also suffered from health issues and slowly started to lose their hope. Because of industrialization, children were forced to do heavy works. Their crying is not valued or notified. So, this made the author to portray the pain of the children. The children are completely marginalized and suppressed; they have no hope towards their life in the world. “Where there is child labour in a nation, they started to lose humanity and development”

This paper dealt with the marginalised position of children. This paper reported also how children are getting marginalised in society. This paper also discussed sufferings including child labour system, slavery, etc. Revealing the unbearable pains children suffer was the main intention of this paper.

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The Calcutta Chromosome: An Ostensible Endeavour to Challenge History

S. John Wesly Regan

M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., D.T.Ed., Ph.D. Research Scholar
Assistant Professor, Dept. of English
Mary Matha Arts and Science College
Periyakulam East

Abstract

In competitive scenario accepting the challenges is important rather than winning it. Ghosh in this novel makes an attempt to wipe out colonial supremacism from the indigenous people's mind. For that purpose he made a crisis over on the subject matter of getting authenticity for discovering malaria parasite. Throughout this novel he recreates a new environment for the oppressed people with proper solutions for their problems, his intention is to improve things better. Thus, this research paper liberates and purifies the mind of young benevolent admirers of the western culture and practices.

Keywords: *The Calcutta Chromosome*, Competitive, Challenges, Colonial Supremacism, Authenticity, Malaria Parasite, Environment, Western Culture and Practices.

In Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996), obviously projects the stipulated scientific revolution which happened in the 19th and 20th centuries. It was understood that in the survey of history, only the westerners' names found in the records for discovering things. In addition to that some of the Medias started to transmit a biased information. To opt-out from this sort of shrewd practices, Ghosh makes his reader to be aware of the present circumstances through radical writings.

Unequivocally in the field of medicine, there was some tiffin the method of curing patients. Especially in the way of curing the sick through western treatments and eastern therapies that to found a place in his work. Amazingly mind acts as a core element for the functions of the human body and the consequences of everything happen only because of the willingness of the particular person's mind. Through this lens this paper questions on some of the historical discoveries and progresses, distorted in his work.

With the assistance of Harvie and Matthew's opinion, the nineteenth century Britain can be visibly defined. Early phase of nineteenth century Britain flourished with industrial growth, there were several good things discovered for the welfare of humankind. Furthermore, the development of second industrial revolution leads to the technological discoveries in a rapid manner. Besides that, slowly the act of blemishing started through the way of getting name and popularity for the discoveries in the field of science and technology. Thus, the growth of industrialization was clearly pointed out here as:

This makes the historian's task awkward, balancing what is significant now against what was significant then. The first directs us to industrial changes, new processes developing in obscure workshops; the second reminds us how slowly the power of the pre-industrial elites ebbed, how tenacious religion proved in the scientific age. Only around 1830 were people conscious of substantial and permanent industrial change; it took another 20 years to convince even the middle class that it had all been for the better (1).

Ghosh has inoculated some of the fictional elements along with scientific discoveries, defining past and predicting future may not be precisely correct. Here, the character Antar began to explore certain data about a missing person called Murugan. This novel too mentions the manner of identifying missing people through a programmed machine. Though the computer and other types of software were positioned in the field to construct history it might not be a genuine one. Thus, the text brings out the unusual experiences from the programmed machine as:

She wouldn't stop until Antar had told her everything he knew about whatever it was that she was playing with on her screen. He'd tried routing her to her own encyclopedias, but that wasn't good enough. Somewhere along the line she had been programmed to hunt out real-time information, and that was what determined to get. Once she wrung the last, meaningless detail out of him, she'd give the object on her screen a final spin, with a bizarrely human smugness, before propelling it into the horizonless limbo of her memory (4).

New research shows DNA in human beings is much more essential one for transmitting biological information from parents to young ones through chromosomes. But in this novel Ghosh mentions the transmission of good traits from malaria patient to normal person was done in transcendent way. Mangala is the one who executes all rituals to make this course to be fruitful. The progress of the novel also describes how Ross adopts this techniques for his own popularity and discoveries. Thus, Ibrahim appreciates the old way of transmitting soul as:

Ghosh immerses into a story of medical journalism and tries hard to give an explanation of the chromosome system, advancing other medical discoveries, popular rituals, killings,

hallucinations, transmigrating souls and panoptical computers controlled by multinational companies. Within all these local and globalized elements, we find strange figures of colonial migrants, like Mangala, a clever and witty scientist, without recognition from the official medicine of that time, who comes to discover how the malaria bug can be used to regenerate decaying brain tissue in the last stage of syphilis (70).

For centuries, the diseases like malaria and syphilis were considered to be a source of spreading death fear in the peoples mind. Such diseases won't disappear permanently but every centuries it will rejuvenate in a new form with new names. Here, some of the characters like Antar and Murugan begin to search for the relevant facts about that diseases and discoveries, unfortunately they were infected with those incurable diseases. Thus, the text reveals the functions of mind as a purported vehicle for the transmitting diseases from thought to reality as:

Antar started. 'Wait a minute...' he cried into a telephone. But the line had gone dead. Antar started at the receiver, not quite sure of what had happened. For a moment it had sounded as though Tara were in the room with him and her mouthpiece had picked up Ava's ping. He put the back of his hand against his forehead and wasn't surprised to find it very hot. He knew he was really feverish now. He decided it was time to lie down (192).

The interaction between Urmila and Murugan brings out the truth that he was attacked with a venereal disease called Syphilis. And this attack was not by the external source or other microorganism but transmitted through mindset of that person who panicked by looking the patients directly affected with it. Thus, the text demonstrates the human attitude about curable diseases as:

I managed to hide the scabs for oh, I don't know how long, for the months anyway-even though it hurt by then, god, it hurt. And when it was finally caught there was no disguising it. That was why my family had to leave the city: the shame. But syphilis is curable now, isn't it? Urmila said. 'With antibiotics?' 'Sure,' said Murugan. 'I got cured. They can cure it now-except for what it does to your head.' (244)

Ghosh introduces superstition and voodoo as a strange method for healing sickness. Somehow it seems to be like aridiculous one but really a challenging task for him, he took this concept from the Indian mythology. Another strong argument in this novel is the lack of laboratory facilities in India, particularly the natives in the colonial landno place for research, even though they were experts in dealing withsuperstitious things. Like most of other English medicines this is considered be a prior to all methods. Thus, Manimekalai and Devi depict Ghosh's scathing attack on the historical record as:

Against the background of the historical facts of Ronald Ross's discovery about malaria fever, Ghosh presents the supernatural power of Mangala who found a so-called cure of syphilis and has also acquired the knowledge of transcending life beyond life. The novel argues the First world and that only rich white men do science. Elijah and Monroe Farley and Dr. Ronald Ross, the counter-science group headed by Mangala and Laakhan worked towards a higher purpose of attaining immortality (116).

In the survey of history like great philosophers and scholars Ghoshin his writings attempt to oppose the cruelty of the colonizers. He handles narrative account to liberate his readers from the invisible bonds and elegiac things created by the imperial force in the colonial land. The stating of metaphysical, technological, geographical and historical things in this novel is for the purpose to annihilate the imperial ideologies in natives mind.

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The Quest for Female Identity in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

K. Kamu, M.Phil. Scholar

Department of English and Comparative Literature

Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai

Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract

The woman, neither biologically nor intellectually inferior to man, is often predetermined as the second sex and has been given the secondary status in the society. She is not recognized as a human with an identity of her own who has faithfully adhered to male supremacy and is made to strictly play her role in upholding the traditions of the family. Though there have been various efforts to emancipate women from male oppression, it is a reality that gender disparity still exists. Women in Indian society encounter lots of troubles and problems within their households, workplaces and society. They are psychologically affected, stressed and exposed to various issues such as loss of identity, male domination and marital disharmony. They are unable to make their own decisions in life and are confined within the four walls of the house, with no one else to share their distress. Many women writers come out to articulate the anxieties, focusing on the feelings of marginality and expressing their revolt against the masculine world. Shashi Deshpande is one among the famous contemporary Indian novelists who took an earnest step in exposing the submissive women through her fiction. The present paper attempts to highlight how Deshpande, through the character Jaya in *That Long Silence*, seems to convey a significant truth that women have the power to control and improve their lives, by being determined to break their silence and fight oppression.

Keywords: Shashi Deshpande, *That Long Silence*, Female Identity, Patriarchy, Self-identity, Marginality, Oppression, Defiance

Shashi Deshpande is one of the famous contemporary Indian novelists in English. She is an award winning eminent novelist with a deep insight into the psyche of middle class Indian women. At the very outset the problem of identity crisis comes to the fore in *That Long Silence*. The dilemma faced by the protagonist is highly intriguing when she says the words come to her freely, but self-revelation is a cruel process. For her “the real you” never emerge. 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. She is a winner of the Sahitya Academy Award, for the novel *That Long Silence*. Her novels present a social world of complex relationships.

The present paper focuses on the study of suffering of women in the works of Shashi Deshpande. Life is full of suffering, full of choices, full of compromises and an adjustment. Jaya is the heroine of this novel. She can be called as the mouthpiece of Shashi Deshpande’s novel *That Long Silence*. The way of thinking and opinion of Jaya is undoubtedly that of Deshpande. Her fifth novel *That Long Silence* give some message for the reader that the empowerment comes from your inner will and the capability to reach beyond restricted and guarded forts. Deshpande successfully makes her readers realize that all path-breaking discoveries are the outcome of faith, which helps, mankind like a ladder to reach the zenith. The journey to wider horizons requires an innovative effort. What she has said in *That Long Silence* is true of all times in the history of mankind.

Male characters do not have any prominent role in Deshpande’s novels. The reader can easily find out resemblance in Deshpande’s heroes and sometimes they even look monotonous. She presents these characters only as dominating male characters and seems to produce them only to trouble the women in her fiction. As Sara Grimke puts it: “Man has subjugated woman to his will used her as a means of selfish gratification, to minister to his sexual pleasure, to be instrumental in promoting his comfort; but never has he desired to elevate her to that rank she was created to fill” (Grimke 10). Jaya’s husband, Mohan was that sort of a man and he married her for his social betterment. Jaya had lost her father at the age of fifteen and her brother considered her a burden, and this leads her to marry Mohan. Before her marriage, Jaya had been taught the importance of the husband in the life of a woman. Vanitamami tells her that a husband is a sheltering tree. Ramukaka reminds her of the thing that the happiness of her husband and home

depends entirely on her. When Jaya is leaving her home after her marriage, Dada has advised her to “be good to Mohan”. Jaya’s brother brought Mohan with money and gave him to Jaya, and she tried to be good to him. This was the beginning of Jaya’s lifeless kind of married life.

The entire novel brings out the stale married life in a middle class home and Deshpande tells the story from the point of view of a wife. The women in Mohan’s family were so definite about their roles and duties. But Jaya has no clear cut idea about her role in that family. Her life before marriage and after marriage shared little similarity. Her father gave her the name “Jaya” for “victory”. But her in-laws gave her a new name “Suhasini” pointed to a docile but efficient housewife. Concerned only about the tastes and interests of Mohan, Jaya has lost her authenticity as a human being. She has shaped herself to the wishes of Mohan. Mohan kept her away from her likings. She was forced by Mohan to give up the job she wanted to take, the baby she wanted to adopt and the anti-price campaign she had wanted to take part in. Jaya’s journey through the rough road of her nuptial life, she learns at last: “no questions, no retorts: only silence”. In accepting everything mutely, she thinks she resembles Sita or Draupadi. In her view, the truth is that it was Mohan, who had a clear idea of what he wanted; the kind of life he wanted to lead, the kind of home he would live in, and she went along with him.

Deshpande’s woman-centered novels and short stories give us a psychological insight into the working of a woman’s mind. Ever since Jaya got married, she has done nothing but wait. “Waiting for Mohan to come home, waiting for children to be born, for them to start school, waiting for them to come home, waiting for the milk, the servant, the lunch-carrier man...” (TLS 30) This mechanical process of waiting fills her life with existential nothingness. Related to the theme of nothingness is the existential theme of death. Her monotonous, boring and isolated days made her to realize this and above and beyond this, there had been for her that other waiting fearfully for disaster, for a catastrophe.

Deshpande’s heroines do not give too much importance to sexual encounters unless it serves an urgent physical need. She feels that “love” is an overworked word, overburdened by the weight one put on it, just another word for human contact. Jaya’s loveless sexual life with Mohan was mechanical and gives her no satisfaction. Jaya’s relationship with Kamath was the result of her search for a human being who can understand, console and support her. Jaya’s judgment about this relation proves it. “Physical touching for me a momentous thing. It was only Appa who hugged me as a child, and after him there was Mohan. We were husband and wife and he could hold me, touch me, and care me. But it was never a casual or light-hearted thing for either of us. And then this man... I can remember how his gift of casual, physical contact had amazed me. His unawareness of my shock the first time he did it had told me what touching meant to him. And yet that day his dispassionate tone, his detached touch, had somehow angered me.” (TLS 15)

The entire novel brings out the stale married life in a middle class home. The married life of Jaya seems to have lost its freshness. As a typical Deshpande's heroine, Jaya does not decide to walk away from marriage or think about a divorce. Instead she has decided to tackle her marital problems in her own way, and make her husband realize that she has to be treated on an equal footing, without destroying the statuesque of her family life. As she has nothing to do in the Dadar flat, Jaya gets plenty of time for introspection. In the process of analyzing herself, she discovers her true identity. She realizes that she had been a divided self- one for the world and another for herself. But in a middle class society it is a must for a woman to fulfill the roles of wifeness and motherhood before their own identity. Deshpande's women break out of their conventional lives and attitudes and seek an identity of their own.

Shashi Deshpande's achievement lies in the depiction of her central character, the introspective and inward probing Jaya. She is representative of girls brought up in middle-class families in post-Independent India, a time when most parents strove hard to provide their children with English education and exposure to Western modes of living and thinking. Parents inculcated in their girls a certain duality, sometimes quite unconsciously. On the one hand, an impulsive desire to be temporary, he has no work to do. And, because he has no work, to do, Jaya too has nothing to do because, as she observes, "Deprived of his routine, his files, his telephone, his appointments, he seemed to be no one at all, certainly not that man, my husband, around whose needs and desires my own life revolved., There was nothing he needed, so there was nothing for me to do, nothing I had to do." (TLS 24)

The most trying moment comes in Jaya's life when she finds two male accomplices fondling the breasts of a narcotic-smoking well-to-do girl at the bus-stop. This experience shocks all her romantic ideas of "woman as the victim" out of her and she finds "Mohan's beliefs, when I listed them, were like a pole that pulled me out of a quagmire of doubts" (TLS 127). She realizes that she is secure only with Mohan, the man who provides for all her comforts and her children's needs. In his absence, which is temporary but full of uncertainty, she becomes rudderless and others are no substitute.

Deshpande tries to focus not only on the patriarchal set up which is responsible for silencing the women but also the responsibility of women lies within the victim to refuse, to raise a voice and to break that silence. The novel traces the dilemma and the quest for identity of Jaya from the feelings of existence, freedom, resilience and adjustments. In the quest for identity, Jaya is trapped in the dilemma, firstly trying to be a suitable wife for Mohan and secondly, struggling

to express the emotions of women's experience in the male-dominated society. She is a silent sufferer in finding out herself very different with noble vision as a writer. She represents the middle class educated woman in India during 1990s who tries to find her identity throughout the novel. She searches her identity as an individual and where her emotions are getting subdued. It suggests that the endemic imbalance in a marriage causes the frustrations, disappointments, failures rather than the endurance and solace.

Shashi Deshpande's novels contain the seed of definite quest for a true and authentic self. By making her heroines undergo stages of self-introspection and self-reflection, Deshpande makes them evolve themselves into more liberated individuals that what their gender of culture have sanctioned. The self-quest of these women is triggered off by some crisis in their lives. These women strive heroically and overcome their cultural conditioning and the barriers created by society in matters of tradition and manners. They finally emerge as free, autonomous individuals, no longer content to be led but desirous of taking a lead. Rather than falling into Western Feminist slot, these strengthened Indian women, work out their own individual paths towards liberation and in the process discover new facets to their selves which had been latent in them. In this discovery of selves and consequent self- fulfillment, these women pave the way for a better understanding of themselves as well as others. In charting the course of such unconventional women, Deshpande seems to make an obvious plea that traditional society must re-mould itself in order to accept these emerging new women.

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Race and Ethnicity in the Poem “The Telephone Conversation”

N. Karan
M.A. English
Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai - 21

Abstract

This article deals with Race and Ethnicity. *The Telephone Conversation* is a poem written by Wole Soyinka which clearly depicts the theme racism. Racism means it is the difference of skin colour, eye colour, or difference of structure. There is a conversation between the landlady and a tenant, who is in need of a house for rent. The African tenant wants to live among whites. The turning point of the conversation is, when the tenant exposes his own identity as an African. Here the theme of Racism emerged through the cold and freaky voice of the white landlady. The landlady often used to ask the colour of the tenant. Though the tenant told her about his colour as brunette, she had the curiosity to know the actual colour of the tenant. Finally, the tenant burst out and continued the conversation in a different way, rather in a vulgar way. This poem clearly exhibits the theme Racism.

Keywords: Wole Soyinka, *The Telephone Conversation*, Racism, Marginalisation, Colonisation, Domination.

Afro-American literature is greatly focused on marginalisation. This poem “The telephone conversation” deals with the sorrows and sufferings of Africans who lived in the United States of America during colonisation. Racism is revealed through the claims and practices of one group of people who claims superiority over another. In the context of the poem under consideration here, it is a discrimination and domination of white people over people of other skin colours. In South Africa racism played a major role. People were separated according to their own prominent

communities and these communities had their own churches, hospitals, schools, and other institutes and they were not allowed to marry from outside their race.

Racism and marginalisation are curses that have occupied the humankind. In this poem we find that the African tenant wants to have an identity and liberty to live among the white peoples.

The history of European dominance of Africa through military and economic strategies is a long history and is often bloody one. The 1880s marked the intensification of conflicts between European countries for the control of the regions of Africa. Especially prominent countries in the imperial project for the last part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century were France (especially in West Africa), Great Britain (East and South Africa, the Gold Coast), Belgium (the Congo), Spain (the Western Sahara), Italy (North Africa), and Germany (East Africa). The struggle for control of African territories was driven in part by the rich natural resources of the various regions of the continent as well as by a desire to control crucial routes for overseas trade. The political and economic tensions that circulated just below the surface of the struggle for Africa informed many of the international crises that led to World War I. The rush to colonize the Congo, the rebellions that threatened the building of the Suez Canal, and the seemingly perpetual battles over control of the Nile headwaters are three examples of many crises provoking incidents that are usually recognized as precipitating the political tensions that erupted into war in 1914.

Furthermore, the cultural impact of Colonialism was immense. The varied cultures of each African locality were subsumed by the culture of the country occupying that locality. In short, native Africans were treated as second-class citizens by the ruling class of European colonists. Thus, it is important to note that though Soyinka's poem explores the speaker's experiences of racism and displacement in a foreign country, that speaker would likely be subjected to similar experiences in his own birthplace as well.

In Britain, prior to the 1900s, there was often tension arising over governmental and cultural attitudes towards immigration. Originally these tensions grew from hostility towards peoples of a different culture and appearance, most notably towards members of the growing Jewish community and later towards immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. Due to the tensions and concerns created by immigration, the British parliament decided to restrict immigration in 1905, a decision that has repercussions even today as the country continues to maintain very strong legislative control of immigration levels.

Following [World War II](#), Britain suffered through a slow and often debilitating return from the economic hardships of the previous decades. The economy was able to rebuild, albeit slowly, and the signs of recovery proved a beacon to immigrants who were seeking refuge or a better lifestyle in the United Kingdom. Under the British Nationality Act of 1948, the British Government decided to embark on a major change in the law of nationality throughout the Commonwealth. All other Commonwealth countries, with the exception of Ireland, had their own British subject nationality status. Since the middle of the twentieth century, racial tensions have

ebbed and flowed in Britain, driven in part by the economic climate of the day and by the realization that the large populations of different nationalities, notably South Asians, Africans, East Asians, and Eastern Europeans, have reconfigured Britain into a country populated predominantly by people with a foreign heritage.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, racial policies and trade practices were a central mechanism for controlling a disenfranchised work force comprised largely of Scottish and Irish workers. As immigrant populations expanded through the early twentieth century, so did the discriminatory conduct, which had to take into account the presence of an increasing number of workers of Jewish heritage as well as immigrants from Russia and [Eastern Europe](#).

“The Telephone Conversation” is the poem about the marginalisation, slavery, racism and so on. The conversation between the black tenant and the white landlady in this poem represents racism and discrimination. The theme and the tone of the poem deal with the racial discrimination between the Caucasian and African tenant. In this poem, the African tenant wants to rent a house from the landlady during colonisation of white peoples. They had rules and regulations showing their hatred for dark complexion peoples. They thought that the dark complexion is vulgar and awful.

When the prospective tenant exposed that he was a dark complexioned person, suddenly the face and the voice the landlady changed became cold. By this we could clearly feel that the landlady was discriminating against the people of other races. Alliteration like clinical crushing was used to give more importance to the coldness in the landladies’ tone, when she knew that the man was an African.

The African tenant openly exposed that he was an African even though he knew that he couldn’t get a house for rent. The landlady asked about the actual colour of the black tenant repeatedly though the African explained about his features several times. The landlady raised the question about the race of the African.

He assumed her image to be with “lipstick-coated, long gold rolled cigarette-holder piped”.

Here the poet reveals the racism of the landlady. At a point, the tenant was upset and said that “Madam you should see the colour of my remaining part of my body like palm of my hand, soles of my feet are a peroxide bond. She examined his conscious of speech through the conversation

“how dark? ... I had not misheard...

Are you light

Or very dark? ... ”

The most horrible comparison of her view about racism is shown in the phrase “omnibus squelching tar.”

We could recognize the feelings of racism through the poem “The Telephone Conversation”.

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Minimised Identity and Marginal Self in *The Big Fat City*

Dr. Madhu Kamra
 Department of English
 Durga Mahavidyalaya, C.G Raipur
kamra61@yahoo.com

Abstract

If each existent has voice, though many a time voiceless, then the marginals are undoubtedly vocal; vocal in their demands, needs as well as plight. The echo of ‘need’ and ‘feed’ has its own meaningful pattern of sense and sensibility – the exploration of which is challenging and at times defeating in terms of ‘feel for humanity’. The present paper is one such difficult and self – defeating attempt to reveal the voice and voiceless cry of the Marginals in terms of caste and class discrimination. The recent play *The Big Fat City* is therefore in resonance with the marginals striving for articulation in order to achieve self – respect and self – efficacy. With Juxtaposition of urban – rural and have-have not, the cunning inhuman traits and tools at work are projected with precision to slot the marginals in full deep probe.

Though the present age has awarded multiple choices, yet the life of marginals cut off from the power – society continue to rely on their personal fate with little or no voice. With increased financial and social instability, anxiety and social approval is as much a far – off gain as was earlier. The public and private spheres juxtaposed adds a much-telling effect to the ‘voiceless say’ of the marginals projected/delineated.

Keywords: Mahesh Dattani, *The Big Fat City*, Minimised Identity, Marginal Self, Marginals, Voiceless, Power, Inequality, Articulation

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Introduction

Mahesh Dattani the playwright, screenwriter, film-maker, script writer, producer and stage director has produced plays of enduring merit. Realising that the world is filled with new ideas, Dattani, like Karnard and Tendulkar, introduced new art form, emerging from the use of technology to add loud meaningful decibels to otherwise not much robust genre. He made theatre move out of the proscenium to speak more intimately and largely on contemporary issues. His enthusiasm resounds in one such play of meaningful enterprise ‘Where did I Leave my Purdah,’ Where Nazia of old theatre makes a comeback with affirmation- “My life is big. I am BIG and GENEROUS. Only the theatre deserves me” (44). The play under study *The Big Fat City* appeared for the public on 22 June 2013 at the Tara Theatre, NCPA, Nariman Point, Mumbai to “... reflect on the highs and lows of surviving in a system largely indifferent to Profession Theatre” (cover page)

Discussion

The Big Fat City is another challenging play with much assertive and aggressive note against khap community. Dattani has established his acumen for taking up contemporary issues - a quick diagnosis comes up as a play if an ill affects the society pathetically. Achintkaur, T.V film and stage actor, therefore, labelled it as “a black comedy” in her contribution entitled “A Note on the play” affixed as a preface. The play illustrates honour killing, also called ‘customary killing’. It can also be defined as a death that is awarded to a spouse or both for marrying within the same gotra or outside one’s caste or one’s sibling or proximal cousin. A caste definition describes this as “Honour crimes and killings as violence stemming from a perceived desire to safeguard family” human which in turn is embodied in female behaviour that challenges man’s control over woman including control exerted through sexual relations, rape, dating someone unacceptable to the family and the violations of restrictions imposed on woman and girl’s dress, employment or educational opportunities, social lifestyle. Victimisation to implicit discrimination brings in violence and loss of new bloomed lives. Parallel to this is explicit discrimination wherein a self- imposed seclusion is expected no sooner economic weeds spurt up.

In the modern times, marginalisation is the cause of concept change. Today an individual is no longer a product of merely traditions, rituals, localities or family. In the existing times, under the flux of transitional changes, self- identity is created through ‘choices’ made by a person. Because the rate of change is annoyingly hurried, it is difficult to survive “on automatic pilot” mode to protect a single lifestyle from the generalised environment of ‘Decent Living’. In an effort to reach a level of public charisma, charm and appreciation, the self is subjected to unimagined conflicts that leads to ‘fragmentation of Identity’ and additional rigorous efforts are put in to reconstruct the narrative of ‘recognition’. Because modern life is more private and at the same time more public the inhabitants are open to high-consequence risk in terms of emotional

and psychological health. Marginalisation of any nature – be its class, caste or race occurs when the self-preserving aspects of identity are mutilated or hampered. The need to promote self-worth for sense of belonging and connectedness with others is therefore requisite for innate drive to feel efficacious, safe, and secured living. When this master sentiment is diseased due to motive challenged by the world around, a marginalised ‘self’ is the ugly outcome. The Big Fat City’ is a potent example of this process.

Plot

Murli and Niharika are socially secluded due to fiscal downfall, herein Sailesh falls in as a butt for Niharika wants to transfer their loan to Sailesh’s bank not knowing that Murli has lost his job too. On the other hand, Sailesh is intent upon using Murli against misuse of his customer’s money. Equally deplorable is the state of TV actor Lalita who needs money to fend her boozier husband-Kailash and a young son - Rahul. In her struggle to make both ends meet, she gets involved with a drug racket of underworld with wild notoriety. Kailash is killed by Puneet who is Anu’s husband and are paying guest in Niharika’s flat. Because Kailash is lying naked dead in Anu’s bed, Puneet suspects his wife sexual connection indicating fragile trust in marriage. To do away with the corpse, the entire stock of characters join to manage Anu to trick her brother Harjeet for Rs. One crore. Harjeet suspects foul play and appears as a killer to do away with his sister for living with Puneet causing stigma on their Khap community. Full of gory drama elements like envy, adultery, violence, murder, greed, mafia and corruption, the play adds gloom to the class and caste marginals. The play is therefore an endeavour to integrate same caste and gotra marriage into the common acceptable fold of social recognition. With multiple cruel instances happening now and then, the play demands ‘Khap Penal Pattern’ to be quashed both legally and individually.

Interpretation

Spread to the length of two acts and six scenes in all, the play makes neat slots for story to develop. Act I, Scene I opens in an economical locale comprising of one bedroom-hall, kitchenette with a small balcony attached to it for meagre air to blow in. Poor finances of the inhabits is symbolically conveyed through makeshift furniture in the bedroom further a few essential items are also on the missing list like a television set and an air conditioner. With poorly done backdrop one can estimate at once that the cause of tension in none other but “no money” or less Money”. Murli and Niharika are therefore struggling for a support- system that can steer them out of deep waters. Resorting to false way and tricky intention that are at work to bait a man of richness who can crutch their staggering finance.

Niharika: ... you have to look successful... and are chance ! we have this one chance and you want to ruin it. (158)

It is this prospective help which ironically comes to bait the couple as financial crutches for Sailesh pretends to be financially sound through his plight is much a corollary to that of Niharika and Murli. Sailesh is quick to estimate in the possibility and is disappointed. Interestingly this is quickly reported through SMS – the screen shows what aside or soliloquy were instrumental in doing in earlier times. The screen reflects his thoughts as- loud meditation, a window to processing of circumstances as derivatives. When Sailesh’s wife calls him exquisitely of the possibility of help needed, he types out a message as he is in audible proximity of Niharika and Murli-Screen (from Sailesh): Just Got HERE. His wife is A PRETENTIOUS, SNOOTY BITCH. CHANCES ARE SLIM: (158)

This trap is concocted again through a technical gadget with its social website- Facebook- “I am so glad to see two college mates united, thanks to Facebook (161). Sailesh and Murli are in tight corners but strategically one wants to use the other for rescue operation. The spouses on either side are also involved to bail out the opportunities. Lolly is another such instrumental presence put to work to tide out the economic odds in Murli’s financial health. Technology is again given space and the popularity of the soap-opera. Saas Beni Saperan is mentioned to illustrate the expanse of media-reach.

Technology is also utilized for plotting and its secrecy as audio-conferencing tool is put to revelation:

Screen (From Niharika): I invited Her so he will be IMPRESSED. IT’S WORKING SO PLEASE DON’T SCREW THINGS UP. DON’T SAY A WORD. (165)

Such innovative techniques do save time of staging and also propels speed of the plot. This also keep the three strands of the story well connected and interdependent:

- a corporate couple in
- a financial quandary
- a popular soap star with a troubled marriage and an aspiring starlet with uncanny awry.

Conclusion

The Big Fat City is not a well-received play though the head female actress Achint Kaur makes tall claims of the subtleties which challenged her performance. The reasons given are varied for example it talks about three strands of stories badly linked to make a shoddy plot and the message going awry as the play progresses. This concoction of three message conveying into one may please a crazy Dattani-lover but others may find the play mind-boggling. Center stage is occupied by female characters who are socially and economically under-privileged and in this sense are subalterns. Pathologically the play suggests an attitudinal change as a truly revolutionary empowerment. The play details how poor finances is a social disadvantage whereby an individual is relegated to the fringe of the groups/ society where he desires to be. The

love partners Anu and Puneet are condemned to live a life of homeless to seek 'gainful' togetherness which the refractory community does not permit.

Escaping from social deprivation is their only refuge. To their fate lies the other group (Murli, Sailesh and Lalita) fearing economic exclusion as they lack capital asset to repay debts and survive on daily basis. Here all characters are 'poor' in an uncustomary sense, that is "they have little; are of little or no worth and have little skill/luck". The entire cohort of personae strive illegally and unethically for non- food related needs. This uncomfortable fringe speaks loud of increasing internal and external dependence for lazy and luxurious survival. For example, Murli who is living away from his mother in a modern flat decides to shift back to his parental house due to loss of job in the sweep of inflation hence stands deprived of his rightful bailout package. Murli who has bought a modern living on manifold debts sounds pathetic when he pleads:

Murli: I can't take it; I can't live in the fear that these thugs from the bank are going to come and knock on our door. They will beat us up, Break some bones to get us going, don't like violence. I don't even play Angry Birds! (180)

The plight of all characters is limited to the slot named 'Material Self'. The 'Bodily Self' is in conflict with the world and wherein each character stands marginalised. Here the focus is purely and largely on what William James called "The empirical Self". The 'mere ownership effect' places one on the hierarchy of 'high' or 'low', wherein his progeny, his friends, his reputation and his riches fall into account. The characters suffer anguish because they have lost what they earlier possessed and are now in depression for they desire now much more without putting in the needed labour. This results in shrinkage of their personalities leading, to noticeable 'harsh-feel' of 'no-identity' and 'no recognition'. The marginal characters therefore strive for 'accomodation,' adaption of new mode and adjustments in the existing frame to build their identity frame.

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Gender Discrimination in India: An Overview

Dr. S. Chelliah & Dr. K. V. Dominic

Abstract

India as everyone knows is the largest democracy in the world and we Indians are proud of it. Equality, fraternity and liberty are the basic principles of democracy. Though our governments, both Central and States, are elected by the people, can we call the country a democratic in the strict sense of the word? No. There is gender discrimination as well as class segregation at a very high rate. Though we call India a secular state, it is unlike the Western secularism and the country has evolved more a religio-centric one. Religions are the main culprits of gender discrimination. And they are fed and supported by politics of our country. This paper aims at portraying the plight of Indian women marginalized and tortured by the religious, political patriarchy.

Keywords and phrases: gender discrimination, Swami Vivekananda, Gandhi, patriarchy, female literacy, dowry system, crime against women, purdah, female infanticide

The term 'gender' is defined as 'either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones.' The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female. Sex and gender are different. The term 'sex' is defined as 'either of the two divisions, male or female, into which persons, animals, or plants are divided, with reference to their reproductive functions.' Gender inequality is the discrimination shown to women by men. It is a product of the patriarchy and

women are assumed and treated as inferior and weaker to men in mental and physical power. It is a global phenomenon, but compared to the West and other developed countries, gender discrimination is very high in India.

India as everyone knows is the largest democracy in the world and we Indians are proud of it. Equality, fraternity and liberty are the basic principles of democracy. Though our governments, both Central and States, are elected by the people, can we call the country a democratic in the strict sense of the word? No. There is gender discrimination as well as class segregation at a very high rate. Discrimination to women was found in all the ages of our country though it was very less in the pre-Vedic era. This paper aims at finding out the causes and effects of gender discrimination.

Let me begin the paper by sharing the views of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi on women and gender discrimination. Swami Vivekananda preached: “The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is its treatment of its women. . . There is no hope of rise for that family or country where there is no estimation of women, where they live in sadness.” (*The Complete Works*, vol. 7, pp. 214-15) Swamiji spoke on another occasion: “When people are discussing as to what man and woman can do, always the same mistake is made. They think they show man at his best because he can fight, for instance, and undergo tremendous physical exertion; and this is pitted against the physical weakness and non-combating quality of woman. This is unjust. Woman is as courageous as man. Each is equally good in his or her way. What man can bring up a child with such patience, endurance, and love as the woman can? The one has developed the power of doing; the other, the power of suffering. If woman cannot act, neither can man suffer. The whole universe is one of perfect balance.” (*The Complete Works*, vol. 2, pp. 25-26) Being a spiritual man, Vivekananda emphatically exposed the vice of sex discrimination: “Soul has no sex, it is neither male nor female. It is only in the body that sex exists, and the man who desires to reach the spirit cannot at the same time hold sex distinctions.” (*The Complete Works*, vol. 4, p. 176)

Quotes of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation is dearer to us than any others. He shared his views on gender discrimination through his weekly journal *Young India*: “To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, has she not greater courage? Without her, man could not be. If nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with woman. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?” (“To the Women of India,” *Young India*, Oct. 4, 1930) See how vehemently he condemned gender discrimination through *Young India* in 1921: “Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of

humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even today the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge.” (YI, 15-9-1921, p. 292) Gandhi was bold enough to blame Shastras and Smritis for discriminating women. He wrote: “Legislation has been mostly the handiwork of men; and man has not always been fair and discriminate in performing that self-appointed task. The largest part of our effort in promoting the regeneration of women should be directed towards removing those blemishes which are represented in our Shastras as the necessary and ingrained characteristics of women. . . We will feel ashamed of the stray reflections on them in our Smritis, and will soon forget them. Such revolutions have occurred in Hinduism in the past, and will still take place in the future, leading to the stability of our faith.” (Gandhi, *Speeches and Writings* 424)

Gandhi was totally opposed to gender discrimination. He did not like Indian society's preference for a boy and a general neglect of a girl child. In fact, in most cases she is not allowed to be born. If born her survival is not ensured. If somehow she survives she is subjected to neglect. She does not get respect and the status she deserves equal to that of a boy. Gandhi described discrimination against women as an anachronism. He said: "I fail to see any reason for jubilation over the birth of a son and for mourning over the birth of a daughter. Both are God's gifts. They have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the world going.”

Gandhi called women as the noble sex. He said that if she is weak in striking, she is strong in suffering. Gandhi described; "Woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa." He further states: "A daughter's share must be equal to that of a son. The husband's earnings are a joint property of husband and wife as he makes money by her assistance.”

Gandhi prepared a primer for the children for a primary school. This primer or *Balpothi* is the form of a mother teaching the child. In a chapter on housework the mother asks her son: Dear Son, you should also help in the housework as your sister does. Son answers: But she is a girl. I am a boy. A boy plays and studies. Sister says: How come I also like to play and study? Brother: I do not deny that but, dear sister, you have to do housework as well. The mother: Why should a boy not do house work? Son: Because the boy has to earn money when he grows up, therefore, he must study well. The Mother: You are wrong my son. Woman also makes an earning for the family. And, there is a lot to learn in housework--house cleaning, cooking, laundry. By doing house work you will develop various skills of the body and will feel self-reliant. In good housework, you need to use your eyes, hands and brain. Therefore these activities are educative and they build your character. Men and women, both need to be educated equally in housework because the home belongs to both. (Quoted in Patel)

Having expressed the views of two greatest souls of our country let me now hunt out the basic causes of gender discrimination. How has this evil attitude got into the Indian minds? Though our country is a secular state our secularism is unlike the Western one and it promotes religions and religious feelings among the people. It has now come to such a worst stage that our people's primary concern and feelings are religious. Communal and religious feelings give way to national and patriotic feelings. The purposes of the practice of a religion are to achieve the goals of salvation for oneself and others, and (if there is a God) to render due worship and obedience to God. Religious leaders, priests, sanyasis and pujaris are esteemed high in our country and their words are more accepted than even one's parents. Patriarchy reigns supreme in all religions and rituals and ceremonies are conducted by men. Thus, clergy assume themselves as superior to laity. Instead of promoting world peace and happiness each religion professes itself as the best in the world and propagates the message that salvation is possible only through it. Scriptures and holy books were inscribed by men, and women had no role in it. Principles, commandments, rules and regulations were formulated by men and the male superiority complex led them to consider women as inferior and it deteriorated to such a level as considering women as consumer products. It is an irony that even women accept themselves as inferior. It is the religions and the religious leaders who injected this venom of inferiority feelings among women. If they will, the priests of all religions can very well remove gender discrimination from all societies because their words are precious and acceptable to the laity. But they won't, because they will have to share their power and positions with women and refrain from exploiting them.

Since religions are vote banks, the political parties in our country feed them and support with money and legal concessions. Even leftist parties are no exception to it. Candidates for local bodies, assemblies and parliaments are decided by the political parties on the basis of religion and community.

Some societies regarded women as the root cause of all evil and responsible for downfall of men. Women had a decidedly inferior status and were totally dependent on men. Women were confined to the family and remained under legal and customary subjection of their husbands or other male family members. Customs and practices like female infanticide, child marriage, purdah (veil), dowry, polygamy, sati, repeated pregnancies, permanent and pathetic widowhood, illiteracy, wife-beating and verbal abuse made life of common women very hard. (Kaushik)

Based on the most recent UN data, India's population is 1.37 billion. Sex Ratio of India is 107.48, i.e., 107.48 males per 100 females in 2019. It means that India has 930 females per 1000 males. In absolute terms, India has 48.20% female population compared to 51.80% male population. India is at 191st position out of 201 [countries](#) in terms of female to male ratio. Among [Asian countries](#), India is at 43rd position out of 51. Isn't this a shameful and shocking reality of our country which is supposed to be a developing nation and one of the emerging superpowers? This unpleasant sex ratio is a result of sex-selective abortion, childhood neglect of girls and infanticide. Preference of son over daughter is the main reason for female infanticide. Another major reason is dowry system which makes daughters an unaffordable economic burden.

Here are some statistics regarding gender discrimination and atrocities. Millions of girls go missing each year and as per UN Population Fund for Asia, over 170 million girls are missing in Asia alone. The proportion of women who completed five years of primary schooling in India and were literate was 48%, much less than 92% in Nepal, 74% in Pakistan, 54% in Bangladesh.

India ranks low in global indices of female literacy as well. African countries Rwanda, Ethiopia and Tanzania all rank higher than India. India was ranked 38th among the 51 developing countries for female literacy. Daughters are not educated because parents think that it is a wastage of money and they have to be married off paying good dowry at an early age. The concept of the Indian societies formulated by the patriarchal system is that women are created for household work and for serving men. Thus, women are destined to lead a prison life of house, rearing children and serving men through food and sex. Gandhi believed that lack of education and information was the root cause of all the evils against women. He believed that education is therefore necessary for women as it is for men. He believed that education is essential for enabling women to assert their natural right, to exercise them wisely and to work for their expansion. He thought that low level of literacy among women had deprived them of socio-political power and also the power of knowledge. He stood for proper education for women as he believed that after receiving education, they become sensitive to the glaring inequalities to which they are subjected. (Kaushik)

Dowry system is another curse of the Indian society. Dowry deaths are deaths of married women who are murdered or driven to suicide by continuous harassment and torture by their husbands and in-laws over a dispute about their dowry, making women's homes the most dangerous place for them to be. Dowry deaths are found predominantly in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Iran. Twenty-one dowry deaths are reported across the country every day. The conviction rate, however, is less than 35 per cent.

I composed a poem on the curse of dowry system which was published in my first collection of poems Winged Reason in 2010. The poem is entitled "Laxmi's Plea". Let me read it:

Laxmi's Plea

Rekha's wedding today;
my youngest colleague
junior by ten years.
To be or not to be;

present or absent;
 a terrible trance!
 Auspicious occasion;
 jocund jolly hall;
 a fish out of water;
 I can't slither there.
 "Laxmi, when is your wedding?"
 "Laxmi, you alone remain."
 Can't bear these arrows;
 heart full of such arrows;
 bleeding day after day.
 It's none my fault
 single at thirty three.
 "Laxmi looks very handsome."
 "She is a lamp to any house."
 A lamp destined to burn out
 under a hot pot.
 Plenty of proposals;
 appeared with tea
 before many young men.
 None complained my looks.
 "What's the dowry?"
 A stumbling block to all proposals.
 Father died when I was ten;
 mother bed-ridden with cancer;
 a thatched house in five cents;
 an elder sister married off.
 My meagre salary two thousand

hardly meets our food and medicine.

I have pricked my bubble of dreams;

let none dream for me.

Leave me alone;

leave me single.

Gandhi believed that the custom of dowry turned young girls into mere chattels to be bought and sold. He called this custom pernicious as it lowered the status of women; destroyed their sense of equality with men and defiled the institution of marriage. (Bakshi 175) To curb the venomous dowry system he advised every parent to educate their daughters so that they refuse to marry a young man who wanted a price for marrying and would remain spinster than to be party to the degrading terms. He suggested that a strong public opinion needs to be formulated against dowry and such young men who soil their fingers with such ill-gotten gold should be excommunicated from society. He advocated change in education and also stressed the need of taking recourse to radical measure like organizing youth movements and offering satyagraha against those perpetuating the custom. (Gandhi, *Woman's Role in Society* 32)

The destiny of widows in our country is very pathetic. India is home to an estimated 40 million widows - approximately 10% of all women. Ageing women are more vulnerable than men. Without any financial security or welfare infrastructure, many of them are abandoned in Vrindavan- where they live off charity while they wait to die. Farmer suicides, communal riots, terrorist attacks, road accidents etc. increase the number of widows in our country. I wrote and published a poem entitled "I am an Indian Young Widow" in my fifth poetry book *Cataracts of Compassion* in 2018. Let me quote from it:

I am an Indian Young Widow

I am an Indian widow

Cruel destiny made me so

at my prime age of twenty nine

With neither notice

nor any prior hint

he left me and our little ones

.....

Alas I have to row all alone now
 And sea has become more violent
 No glimpse of any terminus now
 With none to help from both our families
 how will I survive with my little ones?
 I who opposed practice of suttee
 can now find sense behind its concept
 Hellish is the life of an Indian widow
 Tragic and nightmarish if she is young
 Patriarchy doesn't allow her to survive
 Eagles fly over her wherever she goes
 When she craves for love and sympathy
 society rends her bleeding heart
 shooting arrows of repulsive words
 Curses hurl on her from in-law's house
 Burden for her parents and brothers
 Looking at her husband's photo
 whines often for deserting them
 Pleads him to take with him
 In fact she rows not for saving her life
 but to save her children from being drowned.

Another major chain of Indian women is that they have no freedom in choosing their dress. Their dress code is decided by the patriarchy, particularly religion. Men have the freedom to wear any dress they like but they dictate the attire of women. Gandhi regarded purdah as inhuman and immoral, for it impeded the march towards swaraj (self-rule) by restricting women. (Bakshi 174-175) It denied women freedom as well as free gift of God like light and fresh air. It also crippled the free movement of women; interfered with their advancement and their capacity for doing useful work for the society. It weakened instead of strengthening morality for it did not help in preserving chastity as chastity is not a hot-house growth and cannot be superimposed. (Gandhi, *Woman's Role in Society* 22) It cannot be

protected by the surrounding wall of purdah. It must grow from within and must be capable of withstanding every temptation. Men must be able to trust womenfolk as the latter are compelled to trust them. He believed that the veil generates the feeling of insecurity in women and results in deterioration of their health. He appealed to public in general and women in particular to tear down purdah. (Gandhi, *Women and Social Injustice* 96) He was sure that abolition of purdah would lead to mass education for both men and women and would help women in gaining strength and becoming an active participant in the struggle for swaraj.

According to the [National Crime Records Bureau](#) of India, reported incidents of crime against women increased 6.4% during 2012, and a crime against a woman is committed every three minutes. In 2011, there were greater than 228,650 reported incidents of crime against women, while in 2015, there were over 300,000 reported incidents, a 44% increase.

Extreme poverty and lack of education are also some of the reasons for women's low status in society. Poverty and lack of education derives countless women to work in low paying domestic service, organized prostitution or as migrant laborers. Women are not only getting unequal pay for equal or more work but also, they are being offered only low skill jobs for which lower wages are paid. This has become a major form of inequality on the basis of gender. ("Gender Inequality in India")

According to the Deloitte report titled "Empowering Women & Girls in India for the Fourth Industrial Revolution", 95 per cent or 195 million women are employed in the unorganised sector or are in unpaid work. Women are discriminated in the labour sector with regard to the wages. They are paid lesser than the wages of men even if both are doing the same quantity of work. Among the majority of the poor people in India women are the bread earners of their families. They have to do all the domestic activities and then go for work in factories, estates, and other workplaces. Men, husbands and sons, either live idle or squander the money they earn through labour. Many are addicted to liquor and drugs and they beat and torture the women and children in the houses out of intoxication. Some even steal the hard-earned money of the women for their drink.

Discrimination to women in sports and games is more visible in our country than the West. Spectators are very less for women's games. Cricket, as you are aware, is the most popular game in our country. Players of our Indian Women Cricket team get very less remuneration compared to the men. They have no sponsors at all while the leading men players of our country earn millions and millions of rupees every month. I have composed a poem on this discrimination and published it in my third collection of poems entitled *Multicultural Symphony* in 2014. The name of the poem is "Women's Cricket World Cup 2013". Let me read it.

Women's Cricket World Cup 2013

I.C.C. Women's Cricket World Cup 2013

Played in cricket crazy land of India
 Opening match at Brabourne ground, Mumbai
 Indian lasses meeting West Indian lasses
 Live telecast from Star Cricket
 What a shame! Empty galleries!
 Had it been men's world cup
 galleries full and thousands ticketless outside
 Why such discrimination to women's sports?
 Why such double standards to women's feats?
 Had it been women's beauty contest
 or fashion show with minimum dress
 the stadium would be full
 even if tickets are very high
 Dear my brothers in India and abroad
 let's appreciate and promote
 our sisters' talents and skills
 rather than looking at them
 with vicious hungry eyes.

We have so far examined the impact of gender discrimination in our country. As I have stated earlier this unhealthy attitude and practice have been there throughout all the ages of India. We naturally expect a change or reformation in the society after our independence. Being a democratic country, the Constitution was formulated in such a manner ensuring equality for women. But even after 73 years of independence what is the position of women in our country? In the 17th Lok Sabha 2019 there are only 78 women representatives out of the total number of 542, with a low percentage of 14.6%. Out of the 236 Rajya Sabha members only 26 are women, just 11%. The Women's Reservation Bill or The Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, 2008, which proposes to amend the Constitution of India to reserve 33% of all seats in the Lower house of Parliament of India, the Lok Sabha, and in all State legislative assemblies for women is still a pending bill in the Parliament of India. No doubt, the male parliament members of both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are opposing the bill's implementation. Women representation in the State legislative assemblies is also very low and nominal.

Thus, it is very clear that as long as patriarchy rules supreme in our country women will never get justice. Unless women fight against this male supremacy by boycotting elections and resorting to Gandhian ways of satyagraha this gender discrimination will never disappear from India. I am winding up my paper with an extract from my poem “International Women’s Day” published in my first collection of poems *Winged Reason* in 2010.

“International Women’s Day”

Woman is the game!
 Birth to death,
 an instrument of lust
 and hot-selling sex.
 Her very birth ill omen:
 an unwelcome event.
 No guilt in foeticide;
 foeticide is matricide;
 no life without mother.
 Sexism in childhood;
 priority to her brother;
 her food, his leftover.
 Chained in kitchen,
 she rarely goes out.
 No toys, no plays;
 always envies him.
 Mum and dad love him;
 she gets only reproaches;
 beat her very often.
 Seldom educated;
 hence no employment,
 and always dependant.

No choice of her partner;
 her individuality
 scantily respected.
 Born to be dictated;
 tyranny everywhere:
 slave to her husband,
 servant to her in-laws.
 Bears the burden of birth;
 lives for her children.
 Dawn to dusk,
 blood turns sweat.
 Her love never returned.
 Has no place in politics:
 councils, assemblies, parliaments,
 she has little or unheard voice.
 Religions also dishonour her:
 she has no right
 to enter her Father's abode;
 no place in clergy.
 She is always the Other.
 Patriarchy is his product;
 he dictates the world;
 dictates even God,
 and corrupts religion.
 He writes scriptures,
 makes sexism predestinate.
 Venerable is woman,
 for she is your mother;

she is you sister;
 she is your wife;
 she is your guide;
 she is your teacher;
 she is your nurse;
 and above all,
 she is your angel.

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Biodata of the Resource Person



Prof. Dr. K. V. DOMINIC (b. 1956), English poet, critic, editor and short story writer is a retired professor of the PG & Research Department of English, Newman College, Thodupuzha, Kerala, India - 685585. He was born on 13 February 1956 at Kalady, a holy place in Kerala where Adi Sankara, the philosopher who consolidated the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta was born. He has authored/edited 38 books including two short story collections and ten books of poems—six in English and one each translation in French, Hindi, Bengali and Gujarati. He is the Secretary of Guild of Indian English Writers, Editors and Critics (GIEWEC) and Editor of two international refereed biannual journals--*Writers Editors Critics* (WEC) and *International Journal on Multicultural Literature* (IJML). PhD researches are in progress on his poetry. He can be contacted at prof.kvdominic@gmail.com Website: www.profkvdominic.com

Marginalization of Women in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*

Dr. S. Fathima Syeda
Assistant Professor
M. S. S. Wakf Board College
Madurai

Abstract

Male dominance is asserted through social institutions like the law, education and religion through traditional practices. Patriarchy is the social order, which is constituted by the self-sustaining structures like power, by means of which women's interests are always subordinated. Gender inequality is protested by feminist writers. They want to reconstruct the patriarchal structures of power in economic, educational and professional fields. A new era of

equality between sexes would lead a social revolution since women are one half of the human population.

Vikram Seth, a prominent post-independent writer discusses the marginalization of women in his novel *A Suitable Boy*. Saeeda Bai, a courtesan is being victimized by the society.

Saeeda, having suffered painful sexual exploitation, wishes to guard Tasneem, her daughter from a similar disgraced life. By her own protectionism she denied Tasneem any outside contact / communication or association with normal people. This ‘non-awareness’ is made into a beautiful feminine quality – an asset in young brides to preserve the family system’ (236). Both Lata, the protagonist of the novel and Tasneem are conditioned to attain this muted consciousness.

As Anita Desai (23) puts it, ‘Although in their rash youth, they (Lata and Maan) might be tempted by the possibilities of change, defiance, return chastened, to the safety and security of the familial and the traditional in the Indian fashion, by the great God family’.

Keywords: Vikram Seth, *A Suitable Boy*, Patriarchy-muted consciousness-marginalization of women by society-female victimhood. Tradition-transition-modernity-self-imposed seclusion-feminism-Woman as other-exploitation of women.

Introduction

‘The emotional, sexual, and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says, It’s a girl’ (Shirley Chisholm 1).

Marginalization of women is the major issue prevailing in societies of all eras. Gender imbalance is the hot topic of not only modern age but of all ages. Tradition, Transition and modernity are the different stages woman is passing through in all periods of history. Male dominance is asserted through traditional practices. In “Image of women in the Indo-Anglican Novel,” Meera Shirwadkar claims “Traditionally, marriage for woman has entailed as most submissive feminine role, she submits to her husband and his family as a slave” (26).

Male dominance is asserted through social institutions like the law, education and religion through traditional practices. Patriarchy is the social order, which is constituted by the self-sustaining structures like power, by means of which women’s interests are always subordinated. Gender inequality is protested by feminist writers. They want to reconstruct the patriarchal structures of power in economic, educational and professional fields. A new era of equality between sexes would lead a social revolution since women are one half of the human population.

In the patriarchal society, woman functions as other which allows men to construct a positive self-identity as masculine. De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* declares

Woman as represented by men has double and deceptive image ... she incarnates all moral virtues from good to evil, and their opposites . . . He projects upon her what he desires and what he feels, what he loves and what he hates (229).

Freud's theory suggests that human beings are born bisexual. The construction of masculinity and femininity is not secure. The main goal of femininity is to find ways of confronting and subverting the mechanism of oppression. They question Freud's concept of sexuality.

In Post-Independence era, there has been an astonishing awareness of various speeds of feminism and it has been redefined by many writers in response to the various clamours. Many writers focused on plights of woman poor living condition and voiced their support for equal rights for women. Among the contemporary writers in post – independent era, Vikram Seth is a unique but a versatile writer with variegated career – a Ph.D. scholar in economics, poet, translator and novelist.

Vikram Seth's portrayal of woman as marginalized creatures in his novel *A Suitable Boy* is analyzed in this paper. His depiction of woman is taken into analysis in this paper.

The novel *A Suitable Boy* opens with a wedding ceremony in Brahmipur. Mrs. Mehra's search for 'a suitable boy' for Lata is the main plot of this novel. Quest for a suitable boy for her daughter remains a great task for her to fulfill the social norms such as religion, caste and social status prevailing in the period of early post – independent era.

Discussion and Interpretation

Seth creates a large number of characters in the novel. One such character is Saeeda Bai whose love with Maan Kapoor is purely passionate and sexual attraction. Saeeda is treated in the novel as a sexy female object, primarily positioned as a site of male desire and marginalized on account of her disreputable career. The very system which exploits Saeeda Bai, made her depend on it. She has to satisfy the sexual urges of a range of wide patrons. One such patron was Raja of Marh. The attraction and passion of

Maan with sexual happiness and falls in love with her, knowing very well that he will never marry her.

Saeeda Bai's so called 'younger sister', Tasneem a teen aged girl (whose real identity is revealed by the author at the climax of the plot of the novel) is also in a way similar to Lata in

selecting a suitable boy for matrimonial purpose. Although Saeeda and Tasneem do not know who their fathers are, Saeeda governs Tasneem's life, by her own patriarchal 'self', that Tasneem must be protected at all cost from the exploits of this ungentle world. Like Lata, Tasneem also has three suitors. At least, Lata is accorded a freedom of choice to select 'a suitable boy' whereas Tasneem, on the other hand, has neither freedom nor communication with any other persons, leave alone any suitable boy. Saeeda asserts to Mann 'It is not admirers to choose her, but to be chosen by me' (806). Tasneem is kept in purdah, 'spends time cutting vegetables, reading novels and thinking about life' (113) under the ever vigilant eyes of 'sister-mother' Saeeda. Of the three suitors of Tasneem, Rasheed is her tutor for Arabic; Ishaq Khan is the sarangi player of Saeeda's music team; and Firoz is the son of Nawab of Baitor. And ironically, Saeeda considers none of them to be the suitable boy for Tasneem.

Ishaq is the musician 'has no future' (805). Rasheed is already married and 'eccentric by nature' (Mala Pandurang 125) and Firoz is a blood-relation of Tasneem.

Saeeda tells Firoz of the shameful violation of 15 years old Saeeda, molested by his father Nawab of Baitar. She confesses that Tasneem is not her sister but 'the child she had conceived in terror, had carried in shame and had borne in pain ...' (1212). So, any romantic tie between Firoz and Tasneem is out of question. Ironically, Saeeda desires for the respectability of marriage for Tasneem, although 'domesticity and its standard concerns were not object of fond contemplation for her.' (303). Saeeda, having suffered painful sexual exploitation, wishes to guard Tasneem from a similar disgraced life. By her own protectionism she denied Tasneem any outside contact / communication or association with normal people. This 'non- awareness' is made into a beautiful feminine quality – an asset in young brides to preserve the family system' (236). Both Lata and Tasneem are conditioned to attain this muted consciousness.

Maan's sexual and emotional involvement with Saeeda comes a melodramatic end with a sudden rejection of passion as destructive and damaging when Maan visits Saeeda in Pasand Bagh after a long sojourn away on his father's election campaign, he sees his best friend Firoz in Saeeda's house unexpectedly. He cannot imagine that his close friend is having an affair with his most attractive woman Saeeda. He could not visualize that Firoz might be in love with Tasneem but not with Saeeda. The sudden feeling of rage blinds his balance of mind and he stabs Firoz with a knife and fatally injures him and escapes from the Pasand Bagh. Consequently, he is, however arrested and put in prison, charged with attempted murder. Mrs. Kapoor visits Maan, and unable to bear the shame and desperation of her younger son in detention, she suffers a heart attack and dies the same night. Then comes the dramatic court room scene where in Firoz, pleads a memory lapse and does not offer evidence against Maan. All ends well, with the inter-communal friendship restored and a repentant Maan released from the prison, much to his family's relief.

Maan's shattering experience of his mother's death has, however resulted in a 'violent revulsion of feeling' (1303) against himself, and against Saeeda Bai, for their passionate relationship. He rejects the very physicality that had attracted him earlier and feels only a deep loathing in her presence. On his last visit to her, he realizes with horror that he no longer views her as the sensuous woman for whom he had once felt great sexual desire. Rather, her body now appears physically scarred. 'Maan, totally indifferent to what he has done to Saeeda's household, to her reputation, and more importantly to Tasneem' (1303) returns to Prem Nivas.

As Anita Desai (23) puts it, 'Although in their rash youth, they (Lata and Maan) might be tempted by the possibilities of change, defiance, return chastened, to the safety and security of the familial and the traditional in the Indian fashion, by the great God family'.

Maan's shattering experience of his mother's death results in an overwhelming sense of guilt moves him into another world – beyond the reach of Saeeda's attraction. This bitter experience leaves Saeeda more fiercely determined than ever to protect ... Tasneem' (1228). When Tasneem runs down to prevent a shocked Firoz from leaving, 'she stands for the first time in her life at the open door of the house, not daring, however, to go further' (1192). The 'outing' from the inner courtyard into a larger world is halted. Tasneem is cut off more than ever from the outer world. She withdraws into a self-imposed seclusion. Three men who had come into her life, each more impossible than other and in each case, she had left her affection grow in silence and had suffered their sudden absence in silence' (1314). Saeeda's last statement in the narrative is a melancholic song; in the song there is an implicit acceptance of Saeeda's status quo, stress a reinforcement of the sense of female victim hood:

'The meeting has disappeared; the moths Bid farewell to the candlelight.
Departure's hour is on the sky
Only a few stars mark the night' (1315).

Conclusion

Marginalization of women is one of the themes of Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy*. In the novel, Saeeda Bai and Tasneem are not suitable for living a respectable life which other women live. Even the protagonist Lata is unable to marry Kabir, her lover. She chooses Haresh as her better - half. But Saeeda Bai and Tasneem do not have this option of marriage too. In the patriarchal society, the women become victims. The voice of the voiceless is never been heard. But 'unheard melodies are sweeter' as Keats suggests.

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An Enactment of the Ascribed and Acquired Marginalization in Mahesh Dattani's *Brief Candle: A Dance between Love and Death*

Dr. K. Maheswari

Assistant Professor of English

M.S.S. Wakf Board College

Madurai-625020

Tamil Nadu

maheswari626@gmail.com

Abstract

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With a special reference to Mahesh Dattani's *Brief Candle: A Dance between Love and Death*, the research article aims at exploring how social marginality is imposed upon cancer patients who face social impositions and adapt themselves to understand a new marginalized condition in society and in relationships. The play hints a transition of a set of characters from the centre to the fold of the "other" or the marginalized. The social marginality marked with the marginalization characteristic of an acquired as well as ascribed one is thinly presented here. The characters who once enjoyed the privilege of being at the centre face a situation of total irredeemable social marginality for being people with terminal illness at a hospice. Through a set of six characters – Dr Deepika Dave, Mahesh Tawade, Vikas Tiwari, Amol Ghosh, Amarinder and Shanti Venkatraman, Dattani dexterously enacts an irredeemable social marginality with a difference touching upon the issues of gender, the meaning of life, the inevitability of death, and the attitude of people towards terminal illness, unambiguously exemplifying both kinds of marginalization: ascribed and acquired. Dattani mixes the reality, the rehearsal of the play penned by one of the characters, Vikas, and the participation of the dead characters in the play, fuses the past, the present and the future, and brings out the irredeemable aspect of social marginality in both aspects – ascribed and acquired - cancer patients experience personally and socially.

Keywords: Mahesh Dattani, *Brief Candle: A Dance between Love and Death*, Marginalization, Ascribed Marginalization, Acquired Marginalization, Social Marginality

Introduction

The term "marginality" was first used in 1928 by Robert Park in his essay "Human Migration and the Marginal Man" where Park described the experience of immigrants (Bernt 14). The term has been used in three different ways in the field of sociology as identified by Janet Macini Billson. First, it refers to cultural marginality concerning the dilemmas of cross-cultural identities and assimilation. Secondly, it focuses on social role marginality describing the tensions occurring when an individual is restricted from belonging to a positive reference group. And thirdly, it means a structural marginality, referring to political, social and economic powerlessness and disadvantage. (Bernt 14). Of the three, it is the second reference - the focus on individuals in the society – which the research paper explores with reference to Dattani's *Brief Candle: A Dance between Love and Death*. The researcher goes to a step ahead and defines the second reference with an attribute of two specific categories of marginalization – acquired and ascribed marginalization, which is "a condition and a process that prevents individuals and groups from full participation in social, economic, and political life enjoyed by the wider society (Alakhunova et.al 10). To clarify the attribution, individuals experience marginality due to any already existent social phenomenon, in other words, an ascribed marginalization, and due to an acquired social phenomenon such as disability or illness or diseases such as cancer or AIDS. In other words, the characters in the play are all cancer patients, who experience either of the category of marginalization – ascribed or acquired (eGynkosh 51). They all have in fact moved from the centre to the marginal in terms of the kind of illness they "acquired," and some are already in the marginal.

Howitt observes that marginalisation produced by unevenness is a core focus for explaining social experience, and for changing it - marginalisation as a key theoretical issue, and marginalisation as a focus of practical interventions. These two concerns are touched upon by Mahesh Dattani though not very conspicuously (1).

Discussion and Interpretation

Brief Candle: A Dance between Love and Death by Mahesh Dattani is a stage play first performed on 5 July 2009 at Sophia Bhabha Hall, Mumbai, by Prime Time Theatre Company under the direction of Lillete Dubey, and published in 2010. The play is a kind of parody on death presented symbolically through the story of a group of cancer patients waiting for death in a hospice. Dattani in his introduction to his play sums up the essence of the play in a direct dialogue with his readers:

In *Brief Candle* I have in fact attempted to work on that thin line that defines comedy from tragedy. In the play you have survivors of cancer who are in the process of putting up a comedy play as a fundraiser for their hospice. Usually it is the mask of comedy that we tend to hide behind. In the play the mask of death is predominant almost to the point of ridicule. In that sense I do see the play more as a comedy with a flaw. As one of my characters puts it, 'In comedy, people don't die.' However, if we can view death with the same distance as we do comedy, then maybe it is not a comedy with a flaw anymore. (3)

The play has been presented in seven scenes without any interruption. Dattani has used a huge mask, "Face of Cancer" "ravaged by the effects of chemotherapy" (3), set on the stage constantly over which a piano is laid for the character, the dead Vikas, to play.

A brief sketch on the play is attempted here to create a background to present the analysis of an irredeemable social marginality in the play. The play opens with a rehearsal of a play "Hotel Staylonger" written by the dead cancer patient, Vikas. Dr Deepika Dave playing the character of the hotel manager in the play takes Mahesh Tawade, a nurse in the hospice, playing the role of Mr Kulkarni to Room 206 in the hotel in Mumbai. Mr Kulkarni's flight is delayed. He has been put in the hotel for the night. He has to share the room with Mr Sengupta played by another cancer patient, Amol. Mr Kulkarni regrets sharing the room with Mr Sengupta who is drinking his wine named "Bloody Mary." Mr Kulkarni tries to advance towards the hotel manager. She affirms that she is not a call girl or a girl of weak morality, and screams. Mr Malhotra, whose role is played by Amarinder, another cancer patient, enters the room, asks the hotel manager to set him up with Miss Unikrishnan, played by another cancer patient, Shanti Venkatraman, who had bumped into Mr Malhotra. Mr Sengupta with a bloody mary in his hand and a strolley enters where all three – the hotel manager, Mr Kulkarni and Mr Malhotra – are there. Mr Malhotra asks Mr Kulkarni for the pills of Viagra as he is going to propose to Miss Unikrishnan who is leaving for Chennai the next

day. Mr Kulkarni says that he has it for himself winking at the hotel manager. Mr Sengupta asks the hotel manager for another drink, and wants her to sleep with him. At this juncture, the covered face of cancer is revealed. The dead Vikas is shown to be alive and seated on the top of the face of death playing a louder chord on the piano. He talks to Deepika about her promise of coming to his death bed to say goodbye. Deepika is placed on a spotlight. The conversation between Deepika and the dead Vikas continues. Other characters just freeze. When other actors unfreeze, Deepika is deeply troubled. She stops all others and engages in a conversation with the dead Vikas, which reveals that Deepika and Vikas were medical students in love with each other, and that Vikas was a dropout with ideas to become a writer to change the lives of the down-trodden and the underprivileged.

The second scene switches to a situation of the hospice in the past. Mahesh (a male nurse) gives tablets to the cancer patients in the ward. He is to give a tablet to Vikas now a patient in the hospice run by Deepika. Vikas has written a play and talks about it to her. He tells her that the play is about their love affair in the past. She reminds him that she is a doctor and that he is her patient, and leaves. Mahesh gives him a tablet (Roxanol). Vikas places it in his shirt. He doesn't take it. Mahesh insists that he should take it. Vikas threatens to jump out of the window and kill himself. Mahesh insists that Vikas can commit suicide later as he is to go to Bajrang Bali Temple of the Hanuman. Vikas makes fun of Mahesh who can become rich and marry Dr Deepika. Amol comes there carrying a bottle of blood going into him through a tube. Vikas continues to tease with Mahesh. He makes him tell the story of Markandaya, and talk about the Hanuman Chalisa (the Mantra to chant to get liberation from the birth cycle) and the Maha Mrityunjaya (the mantra to chant to live young forever). Vikas gives him a false hope of making him rich. Amol warns Vikas not to play with his expectations. Vikas gives Amol the tablet he has hid in his shirt. He starts breathing heavily. He is dying. He shouts for the doctor. Mahesh informs Dr Deepika. But she refuses to come to his bed. Vikas dies surrounded by Amol, Mahesh, Amar, and Shanti without a good bye from Deepika.

The third scene presents the suitability of the play "Hotel Staylonger" by the dead Vikas for fund-raising context. Deepika discusses with the patients with reluctance whether the play written by Vikas can be used to raise money for the hospice. The play has taken its characters directly from the real patients of the hospice. Amarinder starts narrating how Vikas understood him better than a doctor to manage his prostate cancer. Shanti too joins Amarinder in presenting how Vikas was there to support her just after chemotherapy. Amol too shares his views on Vikas' play and proves how funny the play is. Mahesh affirms how Vikas and Amol were keen on staying alive. Amol digs at Dr Deepika for being cold and indifferent to the lives of the patients unlike Vikas. He accuses her of considering patients just as "rotting trees" (Brief candle). Deepika defends that Vikas came to her with the hope of being saved, and argues that the play he has penned is the result of his anger with her. Vikas, being dead, is also a character in the play. He speaks to Deepika and asks her to tell their whole story. Shanti refuses to accept that the play is an angry

play, citing the last email he sent her. Deepika suspects that Vikas told their story and relationship to Shanti. Shanti confirms it and says that Vikas had asked Shanti to take care of Deepika when he had gone. This really makes Deepika become sad.

The fourth scene presents the rehearsal of Vikas's play. Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan) is in her room. She is waiting for a room service. Amarinder (Mr Malhotra) enters with a pill in his hand. He takes it. Mahesh (Mr Kulkarni) comes there to stop Amarinder saying that it is not Viagra but a cyanide capsule. Shanti faints in Mahesh's arms. Amarinder runs to the restroom and tries to empty his stomach. Amol (Mr. Sengupta) enters to ask Mahesh (Mr. Kulkarni) for the door key. He searches Mahesh's dress and almost wrestles with him. Amarinder (Mr Malhotra) comes out of the rest room to see them fight. They just stop seeing Amarinder. Mahesh (Mr. Kulkarni) tells him that the capsule was really a Viagra not a cyanide capsule. Amol (Mr. Sengupta) and Mahesh (Mr Kulkarni) go to their room leaving Amarinder (Mr. Malhotra) and Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan) in the room. Deepika (Hotel Manager) comes there for a room service. Shanthi (Miss Unikrishnan) sneezes and her towel around her slips off to show her breastless condition to Amarinder (Mr Malhotra), who just leaves the room in pain.

In the fifth scene Shanthi narrates the events which led her to identify her breast cancer, and how immediately after her marriage she could face this problem and had chemotherapy three times and lost her hope and shape. She also acknowledges how Amarinder helped her feel important and regain her hope for life. Now she can see herself in the mirror without any fear or strange feeling. Amarinder too reciprocates her care for him. He explains how the mutual care helped him accept the effects of the operation he has to undergo, and reasons out why he accepted to be part of the play Vikas has written.

The sixth scene presents the continuation of the rehearsal of the play. Amarinder (Mr. Malhotra) dances with Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan), and faints. Shanti screams for help. Amol (Mr. Sengupta) and Mahesh (Mr. Kulkarni) rush in, and blame Shanti for almost killing Amarinder (Mr Malhotra). Deepika enters to understand the situation. Mahesh asks Deepika to kiss Amarinder and save him. But Deepika asks Shanti to do it. Shanti does it and Amarinder gets up. They all dance. The dead Vikas watches all and joins the dance. Mahesh leads Deepika and joins her hands with those of the dead Vikas. They all dance. All through the play a death mask is moving to all different characters. Amol starts narrating how he suffered with his mother rejected by his father who married another woman after moving from Calcutta to Delhi, how he fell in love with Rosalynd and married her, how he reached the hospice with his lung cancer. Deepika announces that Amol has to leave the hospice, as his insurance expires. Then she tells Amol that she has found a benefactor who supports Amol's treatment. Amol understands who the benefactor is and thanks him. Deepika and the dead Vikas are spotlighted. Deepika admires the good-natured Vikas who worked for the upliftment of farmers, labourers and field workers all around the world from Kamtipura in Mumbai, Faulkland Street in the UK and the Dharavi, the largest slum in Mumbai.

The dead Vikas accuses Deepika of being unfaithful to him. She defends that it was Vikas's love for an adventurous wandering life which made her make a decision. But the dead Vikas confesses that when he had got infected with HIV and later it developed into cancer, he understood his end and wanted to reach his destination, Deepika.

The seventh scene again presents the rehearsal of the play. Deepika (Hotel Manager) is trying to placate the angry Mahesh (Mr. Kulkarni) and Amol (Mr. Sengupta). Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan) is found weeping. Amarinder (Mr. Malhotra) is dancing by himself. Deepika (Hotel Manager) is talking to the husband of Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan) over the phone and gives the phone to Shanti (Miss Unikrishnan), who then talks to her husband and plainly asks him to find a new doctor-nurse for him. She refuses to dance with him, as she has got Amarinder (Mr. Malhotra) to dance with. She simply rejects her husband boldly. Deepika (Hotel manager) talks boldly to her customer who is in love with her and bids farewell to him. They both feel triumphant at settling their issues with their own men. Mahesh (Mr. Kulkarni) and Amol (Mr. Sengupta) rush to the room and kneel before Deepika (Hotel Manager) and say "I love you." Deepika (Hotel Manager) is shocked and all freeze. The play "Hotel Staylonger" ends. They all appreciate Shanti for directing the play. Amarinder talks to Shanti who is leaving for Chennai after the play is enacted the next day at 7 p.m. Shanti thanks Deepika for allowing the enactment of the play. Amol, in the meantime, coughs blood and becomes weak. Deepika instructs Mahesh to bring a stretcher for Amol and to take him to the ICU. Amol is laid on the bed. All are around him. Even the dead Vikas is there. Amol asks Mahesh to improvise and suggests that Mr. Sengupta the role he plays in "Hotel Staylonger" dies in the corridor drinking too much of the wine "bloody mary." But Vikas does not want to accept it as he has designed it to be a comedy. Deepika returns with a syringe but Amol dies with a weak laugh.

Deepika is spotlighted. She talks to the audience directly. She thanks the audience for watching the play "Hotel Staylonger" written by Vikas and performed in two acts by the cancer patients of Avedna, Cancer Research Hospital and Hospices. She sums up: "This play also shows, to all of us here, that all of us have a right to live as long as we can and to laugh at our own follies. Vikas Tiwari lives on through this play" (Brief Candle 47). She announces that the role of Mr Sengupta planned to be played by Amol Ghosh was not included here in the play as he died the previous night. The dead Vikas thanks her. The play "Hotel Staylonger" is fast forwarded with select scenes and closes with the dance of Amarinder and Shanti, the dead Vikas and Deepika singing a duet, and Mahesh and Amol pretending to play an orchestra. The play "Brief Candle" ends.

Conclusion

Each of the six characters has faced their social marginality. Dr Deepika Dave represents an acquired marginalization choosing to run a hospice which is unusual in the profession of medicine. It is this way Dr Deepika though socially part of a privileged group experiences

marginality with her service to cancer patients despite a conspicuous lack of financial support. Moreover, her experience as a woman medical student clearly indicates the marginality of women in the society however socially high the profession may be. Dr Deepika experiences an ascribed marginalization. In her case it is a double marginalization - as a woman (ascribed) and as a doctor of a hospice (acquired). The dead Vikas is an obvious illustration of social marginality. First, he was a medical dropout. He nurtured his revolutionary ideas and established himself as a writer with a strong reforming vein. His strong passion to uplift the underprivileged wherever they are – local or abroad – is a sure form of an acquired marginalization. He shows no regrets when he acquired AIDS which led him to suffer from cancer. He feels triumphant about his life and his career as a writer and a social reformer. Though he could live in the centre of the society, he was marooned to the hospice as a marginal other, and died. His marginality is the one he chose for himself rather – that is, “acquired” rather than the one imposed upon him – “ascribed.” In other words, his life and end illustrates more of an acquired marginalization and less of an ascribed marginalization.

Amol Ghosh is an unambiguous character representing social marginality. The sufferings of his mother at the hands of his father who chased Amol’s mother and him away to face the hardships of life with no concrete support illustrate an ascribed marginalization of women in the society. Yet, Amol comes up in life and manages all odds of life till he develops his lung cancer and faces an acquired marginalization as a cancer patient though his wife, Rosalynd, does not want him to die in a hospice. The background to the life of Amarinder has not been developed adequately in the play. His brand of social marginality is marked with an acquired marginalization as a cancer patient. However, his strong concern about his possible loss of virility or manliness shows his strong anxiety about the ascribed marginalization of the impotent in the society. His acceptance of his condition at the end of the play and his unconventional love for Shanti, a wife of another man, clearly marks his position of social marginalization both ascribed and acquired.

The character of Shanti Venkatraman is a form of social marginality marked with ascribed marginalization. Her meticulous adoption of every prescription of her mother before marriage and just after marriage and the treatment she receives from her mother-in-law are all the result of her ascribed marginalization. When she becomes a cancer patient, she understands her acquired marginalization, which becomes acute when she admits her love for Amarinder and cares for him. She is a sharp contrast to Dr Deepika Dave. Yet, just like her, she too experiences both ascribed and acquired marginalization. Mahesh Tawade, the male nurse in the hospice, is the only character which openly talks about the kind of ascribed marginalization he and his family experience at his hometown. When he talks to Vikas about his dream of buying an aeroplane and taking his family around his village, it becomes very clear. His choice of service in the hospice is so rare that he has chosen to be the other.

In conclusion, Mahesh Dattani has presented a set of characters who exemplify their social marginality in both aspects of marginalization – ascribed and acquired. He achieved this difficult fusion effortlessly. A peripheral eye can very easily miss this brand of marginalization. A very conscious reader can become sensitive to this fused marginalization and understand the artistic dexterity of Mahesh Dattani.

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Dismantling the Patriarchal Myth of Femininity: A Study of Margaret Atwood’s *Life Before Man*

Ms. K.B. Nivethitha

Ph.D. (Part-time) Scholar

Madurai Kamaraj University

Regn. No: P4644

Abstract

Atwood is an internationally known Canadian writer. Her works are noted for her feminist thought. Her novels, featuring women protagonists, examine their relationships in patriarchal society. She mostly writes about women, from a female perspective and with a noticeable feminist slant. Her writing transcends the boundaries of what is often described as 'female fiction'. The protagonists of Atwood's novels are not satisfied with their lives, and as they explore the reasons for their discontent, they come to realize that they are victims of social, economic and political discrimination. Once they have recognized their victimization, they attempt to reject it. In her fiction she attacks the gender discrimination and the narrow, dominant, social and aesthetic constructions of identity and gender. Atwood *Life Before Man* is a bold attempt to redefine male notions and cultural definitions of feminity. It is neither cultural nor social but an individualistic one. The term "femininity" describes the construction of 'femaleness' by society and which connotes sexual attractiveness to men. Atwood's *Life Before Man* (1979) portrays the protagonist Elizabeth as a woman who chooses to live as an individual breaking down the patriarchal stereotypes of woman and holds a mirror to modern marital problems. She undergoes a struggle for survival and changes into a radical and takes diversion to extramarital affairs following her husband's model on the basis of equality. The novel poignantly articulates the marital disharmony and the existential despair of both men and women in the urbanaged modern further society. It further presents how in the struggle for autonomy and individuality between husband and wife the institution of marriage gets disintegrated and dehumanized. Elizabeth feels deserted and betrayed by Nate and decides to live alone in the 'family home' to look after her children. In her rebellion against the phallogentric world what she has achieved is adultery, a broken marriage and a couple of children to look after. She, in a way, breaks the myth of stereotyped notions of femininity. Atwood feels that marriage as an institution should help the personal growth and evolution of both husband and wife; they should live with dignity complimenting each other. Atwood opts for a social change in the institution of marriage to strengthen the man-woman relationship.

Keywords: Margaret Atwood, *Life Before Man*, Femininity, Patriarchy, phallogentric, Logocentrism, Stereotype, Disharmony.

Atwood is an internationally known, read, translated Canadian writer with the publication of more than twelve novels, ten books of poetry, three short story collections and two books of

literary criticism. Her works are noted for her feminist thought and mythological themes. Her novels, featuring women protagonists, examine their relationships in patriarchal society. The epigraph to *Power Politics* (1971) is a bitter recognition of the politics of sex and of the destructiveness, from a woman's point of view of the sexual connection.

You fit into me

Like a hook into an eye

A fish hook

An Open eye (qtd. in Sturrock 73)

Atwood's critical work *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972) discusses in detail 'survival': survival of the individual in the face of mental suffering; survival of women in a male-dominated society; survival of humanity against increasing violence. Here she advises women to 'refuse to be a victim'.

Atwood along with Alice Munro questions stereotypes of nationality and gender, exposing cultural fictions and the artificial limits they impose on the understanding of the readers and other human beings". Atwood has been variously assessed as "a feminist writer, for her incisive commentaries on sex roles, a religious writer, for her visions of spiritual ecstasy, a gothic writer, for her images of grotesque misfits and surreal disorientations of the psyche, a writer of Canadian wilderness; a nationalist writer and a regionalist" (Roserberg 15). She mostly writes about women, from a female perspective and with a noticeable feminist slant. Her writing transcends the boundaries of what is often described as 'female fiction'. Through her female protagonists and narrators who often "journey from victimization to self-actualization, Atwood explores women's issues using elements of science fiction, historical fact, fairy tale, and dystopian vision.

Power politics is the common factor in Canada. Power structures have been built into the Canadian national consciousness and the female psyche and Atwood makes it her mission to explore and expose these. Most of Atwood's novels grapple with the politics and power politics in Canadian society. In *Second Words* Atwood explains what she means by gender politics: "By political I mean having to do with power: Who's got it, who wants it, how it operates: in a word,

who's allowed to do what to whom, who gets what from whom, who gets away with it and how" (73-74). It is imperative at this juncture to make a brief study about the feminist movement in Canada and Margaret Atwood's role in that movement.

'Feminism' is a collective term for systems of belief and theories that pay special attention to women's rights and women's position in culture and society. The term tends to be used for the women's rights movement, which began in the late 18th century and continues to campaign for complete political, social and economic equality between men and women. It is a body of social theory and political movement primarily based on and motivated by the experiences of women. While generally providing a critique of social relations, many proponents of feminism also focus on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests, and issues. It is difficult to define feminism in terms of a set of core concepts but it is common core is the thesis that the relationship between the sexes is one of inequality or oppression. "All forms of feminism seek to identify the causes of that inequality and to remedy it, but the issue of precisely which agency produces and reproduces inequality is the source of many of the differences between feminists" (Macey 122).

Feminists are united by the idea that a woman's position is unequal to that of a man and that society is structured in such a way as to benefit men to the political, social and economic detriment of women. However, feminists have used different theories to explain these inequalities and have advocated different ways of redressing inequalities, and there are marked geographic and historical variations in the nature of feminism. In general, feminism is "concerned with how women's lives have changed throughout history and it asks what about women's experience is different from men's, either as a result of an essential ontological or psychological difference or as a result of historical imprinting and social construction (Ryan 101).

According to feminist theory, the subordination of women originated in primitive societies in which women served as objects of exchange between father-dominated families that formed alliances through marriage. But archaeological evidence from Europe and the Middle East has suggested that Stone Age Civilizations practiced goddess worship and were organized as *matriarchies* – social orders with women in charge. However, from the time of the earliest written records, these civilizations had been overtaken by patriarchal cultures that worshipped male gods and in which men were political, religious and military leaders, and women were kept in subordination. In the time of the ancient Greeks and ancient Romans and in the early Christian

era, women were excluded from public life and were made subordinate to men. For example, Greek philosopher Aristotle argued in his *Poetics* that women were inferior to men and must be ruled by men. Saint Paul told Christian wives to obey their husbands and not to speak in church. Even the modern industrial society is by and large patriarchal in character. Michael Ryan makes a succinct observation in this regard:

Men hold almost all positions of political and economic power and economies work in such a way that women are more likely to be poor and men more likely to be rich. The assumed norm in many societies is for women to be in charge of domestic labour and child rearing while men engage in more public concerns...social structure translates a historically continuous threat of physical force. (101)

The women's liberation movement, which started in the United States, combined liberal, rights-based concerns for equality between men and women with demands for a woman's right to determine her own identity and sexuality. This ideology of second-wave feminism was greatly influenced by the writings of French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir and American feminist Kate Millett, who drew attention to ways in which women were oppressed by the very structure of Western society. In *The Second Sex* (1949) de Beauvoir argued that Western culture regarded men as normal and women as an aberration ("the Other"), and she called for the recognition of the special nature of women. Kate Millet, in *Sexual Politics* (1970), draw attention to the persuasiveness of patriarchy and to the ways in which it was reinforced through the family and culture, notably in literature. The recognition of the rampant nature of patriarchy fuelled the feminist idea of universal sisterhood – that women of all cultures and background can be united within their common oppression. These second wave feminists considered that "The western cultural tradition has, through its use of binary oppositions, helped assure male rule. Men are associated with reason, objectivity, logic and the like, while women are linked to the body, matter, emotions, and absence of logic and reason, and the like. In its misogynist form, androcentric culture equates women with castration and death" (Ryan 102). These feminists argue that women need to constitute a separate realm outside male-dominated culture.

Many Canadian women writers such as Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, and Margaret Atwood have registered a great measure of success as feminist writers and are acclaimed as major contemporary women novelists. "The women's movement has provided many of these novelists with the courage and motivation to break out of traditional patriarchal forms to depict how women have been abused, exploited, and oppressed (Prabhakar 22).Canadian women

novelists from Ethel Wilson to Gabrielle Roy show their concern about a woman's struggle to discover herself and find self-fulfillment. Their works project Canadian woman's encounter with the patriarchal world order. They made women critically conscious of their own roles in conventional patriarchal social structures. Canadian women-writers question and challenge the women's status quo. "Through their narrative strategy of irony and fantasy these writers not only demand revision of social values and conventions but also envision alternate worlds in which women would be autonomous and self-defining citizens" (Prabhakar 21).

Atwood's novels show how society sustains victimization by holding power over women. The protagonists of Atwood's novels are not satisfied with their lives, and as they explore the reasons for their discontent, they come to realize that they are victims of social, economic and political discrimination. Once they have recognized their victimization, they attempt to reject it. No protagonist is always able to avoid being victimized, and two of them may actually die, but all of them, to a greater or lesser extent, fight against victimization. Atwood is a member of the Amnesty International and Canada's civil Liberties Union. She is also a human rights activist. In her fiction she attacks the gender discrimination and the narrow, dominant, social and aesthetic constructions of identity and gender. She is critical of the post-modernist of impersonality, autonomy and dehumanization. Being a feminist, she is conscious of how gender restricts the educational opportunities open to women. Her female protagonists are researchers, writers, journalists, artists and painters who become victims of gender politics and power politics. Christine Gomez observes in this regard:

At the thematic level, Atwood's novels examine themes related to the politics of gender such as the enforced alienation of women under patriarchy, the delimiting definition of woman as a function, the patriarchal attempt to annihilate the selfhood of women, the gradual carving out of female space by woman through various strategies and woman's quest for identity, self-definition and autonomy...Not only at the thematic and structural levels, but also in the organization of women characters, Atwood's novels are based on the politics of gender. (74)

Atwood's novels are governed by feminist consciousness which runs as an under-current and serves as the unifying principle. Atwood demands through her novels, the demolition of gender system and dreams for a new world without gender discrimination.

In *Life Before Man* (1979) Atwood presents the oppressive modes of patriarchal system of marriage. To Atwood, marriage determines the destiny of women within a patriarchal culture. Marriage contract, which is "a mutual bet for gaining ascendancy in power, personal autonomy and self-realization" (Gillespie 70), gives women very little chances of winning the bet. Atwood's protagonists are very much conscious of the victimization of women in marriage. Like Marian in *The Edible Woman* and Joan Foster in *Lady Oracle*, "Elizabeth, the protagonist in *Life Before Man* is considered to be a frustrated, rebellious and an indifferent woman in regard to the institution of marriage" (Prabhakar 126). Here Atwood covers two years in the lives of three ordinary middleclass couple "chatting the development and deterioration of their relationship within the context of daily routine, miscommunication, tawdry affairs and gray emotional struggle" (Grace 135). Elizabeth is a down to earth character. She is a realistic portrayal with all her strength and limitations. She prefers to live like an individual by breaking down the stereotypes of women.

Atwood *Life Before Man* is a bold attempt to redefine male notions and cultural definitions of femininity. It is neither cultural nor social but an individualistic one. The term "femininity" describes the construction of 'femaleness' by society and which connotes sexual attractiveness to men. Feminists are concerned about cultural definitions of femininity in the media which represent sex role stereotyping. The assumption here that appearance creates identity was an early target of feminist writers. Drawing on the language of social psychology, Kate Millett attacked femininity for implying that anatomy is 'destiny'. Phyllis Chesler agreed that 'femininity' is in effect a sex-role stereotype and in *Women and Madness* (1972) proved that women's attempts to achieve it were a prescription for failure, victimization and severe mental illness.

Both French and American writers suggest that 'femininity' is part of an ideology which positions 'women as Other' against 'masculinity' which is regarded by society as the norm of human behavior. For example, Susan Brownmiller suggests that femininity is a way of making masculinity appear more masterly and competent. Julia Kristeva argues that characteristics of 'femininity' can therefore be found in the writing of 'marginal' men like the modernist author Mallarme. Third World feminists interpret 'femininity' more positively. For example, Buchi

Emecheta describes how the self-creation of femininity enables her women characters to become strong and independent (Humm 93-94).

Atwood's *Life Before Man* (1979) portrays the protagonist Elizabeth as a woman who chooses to live as an individual breaking down the patriarchal stereotypes of woman and holds a mirror to modern marital problems. It is Atwood's first attempt at social and domestic realism. Elizabeth is frustrated, rebellious and indifferent in regard to the institution of marriage. The message here is that marriage should help the personal growth and evolution of both husband and wife, and they should live with dignity complementing each other. The novel covers two years in the lives of three ordinary middle-class people – Elizabeth and her husband, Nate, and Nate's new lover, Lesje, for whom he leaves his wife – “Charting the development and deterioration of their relationships within the context of daily routine, miscommunication, tawdry affairs and gray emotional struggles”(Grace 135). In this way Atwood examines the politics of power in interpersonal relationships between wife and husband in *Life Before Man*. As the author of realistic fiction, Atwood does not claim for Elizabeth, the protagonist of the novel, greater autonomy than actual women can reasonably claim in their life. Through Elizabeth Atwood has given a portrait of a real woman with all her strengths and limitations, muddling through existence. Atwood is aware that women, both as literary characters and as human beings, must be allowed their limitations: Again, she observes:

If I create a female character, I would like to be able to show her having the emotions all human beings have – hate, envy, spite, lust, anger and fear as well as love, compassion, tolerance and joy-without having her pronounced a monster, a slur, or a bad example. I would also like her to be cunning, intelligent and sly, if necessary, for the plot, without having her branded as a bitch goddess or a gearing instance of the deviousness of women. For a long time, men in literature have been seen as individuals, women merely as examples of gender; perhaps it is time to take the capital of W off woman. (*Second Words* 228)

Elizabeth in *Life Before Man* encounters her life before men in general and Nate in particular in an antagonistic and male-dominated society. She undergoes a struggle for survival and changes into a radical and takes diversion to extramarital affairs following her husband's model on the basis of equality. As Prabhakar remarks: “Both Elizabeth and Nate indulge in a tug-of-war and what matters for them is who wins and who loses. Marriage, for both of them, has lost its sanctity and credibility like all other modern marriages” (128). The novel poignantly

articulates the marital disharmony and the existential despair of both men and women in the urbanized modern further society. It further presents how in the struggle for autonomy and individuality between husband and wife the institution of marriage gets disintegrated and dehumanized.

Atwood feels the freedom of right to equality in marital relationships does not mean that the wife/husband has a right to do anything that brings her/him satisfaction in an immoral way. To Atwood, sexual immorality of either partners is a violation of the moral code established and respected by society. Simon de Beauvoir also says that “adultery is for both a breach of contract” (*The Second Sex* 445). Atwood thinks the act of adultery in the institution of marriage would lead to a complete chaos and anarchy in social relations. The novel drives home the message that both wife and husband be faithful to each other, and they must show respect for the regulated social conduct which is essential for the maintenance of social stability and the sanctity of conjugal relationships.

Elizabeth has a tragic past. She is the product of several contradictions in the past of her family. She grows up in an unhealthy and joyless family atmosphere. Her father leaves the entire family in a state of dissolution and destitution. He abandons his wife and children for a mistress. So, her mother suffers from neurosis and becomes an alcoholic. Unable to run the family, the mother, in a cold-blooded act, sells her children to Auntie Muriel, a tyrant, for a regular allowance to spend on alcohol. Finally, she commits suicide by setting fire to her body. Elizabeth is aware that her mother has been “Entirely destitute, a wronged party, a saint under the streetlights ... like clouds or angels, lived on air...” (*Life Before Man* 259). Thus Elizabeth and her sister Caroline are left under the care of ‘dinosaur Auntie Muriel’ who is both “the spider and the fly, the sucker-out of life juice and the empty husk” (105) Atwood has portrayed Auntie Muriel as a victim of patriarchal society leading her to exercise a damaging influence on the early life of Elizabeth. At an early age Auntie Muriel was thwarted in her ambition of becoming an educated woman. She was not allowed to go to college by her domineering father. She too suffered under patriarchal domination. Her roles were restricted. She was compelled to sit at home doing embroidery. Even after her marriage, Auntie Muriel plays what Virginia Woolf calls the “Angel of the House” and leads a life of unending sacrifice. In this way, she becomes a victim of the patriarchal codes in the society.

Elizabeth undergoes a trauma under the control of Auntie Muriel who imposes on her own embroidery which is a fortune to Elizabeth. Elizabeth fears and detests Auntie Muriel as she is destructive by imposing the patriarchal norms. Thus, the harassment of Auntie Muriel disturbs Elizabeth psychologically which in turn makes her become hostile towards men. In one of her interviews Atwood describes Elizabeth's relationship with her aunt thus: "She absolutely hates, loves and detests her aunt – which gives her a lot of energy. Her hatred drives her on" (qtd. Prabhakar 129). Elizabeth's sad experience and bad upbringing of Auntie Muriel, drive her to wage a war against patriarchal structures of power and domination, In the words of Prabhakar: "She becomes a strong and dominating woman who refuses to be victimized by any man or woman" (130). She becomes a threatening force, the daring and dashing "lady with the axe" (*Life Before Man* 41) who courageously faces her life before men in a patriarchal set-up. She is prepared to do anything against patriarchy. She observes:

I don't want to discuss my mother, my father, my Auntie Muriel or my sister. I know quite a lot about them as well... I am an adult and I do not think I am merely the sum of my past. I can make choices and suffer the consequences. (86)

Auntie Muriel's character is due to the victimization of patriarchal society. She, unable to realize the harm done to her, chooses to shape other women in her mould by becoming an active agent of patriarchal power. Unlike other novels, Atwood has portrayed a woman through Auntie Muriel who becomes a victim and a victimizer.

Elizabeth, a special projects administrator at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum, marries Nate, an unemployed law graduate, with the hope of getting security and shelter for her life. But she soon understands that it is Nate, who is emotionally weak and dependent, requires security. Consequently, she becomes "a cage: Nate a mouse, her heart pure cheese. Earthmother, Nate her mole, snouting in darkness while she locked him" (145). Therefore, Elizabeth has to lead a rules-bound and logocentric life. Nate hides his occupation of making "handmade wooden toys" (34) as a secret from his wife. He even longs to have a lottery prize to meet the needs of his drinking and smoking. He is like a "prodigal son" (281) to his mother. His mother wanted him to be "a radical lawyer" who defends "the unjustly accused" (33). He is such an 'idle drone' who depends completely on his wife for money. The life of Elizabeth and Nate is a mechanical one for they do not know what 'love' means between them. They are an example of a disharmonious couple though two children are born out of their wedlock. Their marriage, in due course, begins

to shatter around the edges when Nate goes after women like Martha and Lesje. He spends a lot of money for women and sex.

Nate, the indecisive and immoral husband, plans to leave Elizabeth for Lesje, a perennial, innocent, “a dinosaur lady” (132) who offers dinosaurs to men. Lesje is forced by her witch-like grandmother to seek refuge in the unreal world of fantasies. She is a ‘paleontologist’ who becomes a victim of prehistory. She has fantasies in which she is “wandering in prehistory” (10). Lesje’s dinosaur fantasies exemplify the monstrous nature of man-woman relationships based on the ethic, ‘The strongest sustain themselves by eating the weakest’. Lesje had loved William, an environmental engineer. The problem in their marriage is that of the issue of his children. Their love affair breaks up as William does not want to have a child by her. Therefore, she has “seedy” or “even tacky” affair with Nate. Moreover, Lesje lends Nate money as he is perennially short of money for his needs. She is addicted to Nate’s version of her. For him, she exists on “a scale of relatively important things” (*Life Before Man* 204) but for her, he is absolutely needed to get pregnant. Both Nate and Lesje have wronged Elizabeth. Lesje has trespassed into the marital life of Elizabeth. Nate thus breaks the sacred bonds of marriage. Elizabeth considers Nate as the father of her children but not her husband. Nate, on the other hand, neglects both his wife and children. His children feel as if “he’s an uncle, a new school principal” (224). His failure both as a husband and father leads Elizabeth to commit a moral crime. What is particular about the marriage of Elizabeth and Nate is they still live together under the same roof because of the children.

Elizabeth becomes involved with Chris who works in her office and finds solace in him. She keeps up her extramarital relationship with him within its limits, without touching either her house or her children. She rejects his demand to give up her job and leave her family. Thus, she refuses to become a dependent woman once more. But Chris feels humiliated at Elizabeth’s behaviour. Elizabeth opposes the power of Chris over her life. As Prabhakar observes, “she becomes the spokes-person of men and women who have ‘militaristic’ attitude towards their female/male – counterparts” (132). As a result, Chris kills himself violently due to the anger and fear of being nothing. His death is just ‘an event’ and not a sacrifice for love. Elizabeth feels herself as a ‘widow’ of Chris. She mourns on the death of Chris:

You wanted me to cry, mourn, sit in a rocker with a black-edged handkerchief, bleeding from the eyes. But I'm not crying, I'm angry. I'm so angry. I could kill you. If you hadn't already done that for yourself. (*Life Before Man* 3)

After Chris's death Elizabeth decides to lead a harmonious life with her husband. She tries to open his eyes by questioning about his extramarital affairs. She wants to save their life from the wreck that they both have jointly created. But Nate decides to leave his family and wife for Lesje. On the other hand, Elizabeth prefers to share her life with him on the basis of a friendly rapport which is needed for old age. But her dreams become shattered when Nate plans to divorce her and marry Lesje who wishes to have a child by him. Lesje needs to be pregnant to stay alive and to secure her primary significance in Nate's life. In fact, she prefers to become "an unwed mother." Elizabeth, due to this traumatic experience in marriage, is uncertain about her future. She is so distracted, but she sometimes fears of falling asleep in the tub. She has violent nightmares that her children are lost.

Ultimately, Elizabeth and Nate agree to go in for divorce. Elizabeth, 'supermom', knows well in advance the afflictions of children after divorce. So, she takes precautionary measures to prevent children from undergoing the trauma. Elizabeth is aware of the trauma the children will suffer on account of their separation. Nancy, Elizabeth's daughter, asks her: "You and Dad don't love each other anymore?" (228). She answers with a heavy heart that: "I know it makes you unhappy that your father doesn't live here with us any more... your father loves you both very much. Your father and I will always love each other too, because both of us are your parents and we both love you" (228). Nancy questions pathetically: "Mummy, are you going to die?" (228). This query stirs up pain and frustration in Elizabeth. However, she does not use 'emotional blackmail' to turn the children hostile towards their father.

At the end of the novel, Elizabeth feels deserted and betrayed by Nate and decides to live alone in the 'family home' to look after her children. She feels liberated from Nate's image of her as a dragon woman. In her rebellion against the phallogocentric world what she has achieved is adultery, a broken marriage and a couple of children to look after. She has transformed herself into a respectable individual now. She becomes the creator of her own reality. Elizabeth accepts her life contentedly and refuses to be a victim because "she's still alive, she wears clothes, she walks around, she holds down a job even. She has two children" (*Life Before Man* 278). She has learned the lesson in her life the harsh way and she now possesses the knowledge that will help her children. She resolves to look forward to the future of her daughters whom she would like to bring up as champions of human values. She transcends the narrow confines of her individual

self and grows beyond mere personal; she now connects herself to the outside world. Thus, Elizabeth decides to survive with dignity in society. She, in a way, breaks the myth of stereotyped notions of femininity.

Atwood, through *Life Before Man*, satirises the institution of marriage which is based on merely bodily wants: fraud, deception, greed and lust which can never make a successful and result only in misery and suffering for the partners concerned. As such she has given guidelines that concern relationship between the sexes. Atwood feels that marriage as an institution should help the personal growth and evolution of both husband and wife; they should live with dignity complimenting each other. The novel, in truth, sets out possibility for the moral and social evolution of human beings. The message that Atwood conveys through this novel is:

The married people should not be viewed as each other's property but as living, growing organisms ... personal growth [is] commendable. You ... have the right attitude and be honest with yourself. (113)

The novel thus offers hope for a 'mutual salvation' and peace between the wife and husband. Atwood opts for a social change in the institution of marriage to strengthen the man – woman relationship.

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Indian Diaspora and Liminality in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Only Goodness*

Pankaj Luchan Gogoi
Asst. Prof of English
Digboi Mahila Mahavidyalaya
Digboi-786171, Tinsukia, Assam
(M)- 7002731014, 9954792418

Abstract

“Only Goodness” is the fourth story of Jhumpa Lahiri’s celebrated short story collection *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008). Like the other stories of the collection, this story too, deals with liminality or “in-betweenness” being faced by the Indian diaspora abroad. The story particularly deals with the children of the Indian diaspora in the form of Sudha and Rahul and situates them in liminality to show their resilience and vulnerability which define their subject positions there. Lahiri, through Sudha, aims at telling a success story of liminality on the one hand; and on the other, through Rahul, tells a failed story of liminality. The text highlights displacement, transnationality, alienation, intergenerational clash, uncertainty, unsettlement and the like that characterize their subjectivity in liminality. A post-colonial reading of the text coupled with diaspora studies illuminates the liminal subjectivity of the Indian diaspora narrated in the text.

Keywords: Jhumpa Lahiri, *Only Goodness*, Liminality, Indian diaspora, displacement, transnationality, alienation, uncertainty

Introduction

“Only Goodness”, a constituent story of Jhumpa Lahiri’s short story collection *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008), is found to be resonant with liminality or “in-betweenness” of Indian diaspora. The story attempts at exploring the liminal subject position of the Indian diaspora with a domestic setting that covers two generations – parents and children. It projects liminality to be an ineluctable reality of diasporic life which exposes the resilience and vulnerability of Indian diasporic subjectivity.

Discussion and Interpretation

In “Only Goodness” liminality seems to find its manifestation in the plight of the parents and their children vis a vis their career abroad. The parents, being the first generation immigrants, struggle a lot to build their career, and giving birth to children Sudha and Rahul in two different countries viz., England and America. Their upbringing and career, particularly of Sudha which spans England and America, are among most testing phases of their diasporic life. The father who migrated from India to make career in England, and then in the U.S, is representative of the first generation immigrant, is portrayed as a successful diaspora for his resilience and diligence in liminality as evident in consistency of his career and rearing a family there. He does everything to make his family happy, and particularly in respect of his children does everything to secure a good future there. The children, on the other hand, are portrayed both as successful and unsuccessful depending on their own nature and personality.

The lives of Sudha and Rahul’s parents appear to be liminal given their experience of both “blessing and portent” (Lahiri, 135). Sudha’s father along with her mother, in order to build his career, struggles a lot both in England and the U.S. When they came to England in the 1960s, the most noteworthy challenge that they faced is racial discrimination. The rentals at that time did not open rented house to the non-white people much to the woes of their parents. Moreover, the white house owners did not even let pregnant non-white immigrants to go for labor at home. This situation is a virtual double whammy that troubled them immeasurably at London. It was only after their meeting with Mr. Pal, a Bengali landlord who provided his parents asylum that they heaved a sigh of relief as it was exactly at that time, a white old lady, the owner of their previous house, had not allowed Sudha’s birth at her home.

Her parents told her that half the rentals in London in the sixties said WHITES ONLY, and the combination of being Indian and pregnant limited her parents to the point where her father considered sending her mother back to India to give birth, until they met Mr. Pal. To Sudha this story was like an episode out of a Greek myth or the Bible, rich with blessing and portent, marking her family as survivors in strange intolerant seas. (135)

Their second child Rahul is born in America. This time around their problem is more acute given their loneliness in America which is a new country for them. There are few Bengali acquaintances, and hence no one is there at hospital at the time of labour. This condition reminds us the traumatic experience of labor of Ashima in *The Namesake*. It is also an unforgettable memory for six year old Sudha who recollects the trouble of her parents during Rahul’s birth, and it is, indeed, the “first sustained memory” (133) of her life. This memory also serves as a trauma of displacement at a very early stage of her life. She remembers the trouble of his father as he has to take her to Boston hospital all alone, and there is no one to attend to her mother. Sudha herself faces many problems as she is left at a party of her parents’ Bengali friends in Peabody much to her annoyance and disappointment:

The host and hostess did not have children of their own. Sudha had slept on a cot in a spare room containing no permanent furniture other than an ironing board and a closet devoted

to cleaning supplies. In the morning there were no Frosted Flakes for her to eat, only toast with margarine, and it was then, during that restrained and disappointing adult breakfast, that the phone rang with news of her brother's arrival. (134)

The liminal subject positions of the parents are also shown through the perspectives of their children Sudha and Rahul. Sudha notices correctly the deep trouble in which their migration to England took place; for, it was a time "when immigration was still an adventure, living with paraffin heaters, seeing snow for the first time." (138). Both of them were first generation immigrants, and certainly they faced innumerable problems in getting well along with the foreign land. The "in-betweenness" of the parents' existence can be seen in their life that is rather insipid. The situatedness of their life in liminality that makes their marriage a "perplexing fact" (137) characterized by insipidity:

Thanks to Rahul there was also someone else to witness the perplexing fact of her parents' marriage. It was neither happy nor unhappy, and the lack of emotion in either extreme was what upset Sudha most. She would have understood quarrels, she believed she would even have understood divorce. She always hoped some sign of love would manifest itself; the only things that consoled her were a few pictures taken during their London years. (137)

The displacement of the parents is found to be more intense in the U.S. Their shift to the U.S situates them in such a condition that they find it hard to negotiate their living in the city Wayland. Things are not same as those of London, and hence they are to depend a lot upon their children, particularly Sudha. Their inconvenience in foreign land can be deemed from the fact that they find everything in Wayland perplexing. In London, her mother kept herself busy in certificate course. Within a very short period they had to pass through various situations of two different countries. They have come to the U.S after four years of stay in London. They have not voluntarily come from London to Wayland, Massachusetts, the U.S.A; but it is occasioned by their father's transfer from Badger to Raytheon. On this displacement they carried "no evidence of their years in London," (135). It implies that they still remain very much Indian and not British anyway. In their cross Atlantic migration, they have not even carried baby Sudha's toys, clothing, and other belongings that they have gathered in the U.K except the family photos clicked by their Bengali landlord Mr. Pal. These are the photographs that Shudha produces at her autobiography presentation at grade school of Wayland much to the amusement of her friends. Interestingly, their mother has psychological connection i.e., English biscuits and brassieres which moderately defines her taste for foreign things –"her mother's fondness for the McVite's biscuits she ate every morning with tea and her lifelong belief in the quality of British brassieres, which she asked friends in the UK to mail her every so often." (135-136). On the other hand, their arrival in the U.S is a kind of shock, and they find it rather inconvenient to cope up with the American way of life. Therefore, the parents start depending upon their children for guidance:

Wayland was the shock. Suddenly they were stuck, her parents aware that they faced a life sentence of being foreign. In London her mother had been working toward a certificate in

Montessori education, but in America she did not work, did not drive. She put on twenty pounds after Rahul was born, and her father put away his mod suits and shopped at Sears. In Wayland they became passive, wary, the rituals of small-town New England more confounding than negotiating two of the world's largest cities. They relied on their children, on Sudha especially. (138)

Dependence on the elder child Sudha stems from the fact that she has more command over American English than her parents. Rahul is six years junior to her, and “never considered it his duty to help their parents in this way.” (138), hence, the parents talk more frequently to her. Besides her fluency in English, she has better understanding of American way of life which she acquires because of her socialization in America at school:

It was she who had to explain to her father that he had to gather up the leaves in bags, not just drag them with his rake to the woods opposite the house. She, with her perfect English, who called the repair department at Lechmere to have their appliances serviced. (138)

This obvious dependence of her parents on Sudha reflects the first generation immigrants' difficulty in getting well accustomed to the U.S life which bespeaks of their liminality whereas the second generation's ease with it shows their acculturation into the mainstream culture. Rahul's unresponsive attitude thereof may be read in two ways. On the one hand, he is too assimilated into the U.S culture to believe his parents' inability to do so because of his birth and complete upbringing in the U.S, unlike Sudha who was born in London. On the other hand, given his being a second generation diaspora he is completely oblivious and nonchalant to the in-betweenness of his parents which cripples them in starting a life in the U.S.

Sudha's co-operation and responsiveness to their parents' time and again proves that in liminality she is epitome of only goodness. Later, she continues to be so in every walk of her life viz., education, profession, relation with Rahul, her husband Roger and their son Neel. On the other hand, Rahul's insensitivity, irresponsibility, and negligence portray him as figure of only badness which ultimately leads to the spoiling of his career and life, even spoils the relation with his parents and Sudha. The callous attitude of Rahul towards his parents' projects him to be totally unconcerned and “impermeable” (138) about the pangs of his parents who try all the possible way to build a life in two foreign countries, and who have showered more love and care to him than Sudha:

Rahul was impermeable to that aspect of their life as well. “No one dragged them here,” he would say. “Baba left India to get rich, and Ma married him because she had nothing else to do.” That was Rahul, always aware of the family's weaknesses, never sparing Sudha from the things she least wanted to face. (138)

The liminal subject position can be harnessed towards excellence is shown by Sudha. A girl, born in the U.K, takes education in the U.S; and again, comes to the U.K for education and career. In the U.S she takes major in two subjects – economics and mathematics, and gets Master's

degree in international politics. Her quest of learning continues with her pursuit of another Master's degree in economics in London School of Economics. Rahul does not like her plan of having two master's degrees; but she explains him that developmental economics offered by LSE is one of the best programmes of the world, and it will ultimately help her pursuing her aim of serving in NGO. Earlier her parents, too, had an apprehension on her flying to England for education, and had not approved her admission into Oxford to pursue a junior year. But this time around they endorse her decision:

Her parents hadn't allowed her to do a junior year abroad at Oxford, telling her then that she was too young to live in a foreign country alone. But now they were excited by the prospect of Sudha going to London, where they'd first lived after getting married and where Sudha had been born. Talking about visiting and reconnecting with old friends. (132-133)

In her profession as well, she seems to be a very successful professional. After coming out of LSE she fulfills her aim of working in an NGO that aims at poor countries for promoting micro loans. She through her diligence and performance has become a matter of pride for her parents – “Sudha was among those successful children now, her collection of higher degrees framed and filling up her parents' upstairs hall.” (151) Even in her personal life too, she wishes to have a person of her own choice that underlines her independence in her liminal subject position in England. She finds Roger to be a man having “the same strain of competence she possessed.” (147). He has a PhD in history, works as an editor of an art magazine. He also comes of a humble background as his father is only an overseas worker of Singer sewing machines. His romantic behavior towards her, his well-understanding of her, his birth in India, his habit of drinking moderately like her, are some of the key factors that brings him closer to her. Besides, she prefers her as a life partner despite her knowledge of his previous marriage with a girl with whom he does not live now. Even Sudha's parents, in their liminal existence, like Roger because of his birth in India and harboring his life in England. The birth and career of Roger in two different countries serve as similar case of liminality for Sudha's parents, and hence they readily approve of the marriage:

They accepted that she and Roger planned to have a registry wedding in London, that they were willing to have only a reception in Massachusetts, that Roger had been previously married, that he and Sudha had a fourteen-year gap. They approved of his academic qualifications, his ability, thanks to his wisely invested inheritance, to buy a house for himself and Sudha in Kilburn. It helped that he'd been born in India, that he was English and not American, drinking tea instead of coffee, and saying “zed” not “zee,” superficial things that allowed her parents to relate to him. (152)

The flexibility in Sudha's character in her liminal subjectivity lies in the fact that she would like to settle in the U.K where she feels “an instinctive connection to London” (144). She does not show any sign of disappointment in being remaining or settling on the other side of the Atlantic without the parents and brother. She is very happy in London, gets her degree from her cherished

institute LSE, and finally immerses herself in the work of NGO. This success of Sudha reveals her comfort and survival instinct in liminality.

Although she seems to be flexible to the environment of the U.K; it does not mean that she does not have any relation with the parents. Indeed, the cross Atlantic flight brings her closer to her parents than ever before. This is conspicuous when she feels the urge to speak to her parents about her relation with Roger and their subsequent settlement in Britain – “She had come to tell her family about Roger, to tell them she planned to move permanently to London and marry him,” (150). It clearly shows that her liminal existence in far-away country does not make her remote from her kin; instead, it brings them closer. This is evident even in early days in London when she starts studying at LSE:

In spite of the ocean that now separated her from her parents, she felt closer to them, but she also felt free, for the first time in her life, of her family’s weight. Still, she could not drink anymore without thinking of Rahul, always conscious that the second pint she drained, satisfied at the end of a night out, would not have enough for him (144-145).

On the other hand, Rahul seems to be a case of complete disorientation in the U.S. His parents are more focused on him, and facilitated everything for his betterment. They have gone for documentation of his life with photographs clicked at the time of sleeping, bathing etc., and put them into an album. Given their liminal existence and its concomitant inconveniences they even provide him with a car when he goes to Cornell for higher studies after having graduated from high school of Wayland. They justify presenting a car to him at college level “as a necessity for life in Ithaca.” (129). Since his childhood he has been provided with everything that a child needs to the extent that even Sudha gets envied with him. Initially described as “precocious” (130), he turns out to be “a blot, a failure” (151). Rahul is an irony for the parents in their liminal existence; they pinned huge expectation in him, but he appears as complete failure and disaster for the family. His performance at Cornell is on the decline. In the first semester he gets B grade, and then in second semester he gets C. He gives up his subjects - biology and organic chemistry and takes up English literature. Along with poor performance, he also develops some extremely bad habits like addiction to alcohol, bunking the classes, extravagance, watching movies in class and the like. Even at Cornell, Ithaca, Rahul is unable to sustain his former “precocious” (130) self, away from his parents and sister. He is situated in liminal space within the U.S with a change of place for education from Wayland, Massachusetts to Ithaca where he goes for degeneration. His utter failure to negotiate his own career and life in liminal subject position is best noticed by his father who has the experience of struggling and shaping life in three countries – India, England and the U.S.A, the countries of three different continents. Rahul’s father notices him in his liminal existence in Ithaca, and says to Sudha, “He is floundering.” (140); and the father who invests a lot in his son and who himself is an epitome of success has “no patience for failure, and indulgences” (140), that too, in a country where success is deemed as a dream. All these demerits, especially his habit of bunking the classes ultimately resulted in his dismissal from the prestigious Cornell University much to the shame, agony and embarrassment of the family. After this debacle in Ithaca, Rahul

remains at home spending his days watching television. The parents sell his car, and hence he has kept indoors. Ithaca debacle debars him from challenging his parents like before – “That energy was missing now” (150). It is Rahul, the second generation migrant, who makes their parents hard-earned position in liminality abominable, embarrassing, and intolerable:

For a while her parents told their friends that he was taking a leave of absence and then that he was in the process of transferring to BU. “Rahul needs a city in order to thrive,” they said; but he never applied to other schools. They told people Rahul was looking for a job, and then the lie became more elaborate, and Rahul had a job, a consulting job from home, when in fact he stayed home all day doing nothing. Their mother, who had always hoped her children would live under her roof, was now ashamed that this was the case. (150-151)

Rahul’s case is a testimony to the fact that displacement from home; and liminality in other places is not negotiable to all. Even money and good academic institute cannot guarantee one’s success in liminal space unless he himself is capable of dealing with his liminal subject position. Simply speaking, success in liminality depends on person’s individual capacity or resilience like his father and his sister Sudha who pass through a series of challenges to define their identity in foreign land.

Both the cases of Sudha and Rahul show the uncertainty vis a vis children’s career experienced by parents in liminal existence in foreign land. The parents, who feel relaxed after having witnessed the initial achievement of Sudha and Rahul, become very upset about Rahul’s failure. Earlier when Sudha is in Philadelphia and Rahul is in Cornell, the parents think that they have successfully raised their children in America. They are compared to other successful Bengali students in America, and they proudly exclaim “Our job is done” (129). The concern and obsession with the children’s career by the immigrant parents reveal another dimension of their subjectivity as noticed by Ed Minus, “first generation parents are inevitably autocratic in their ambition for offspring.” (Minus Ixxxv)

But their expectations are shattered with Rahul’s failure, alcoholism, deviance, and finally disappearance from home after Sudha’s wedding party where he has fiercely fell out with his father. His disorientation with his parents is evident in the letter he has sent from Columbus, Ohio that is addressed to no one; but makes his stand clear:

“Don’t bother looking for me here,” he’d written, “I’m only spending the night. I don’t want to hear from any of you. Please leave me alone.” (Lahiri 158)

Through the characters of Sudha and Rahul, Lahiri actually tries to show the success and failures of immigrants’ children in liminality. The children’s performance, to a great extent, determines the family’s psychological affiliation to the model minority, i.e., the same ethnic community like Asian Americans, or Indian Americans. That is why, there is persistent anxiety in

parents over the prospective pride in or shame on their children's career, and this anxiety characterizes Sudha's parents' subjectivity in America:

The prospect of model minority is a source of anxiety for some of her fictional immigrants who face psychological dilemmas, whilst others, capable of adjusting to the host land, tend to dwell in the interstices of cultures. Lahiri's tales, therefore, juxtapose vulnerability and resilience in everyday life, bringing to the fore an aesthetics of neurosis as a way to criticise socio-economic pressures. (Monaco 161)

Rahul's arrest for his drinking seems to expose the liminal subject position of his mother as secondary immigrant. According to the U.S law, he is so underage that his driving in drinking state leads to his arrest. His mother, on the other hand, thinks that he has been arrested for being Indian. She tries to give the case of his son's arrest a racial color much to the anger of Sudha. Being a considerate girl, Sudha is aware of fault caused by Rahul, and feels rather embarrassed with her mother's ignorance of certain basic facts of the country in which they are living. Even their father is aware of the truth about Rahul's arrest, and so he observes silence:

Sudha pitied her mother, pitied her refusal to accommodate such an unpleasant and alien fact, her need to blame America and its laws instead of her son. She sensed that her father understood, but he refused to engage in the conversation (Lahiri143).

Sudha's stand against her mother's racial consideration is actually part of the second generations' "racial disavowals" (Koshy, 366) which underlines the parent's failure to transcend their essential view on India and America. The oppositional vision of the two countries is actually a major cause of intergenerational clash in the story. Sudha's insightful observation thereto shows her taking a very balanced position which defines her cosmopolitan subjectivity:

Her parents had always been blind to the things that plagued their children: being teased at school for the color of their skin or for the funny things their mother occasionally put into their lunch boxes, potato curry sandwiches that tinted Wonderbread green. What could there possibly be to be unhappy about? Her parents would have thought. "Depression" was foreign to them, an American thing. In their opinion their children were immune from the hardships and injustices they had left behind in India, as if the inoculations the pediatrician had given Sudha and Rahul when they were babies guaranteed them an existence free of suffering. (Lahiri143-144)

All through the story, Sudha is portrayed as symbol of "only goodness" for her parents, brother, husband, child Neel, and everyone she meets. Her goodness is also found her success in academics, building a cherished career, and thus living up to the expectation of parents. Her celebration of the thanksgiving at her college days and annaprasan after the birth of Neel shows her hybrid character as well. Because of her goodness in character she is fully successful in her liminal subject position setting a glorious precedent for other displaced people. She has been good

to her brother Rahul since his childhood. She always stands by him at his hour of crisis, never scolds him for his deviance and failures. It is this goodness of her that he writes a letter to her after he has disappeared from his house and stopped all ties with the parents. In the letter, Rahul talks about his present condition of life, his living with Elena along with her daughter, his being apologetic for everything, his desire to meet her, and his status quo with his parents. Sudha readily writes to him informing him of her attaining motherhood and expresses her desire to meet him. At this point of time, Sudha starts a completely new life with her job, husband and the baby Neel in her liminal subject position in England. When Rahul arrives there, she and Roger do everything to make him happy. Being a considerate girl, she knows the plight of dislocated families, and hence she opens her door to her deviant brother to strike a balance between “natal and alternatal families” (Dennihy 240). But much to her surprise and anger, Rahul has not been changed. He is incorrigible, and a symbol of only badness. This comes to Sudha’s notice when he asks Sudha and Roger to go for movie after having promised to take care of little Neel in their absence. Contrary to their expectation, Rahul drinks a lot, and falls asleep leaving the baby dangerously in the bathtub. This incident is a sufficient proof of his innate badness and incorrigibility which ultimately forces Sudha to snap all ties with him permanently.

Sudha is beginning a new life in England through sheer hard work in academics and career. Her endeavors to promote microloans to poor countries through NGO, indeed spreads her goodness to humanity at large. It also shows her capability to operate on global scale with the full enjoyment of liminal subject position. Besides, at personal level she has a competent husband Roger to add meaning to her life in liminality. The birth of their son Neel makes her life more meaningful as mother to whom she is the symbol of “only goodness” (Lahiri 173). Neel completes the lives of Sudha and Roger, and they both do not wish to take the risk of allowing an anathema like Rahul to continue his spoiling misdeeds in their family. For, he has never become a good son, brother, brother-in-law, and finally he has failed to become a good uncle. He is complete opposite to Sudha, and hence becomes a discouraging example of liminality. Sudha and Rahul, through their resilience and vulnerability, in their liminal subjectivity, fit into what Angelo Monaco observes about aesthetics of signifying neurosis:

At the heart of Lahiri’s fiction there is a vision of neurosis that emerges from the failure to assimilate. Her characters seem to challenge narratives of wholesomeness, generating empathy in reader’s affective response. On one hand, Lahiri exposes neurotic symptoms of vulnerability in characters who face paralysis, mutism, repetition compulsion and depression, thus offering no hope of redemption. On the other, her macro-text charts the potential benefits for those who linger over the in-between shuttling physically and imaginatively between the two worlds (Monaco 161).

Conclusion

“Only Goodness” offers a rich portrayal of second generation Indian diaspora subjectivity in America. The text situates them in liminality marked by opportunity and uncertainty to reinforce the need of resilience to survive in it, and at the same time also exposes the vulnerability that leads

one to utter predicament. The text serves as a testimony to the ineluctable uncertainty and unsettlement of luminal life which characterizes the diasporic existence in today's world.

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Dalit Consciousness in Society and Literature: An Overview

Dr. S. Pari Parameswaran, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Youth Welfare Studies

Madurai Kamaraj University

Madurai –625 021

=====Abs
tract

This paper attempts to focus on the Dalit consciousness in India after independence. The status of Dalit people in India and the struggles they overcome to make themselves equal to other communities were pointed out. Denial of basic rights and the steps taken by Indian government to provide the Dalits equal rights were the main areas discussed in this paper. This paper also deals with the Dalit consciousness in Indian literature and concludes with a strong belief that someday this society would be a casteless society. This paper also proposes to eradicate untouchability from the minds of people and in the society so that all will be equal in the society.

Keywords: Dalit Consciousness, Society and Literature untouchability, struggles, challenges, law, literature, Dalitism

Literature generally reflects the life on earth. Some critics would refer to it as the mirror of human life. Literature brings out the real face of the society through a book. There are many different world literatures that reflect the everyday plights of the human race. The detailed portrayal of human sorrows and sufferings could be seen in Subaltern or Marginalized literatures.

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The literature of the African-Americans, feminist literature all over the world, and Dalit literatures in India could be quoted as the best examples of marginalized literatures. The African-Americans faced so many serious problems due to racial and colour discrimination in America. Harlem Renaissance during 1920s to 1930s paved for them a way to bring out their sufferings through writings. *The Continuum Encyclopedia of American Literature* says that,

“... the first two centuries of the African diaspora’s sojourn in the U.S. were marked by the dominance of the slave narrative and African American folklore, both of which continued to flourish and influence African American literature and politics long after the end of slavery. This does not mean, however, that these two creative forms represented the totality of African American literature” (Serafin: 2003).

The Dalit consciousness in Literature grew rapidly only after the independence. This is because everyone, irrespective of caste and religion, was encouraged to seek education only after the independence. So, this paved way for the people to think of their condition in the society. And then they started making notes about their condition and written about these in their works. This latter paved way for a new genre of literature called the Dalit literature.

The word ‘Dalit’ is of a Sanskrit origin and it means ‘Crushed’ or ‘broken to pieces’. The word ‘Dalit’ was first used by a nineteenth century writer Jyotirao Phule when he wrote about the story of ‘Untouchables’ in his work. There were numerous Dalit movements in India that work for the betterment and welfare of Dalit people in India. The Dalit movements were mainly organized as the response against the dominating upper castes especially Brahmins in Indian society. The socio-economic differences between the upper caste people and the lower caste people created an unhealthy society. The denial of basic rights to a particular group of people induced them to fight for their rights. For a long time, Dalits were not allowed to do all types works, but some works were assigned to them. They were even denied wearing proper dresses and eat good foods.

They lived in villages or in secluded areas that were given to them by the so-called upper caste people. So, they were not allowed to go anywhere away from those villages. The predetermined hierarchy in Indian society made these people a kind of slaves as they could not even shift to other places and were forced to live in the places given to them. They were actually called as the ‘untouchables’ by the upper caste people. Later, after independence they themselves re-revised their own name and called themselves as ‘Dalits’. The founder-editor of Asmitadarsh, a chief organization of Dalit literature, Professor Gangadhar Pantawane, defines the word ‘Dalit’ in Eleanor Zelliott’s compilation as,

“To me Dalit is not a caste. He is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, rebirth, soul, and holy

books teaching separatism, fate and heaven because they have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution.” (P 268)

Dr. Ambedkar initiated an organization in 1942 in Nagpur by the name *All India Scheduled Caste Federation*. This federation ensures legislative, executive and public services to all the people belonging to Dalit group. Providing all the duties equally to all the community people would eradicate the system of untouchability in future. The efforts made by Dr. Ambedkar in his mission of eradicating untouchability were immeasurable. This could be better understood with the lines of C. B. Raja. He states thus,

“The use of political means to change the condition and status of the scheduled caste was first made by Ambedkar. Through his writings and speeches, he emphasises the fact that political power was the key to all progress and that the scheduled caste could achieve salvation, if they captured power by organizing the schedules with a separate party. He believed that ... the social and economic conditions of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes improved through political action. He wanted to force the hands of the caste Hindus to ameliorate the conditions in which the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were living.” (P: 133)

There are numerous laws and acts that are made to protect the Dalit people in India. There are various acts that propose equality to all the people in India. Education, jobs, dressing, food and habitat have become common to every people in India excluding some rural areas in India. There are still some practices in some rural areas that threaten the peace of Dalit people. There are reservation quotas for Dalit peoples in all the aspects like education and job opportunities. This is to elevate the standards of Dalit people and bring them equal to other caste people in livelihood and social status. There are many commissions and organizations working hard to achieve this goal. Indian Constitution is designed in a way to create a casteless society. It proposes fundamental rights and duties to every citizen of India irrespective of caste and religion. India is a secular country with numerous religions and castes in it. The unity among every group is achieved by following the nation’s constitution in a proper way. Article 46 of Indian Constitution proposes,

“The state shall promote with special care of the educational and economical interest of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.” (Article 46)

There are many undefined laws that are with the name of Manu's Laws, which still kill the rights of lower caste people. These laws are actually the serious offences made by its followers. For instance, the Manu's Law denied education to people of all castes in India; it was totally against the inter-caste marriages. This even denied the lower caste people to sit equally with upper caste people and have food. These caste-based discriminations of the Manu's Law are highly criticised. The Indian Constitution proposes a law as a response to these injustice laws. Article 17 of the constitution says that,

“Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.” (Article 17)

There are numerous articles that are made to protect equality among Indians. The articles that protect the lower caste people in the society are Article 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, 25, 29, 38, 46, 164, 330, 335, 338, 341 and 366. The parliament of India also passed an act called Untouchability Offence Act (UOA) to announce untouchability practice as an offensive practice. Government has taken many steps to eradicate the untouchability practice in India. Its efforts start from the textbooks of little children, saying, Untouchability is a sin, crime, and inhuman. The UOA act came into operation in December 1956 and the same act was amended in September 1976 as the 'Protection of Civil Rights' (PCR) act. PCR act was like a guard to each and every people belonging to Dalit community. This act protects them in a way that the untouchability was almost brought into control by this act.

There are numerous literary works in English that are written with Dalit consciousness. Some of them are *Shadow from Ladakh (1988)* by Bhabani Bhattacharaya, *Children of God (1976)* by Shanta Rameshwar Rao, Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, *Baba's Tribe (1989)* by Suresh Chandra and *A Black Paddy* by Rangin Banerji, etc. are best examples of Dalit writings in literature of India. All these stories deal with the sufferings and plights of lower caste people through some characters in the stories. Even in the two great epics of Indian literature there are some characters who stand as the best examples of untouchability due to caste. Out of the two, *Mahabharata* is taken for instance. The characters Ekalavya and Karna are considered the most talented characters who unfortunately belong to lower castes. The sufferings and pains they faced due to their caste could be well understood by the readers. Discrimination in *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata's Ekalavya's* condition were noted by Bir Singh Yadav thus,

“In the Ramayana, Shambuka, a sudra who was doing penance, and was dealt with death penalty by Lord Rama on the advice of his political council comprising the learned scholars and his rishis like Vishwamitra and Vashista. In Mahabharata, even a great rishi Uttanga emitted bad smell of untouchability when he refused to drink water from the Nishad - the disguised Indra, saying that he

would prefer to die than accept water from an untouchable. Ekalavya was debarred from the archery by the great guru Drona and he had to pay a heavy price for being an untouchable.” (P 71)

Thus, there are lots of literary works that expose the sufferings of Dalit people. The efforts that they have taken to overcome their social condition were well written in the works of Dalit writers.

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Marginalization and Idea of Justice as Projected in the Novel *Halfbreed: An Overview*

P. Rahul
M.A. English
Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai – 625021

An Abstract

This article depicts the struggle of the marginalized people who were longing for their freedom in Canada. People who had a mixed blood named differently throughout the world by carrying a dreadful name called 'METIS'. As a spark from the dark Maria Campbell the protagonist of the novel *Halfbreed* raised to eradicate the life of the slavery using her pen as a sword. The dominant people subjugate them by controlling and torturing them. Poor self image, cultural violation, assimilation, marginalization, internal violence, self destruction were only seen in the life of those people. The search of identity and a desire to live an independent life made the protagonist to lose all her virginity and also originality. She and all her people desired to live an independent life which is free from all the obstacles. Though they have not given full freedom when they lived they hoped that their future generation would live an independent life. This article deals with the justice which has to be given to those kinds of people who longed to be free from marginalization.

Keywords: Maria Campbell, *Halfbreed*, Marginalization, loss of identity, thirst for freedom, idea of justice, violation.

This research paper analyses the novel *Halfbreed* by Maria Campbell as it is all about the half breeds. The by product of French Canadian Males and Native females are called Half-Breed. Half-breed is actually called as mixed blood. They are also called as Metis in other ways. A person of mixed blood is named differently throughout the world. They do not have legal status and this Metis came into existence since 1960. Maria Campbell the protagonist of the novel fights for her freedom and also for her identity as she was socially marginalised from her birth. The concept of marginalization plays its vital role in the life of Maria Campbell. This paper is to analyse how she was marginalised and how she fought for her freedom.

Halfbreed was her own autobiography novel which brings out her pain due to marginalization. She was born on April 26, 1940, near Park Valley, Saskatchewan and was a Metis author. She was the oldest of eight children. So she was supposed to take care of her siblings after her mother's death. One of the major factors that affected the history of the world is the world wars and the aftermath of world wars created many deep scars in the minds of the people. The major scar that was still being as ulcers in people's minds is colonization. Colonization involves one nation colonizing another nation by the force or acquisition. Colonized ones are forced to follow the culture and tradition of the other, political domination and cultural will be in the peak. The result of these, the colonised ones would be condemned and marginalized. The colonization involves into the nation and these native people were severely forces to follow their rules. Assimilation also involved into the nation and the colonized once were forced to conform to the cultures and tradition of the colonizers. The by product of these colonizers and the native people are called as Halfbreed, who had no identity as they were rejected by both the colonizers and the native people.

In the beginning of the novel the author describes her people that they came from Ontario and Manitoba to Saskatchewan. They have to escape the prejudice as they are entering into the new land. Canadian Bay Company, so Halfbreed leaders and their lands gone, they had to the southern areas of Prince Albert Saskatchewan. There was no government, no law and order. They fashioned their life, soon they elected Gabriel Dumont as their president, with eight councillors. Here they lived happily, but soon, in 1870's; their threatened life was again born as how happened in Ontario and Manitoba due to the settlers and the railroad. There established the land act and, the author and the people believed that this act discriminated them.

The condition was that they have to work for three years and had to live on the land before filling a claim. They wanted assurance, from Ottawa of their rights encroached on them by using homestead law [10]. They sent many petitions to Ottawa, but as how happened in Ontario and Manitoba, Ottawa started to ignore the existence of the people.

At last, in 1884, the people believed Gabriel Dumont as he was their only hope. But the result that Riel discovered that only half-breed has complaints with no reasons and Maria Campbell belonged to Métis people. This Metis people are the marginalized people in Canada. To the white people, the Metis are meant as light coloured Indians, they are part and part white. Soon this half breeds vulgar expression for mixed blood. The Canadian Government grabbed all their lands and shown a severe way of living which lead their life to poverty. There was much diversity in cultural, physical appearance commonly. They were called as ‘Road- allowance people’ due to poverty and lack of houses. Campbell says that they were brave hunters and not farmers. But their lands were given to the immigrants and left as homeless.

“Being a half breed meant being poor and dirty. It meant being weak and having to drink. It meant being ugly and stupid. It meant living off white people. And giving your children to white people to look after. It meant that kids like me, had to take what kids like the Derosiers gave and none of that were good”. (34)

Marginalization played a vital role in the life of Maria from childhood. As a child she was suffering from the disease of in equality. Platforms become house for them Marginalised along the platform due to their identification. Maria was born in a home where Chee chum her Cree grandma who taught her ambient Cree rituals and legends. They were extremely discriminated and suffered by poverty. She was much disappointed in the school where she studied with the white people. She was forced to speak in English and also premised for speaking her own language. Many times she was treated lovely among the white children.

“Our first teacher was sad looking little English woman in her later forties she had never taught half-breed before and we soon realized that she didn’t like us... we had many different teachers during those years; some got the girls pregnant and had to leave; others we alcoholic; and because our school attracted everybody else’s reject. We had a constant stream of teachers. We had one good teacher, Mrs. Park, who was stern but fair. Maybe it was because she treated us as equals that I liked her and did well in school (Campbell 52).

Too much depression and extreme poverty made her to search for a new identity. She tried to escape from the poverty, by marrying a white person. But, soon, she was treated low and she broke up with that white man, and she felt herself alone in the slums of vernacular. There she faced depression, drug addiction and prostitution. Her remain significant sociological concepts through her writings: discrimination, poverty and injustice. There are many controversial between these concepts. Then she was discriminated by her own society and lost her identity. From her first husband she undergone the moment of injustice. Her life has been filled with many issues and problem, as a Half-breed.

With no hope she came out from her husband. She was turned into a prostitute for her breed. Lil got major part of her bread and Ray another man turned her as a drug mule, it was her

poverty made her to fall into these bad circumstances. Chee chum her grandma taught many natives which made her to hate life and so she lift her child in convent and the slums. In Alberta she hides her terrific life to David, but David helped her and Tixie helped to overcome drug addiction. She was struggling to keep secret from David and also attempted suicide twice. All these are because of the white superiority over a poor woman.

She hated the life which she lived. Preventing herself from entering into the immoral life, she took her pen as a sword. Her pain and anger has been filled in fictional for in this book *Halfbreed* (1973), which made the world to take away at her agony.

Only hope is that one day, very soon, people will set aside their differences and come together as one. This is not because they love one another, but because they will need each other to service. Then together everyone will fight against their common enemies. Thus marginalization played a vital role in the lives of Maria Campbell and her people. The only weapon she has taken to bring out this pain to this world is her pen and their only belief is that this condition will be changed.

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Savage Treatment of Untouchables in Meena Kandasamy's "One-Eyed"

Dr. V.P. Rathi

Assistant Professor of English
Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College
Pasumalai, Madurai
mannarrathi6@gmail.com
9788672271

Abstract

Meena Kandasamy always sketches the weakness and struggle of the Dalits in her poems. In her poem, "One-Eyed", she delineates the continued existence of oppressive structures of caste, class, race and gender domination within the Indian society. She has designed her poem in such a way to incorporate the marginalized, the voices of the Dalit community. She delineates the savage treatment of untouchables. The perspectives of the inanimate objects on the Dalits are quite common but the society rebels against the use of inanimate objects touched by the untouchables.

Keywords: Meena Kandasamy, “One-Eyed”, Dalit, untouchable, community, inanimate.

Maintaining equality is a major issue expected in the world at the present time. The treatment of inequality prevents the peaceful atmosphere of a society. Inequality prevails because of the discrimination among people related to the class, caste, race and gender. Meena Kandasamy brings out some of the literary works that express caste, class, racism and also brings out the depressed condition of the marginalized people especially the Dalits who live among the exploited people.

Meena Kandasamy is a Chennai-based, contemporary poet, fiction writer, translator and activist. She articulates the voices of her own community, her own country to which her forefathers belonged at a given point of time or history. She tries to recreate the lives of her community native to her and makes her voice heard in the dominant discourse. She finds herself marginalized on the psychological level and suffers from a split self. She presents herself as a Dalit woman writer and retells the Tamil myths by feministic and anti-caste perspectives.

Meena Kandasamy approaches the state of her birth as an outcast and she tries to scan the inside with open-mindedness and neutrality. Her literary output treats all shades of identity crisis such as alienation, marginalization, despair, readjustment, assimilation, adaption and adoption. Her writings are essentially autobiographical and mostly her protagonists and the significant characters are marginalised people especially the Dalits. Her works centre on the complexities, the extraordinary range of possibilities, situations present in Indian family life whereas her themes, however, remain universal - love, loss, separation, heroism, despair, happiness, untouchable, etc. The poems of Meena Kandasamy offers contrapuntal readings of Indian multiculturalism, readings that give scope for alternative views of a whole ensemble of marginalized attitudes – cultural, political, social and literary.

The Dalits have very few opportunities to alter their fate because the society, which is controlled by the elite class, closes the options like education, awareness and equal rights to elevate their position. Meena Kandasamy always sketches the vulnerability and struggle of subjugated human beings in her poems. In her works Meena Kandasamy delineates the continued existence of oppressive structures of caste, class, race and gender domination within the boundaries of the secular Indian democracy. She has designed her poems in such a way to incorporate the marginalized, the voices of the Dalit community.

Meena Kandasamy’s poem “One-Eyed” was published in Ms. The poem talks about Dhanam, a little girl who feels very thirsty, touches the pot and drank a glass of water from the pot to quench her thirst with her “clumsy hand”. The learned teacher in the school slapped on the little girl’s cheek especially for breaking the rules. The concept of untouchability is practised mainly against the lower caste as well as the lower section people. They are the worst sufferers. As they do not have the political and economic power to fight against the upper class people’s supremacy, they mutely accept subjugation. They do not have the voice to express their conditions and portray

themselves before the world. Even the inanimate objects surrounding her feel the pitied condition of the girl:

“the pot sees just another noisy child
the glass sees an eager and clumsy hand
the water sees a parched throat slaking thirst” (One-Eyed)

Even the pot, glass and water take pity upon the girl. These inanimate objects feel for her and they allow themselves to quench her thirst. In reality, the Dalits are not allowed mingle with the public and they are not allowed to touch vessels, or any other items used by the upper caste. They have to use separate vessels, pots, glasses, etc. Dhanam in the poem is a submissive girl. She does not even react to the upper class supremacy. But she sees a kind of world which is torn into two. The poet pathetically concludes the poem as:

“dhanam sees a world torn in half.
her left eye, lid open but light slapped away,
the price for a taste of that touchable water” (One-Eyed)

Water is a natural resource and it never gulps but sacrifices itself to all creatures in the world. But some human beings divide water for the upper caste and water for the lower caste. It is very nonsensical to think deeply about the classification and caste system which still prevails in some places. Meena Kandasamy has concentrated on the pessimistic image of her land, gives an insight into rural India and mentions the atrocities committed on the untouchables. The children of the low castes were denied the right to drink water with the other; Dhanam was slapped severely when she drank. What is the price for tasting that untouchable water? It is nothing but a slap and for that particular reason her one-eye is damaged. She sees the torn world but not a complete one. In her eyes, the world seems to be partial one and it shows partiality to a particular group.

Meena Kandasamy reveals that the weight of social pressure operates to confirm in each case their extreme subordination despite whatever personal effort may be applied towards upward mobility on the part of the untouchables or towards autonomy on the part of the woman. In an interview with *Sampsonia Way Magazine*, Meena Kandasamy remarks, “*My poetry is naked, my poetry is in tears, my poetry screams in anger, my poetry writhes in pain. My poetry smells of blood, my poetry salutes sacrifice. My poetry speaks like my people; my poetry speaks for my people.*” (*Mitsu 1*)

Meena Kandasamy vehemently condemns and criticizes the devilish practice of casteism and savage treatment of the untouchables in the name of supremacy of the caste Hindus who, according to Hindu mythology are supposed to be the most cherished children of the Brahma, the Supreme Soul. It is the hypocrisy of the Hindu tradition which renders the untouchables as born of the feet of the Brahma, therefore regarded as the lowest in social hierarchy. In the surrounding villages also the low castes underwent untold sufferings. Meena Kandasamy recounts the brutal

and inhuman treatment given to the little girl of this caste. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, “Education is a panacea” but here in this poem the reader could see that an institution corrupts the little child. According to Meena Kandasamy, the school, hospital and the press violate the rules.

The social pictures of Meena Kandasamy look ironical and depressing, but they have a message to be shared with the readers. The contrast involved has to be well understood by the readers who want to comprehend what Meena Kandasamy suggests about the relationship between art and society. Her artistic device of contrast gives real insight into the way of the Dalits healthy adjustment in Indian society at a time when other options are available to them. Time passes, things change but the fate and struggle of the untouchables and subalterns do not change. They remain stagnant at the same point where they were before independence. The representation of the Dalits in her poem is realistic, putting aside many controversial issues. Symbols and images are used adeptly by Meena Kandasamy in her poem. She gains maturation as an artist of excellence, significance, relevance and consequence. The style of Meena Kandasamy’s writing is like that of E.E. Cummings, a familiar American poet who is known for small letters in his poems. Meena Kandasamy’s poems are characterised by both ethnocentric and minority discourse features. Naturally, her poems clearly portray the anxieties, alienation and feeling of insecurity of a modern day Dalit. She also uses different narrative techniques in her creative work.

Meena Kandasamy voices for the unvoiced especially for the Dalits. Human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. But basic rights such as right to live, right to protest, right to express oneself, right to live safely from violence and torture, etc are being denied to the marginalized communities. They continue to endure the evils of bonded labour system with their poverty and literacy. The Government of India plans and introduces welfare schemes in paper but could not uproot it completely in effective practice. The benefits of the schemes are pocketed by the politicians and bureaucrats. The concepts of equality, fraternity, liberty, and democracy in Indian context seem to be illusory for these unfortunate layers of the society. Even the inanimate objects have life and see this world as one, but the treatment of the Dalits are dissimilar.

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**Exploration of Diasporic Identity as Projected in Chitra Banerjee
Divakaruni's *Before We Visit the Goddess***

R. Esther Reshma
M.A. English
Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai – 625021

Abstract

This research article explores the theme of 'Diasporic Identity' in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Before We Visit the Goddess*. It is an attempt to highlight the concept of the women psyche and the cultural oscillation experienced by the characters Sabutri, Bela, Tara. 'Straddling between Cultures' is the common outlook of Diasporic culture. The female characters in this novel straddle between the culture of the homeland and the host land. In the period of globalization, migration is a common phenomenon. This paper neatly concludes with the emerging trend in

literature, which signifies the dilemma of immigrant self and deals with the issues like gender, race, religion, education, language, codes of behavior and cultural practices. This article helps us to understand human experience as a combination of cultural forces in each of us.

Keywords: Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *Before We Visit the Goddess*, Cultures, tradition, migration, gender, self identity.

Women writing have come of age, overcoming its difference. Most of the women writers and feministic writers have discussed on the issues of gender construction and its impact on the psyche of the girl child, traditional interpretations of motherhood, exploitation within and outside the family, influence of gender stereotyping on career/life options, etc... Diasporas may be migrants but the ones who have settled in specific countries constitute the mainstream like Indians in foreign countries especially in USA. Temporally, they are located in the past historical moment Diasporic foregrounds migration both by choice and by compulsion.

The diasporic writers in their own ways have tried to offer through discourse of terror a warning to the future generation. Divakaruni tends to use her writings in a way to reject the culture of violence. She has tried to grapple with the complex, confusing and fast charging social and political realities. She has depicted the impact of discriminations on ordinary people. She had presented the conflicting passion and demands that come to women as daughters, lovers, wives and mothers.

Chitra Banarjee Divakaruni has been educated at Loreto house, a convent school run by Irish Missionary and presidency college, Kolkata. She has moved to the United States in 1977 for her higher studies. At present she lives in Bay area with her family. She teaches writing and composition for several years at Foothill College, Los Altos. She has been teaching creative writing at the University of Houston. She is a co-operative founder and former president of Maitri, a helpline found in 1991 for South Asian women dealing with domestic abuse. She also serves on the emeritus board of Pratham Houston, a non-profit organization working to bring literacy to disadvantaged Indian children.

Divakaruni's works has been published in over 50 magazines, including The Atlantic Monthly and The New Yorker and her writing has been included in over fifty anthologies including the Best American Short Stories, the O'Henry prize stories and the pushcart prize anthology. Her fiction has been translated into twenty nine languages including Dutch, Hebrew, Indonesian, Bengali, Turkish and Japanese.

Divakaruni is at her best in exploring the themes of love and longing desires, process of understanding, self-analysis and discovery. In her writings, women play a predominant role and as a writer, she justifies her choice. Her writings project woman characters a bounding passion. They draw upon boundless inner strength. Her themes are the Indian experience, contemporary America, history, myth and the challenges of living in a multicultural world. She has begun her writing as a

poet. Her two latest volumes of poetry are *Black Candle* and *Leaving Yuba City*. She has won several awards for her poems, such as a Gerbode Award, Barbara Doming Memorial Award and Allen Ginsberg Award. Two of her major collections of short stories are *Arranged Marriage: Stories (1995)* and *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives (2001)*. In those stories, the author narrates about the immigrant brides who are both liberated and trapped by cultural change.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's unique perspective on what it means to live as an immigrant in the United States has influenced most of her work. To most of them, America is a land of opportunity, providing them with a new life, and a way of escape from the dominant factor. The dominant factor can be anything which an individual thinks to be a different one. Each culture is different but human experience such as desire, pain and joy are universal. Divakaruni's novel *One Amazing Thing* helps us to understand human experience as a combination of complex cultural forces operating in each of us. The characters in the novel are from different cultural background but they have one thing in common- domination by a superior force. The present paper discusses the different consciousness that operates in general within an individual and focuses especially on how these consciousnesses has put the characters in dilemma.

In the period of globalization, migration is a common phenomenon. One of the emerging trend in literature is to present the dilemma of immigrant self which includes issues like gender, race, religion, education, language, codes of behavior and cultural practices. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a distinct South Asian writer with a well established position in literature. She belongs to the group of Indian writers who focus on postcolonial diasporic identity. As a writer, she has represented many genres such as poetry, short fictions, novels and essays. The experience of the immigrants in the United States forms the core of her fiction. Divakaruni stresses upon the concept of double consciousness in *Before We Visit the Goddess*. The term, "Double Consciousness" was first used by W.E.B. Du Bois in his book, *The Soul of Black Folk*. It is an individual's feeling of having more than one social identity, which makes him/her difficult to develop a sense of self. Originally Du Bois used this term in order to explain the minds of African-Americans living in the Southern United States. Today critics and researchers employ this term to bring out the in-between state felt by the characters. It is a study that promotes human understanding. Double Consciousness and homelessness are the two features of postcolonial Diasporas. Double Consciousness or unstable sense of the self is the result of forced migration colonialism frequently caused. In the Diaspora this feeling of being caught between cultures, of belonging to neither, rather than to both of finding oneself arrested in a psychological limbo that results not merely from some individual psychological disorder but from the trauma of the cultural displacement .

Divakaruni's latest novel *Before We Visit the Goddess* travels across two continents and three generations of women. Divakaruni seamlessly takes us from rural India to modern life in Houston and Austin. If Sabitri is Bengali in her passionate love for sweets and Bela straddles two cultures, Tara is as far removed from her roots as one can imagine. The author paints her as the stereotypical rebel-a drug-addict with an eyebrow piercing and spiky dyed hair, with no knowledge

of gotras and temples and Indian culture. Tara is strangely the opposite of her grandmother. While Sabitri yearned to be educated, Tara throws away education to find herself a monotonous job instead. It's a topsy-turvy world where previous generations look forward while the present generation looks backward. But we learn later that Tara's dreams are not regressive; they are just different.

The uniqueness of Divakaruni's fiction *Before We Visit the Goddess* lies in her bringing together the people from different cultural background and making them share their experience. Language and culture transformed when they come in contact with others. The immigrant writers write in relation with the culture of their homeland and at the same time adopt and negotiate with the cultural space of the host land.

Being the relative of the immigrant the non-immigrants are also is forced to learn the language of their immigrant relatives. When Sabitri is asked to write a letter to Tara to bring her in the right path Sabitri, wonders,

“What can she write in her rusty English to change Tara's mind? She cannot even imagine her granddaughter's life, the whirlwind foreign world she lives in” (3).

All that she has known of her grand-daughter, Tara, is what she has managed to acquire through the photographs that her own daughter Bela, the mother of Tara, has sent her. Making various attempts to write, resulting in false starts that make the letter sound moralize and inappropriate, even to her, she ultimately joys down her own experiences and decisions that have shaped not only her own future, but inadvertently also that of her daughter Bela and possibly even in turn of her granddaughter Tara. A letter that travelled the boundaries of time and space and which despite lying unopened for almost quarter of a century. The letter has kept the three generation of mothers and daughters away from each other.

The three generation of women have been not merely separated by space Sabitri being in India, Bela travel from India to America and Tara being born and brought up in America, though both Bela and Tara live in different parts of the country, as Sabitri and her mother Durga also by their beliefs their lifestyles and the mental and emotional borders they have drawn between themselves walling the other person out. Interestingly, though, their lives run a close parallel, in the decisions they take and the impact it has on their life and relations, given that these decisions bring with them their unwritten 'other' dependency and restrictions, which all three women, being by nature independent and impulsive, either consciously or unconsciously , regret and resent.

This book signifies its coming in the age of diasporic writing, where the travel undertaken is not merely across physical space, but also largely through the mental space of the three generation of women. The emotional distance that emerges between the three women and within each of them, as they seek to pursue their dreams. This emotional disconnect coupled between the dreams that the women wish to pursue and the reality, that in actuality unfolds, is what constitutes the major borders that the book dwells upon. Despite the death of Sabitri and the imminent

separation of Bela, who is to go to an old age home, and Tara, who is to go back to their own life, with her husband and son, in the end these borders are dissolved and the women understand each other and themselves better.

What actually pushed them apart, which is also what creates a feeling of alienation, in the diasporics, is the “longing to be included” (10). Beginning with an external displacement and a yearning for their home, it eventually manifests in an internal displacement; as one gets alone, disaffected only from others, but also gradually from one’s hopes and dreams, thus driving deep the sense of loss and alone, disaffected that endlessly shifts from outside to deep within. Sabitri first experiences this displacement and loss, when she moves from her parents’ home, in a village far away from Kolkatta, to the city, in order to pursue her dreams. This moving, which is underlined with both anxiety and anticipation, then gets manifested in an adjustment and acceptance that remains so. “Even the most startling adventure, sooner or later, must become routine. So it was with Sabitri” (8). Then eventually turns to doubt and disillusionment “Sabitri was mostly grateful to be ignored. The village school had not prepared her adequately: it was only with frantic effort that she managed to keep up” (9).

This, in turn, can lead to become complacent or even cocky and making errors of judgment that can then cost oneself more than what one is prepared to pay, as Sabitri realizes, when she is turned away from the home of her benefactor Leelamoyi, into the dark night, because she guesses that she will make a good daughter-in-law, for the son of the house, despite having come from a social class that is far lower than that of Leelamoyi, though her caste is comparable, given that she is the daughter of a temple priest, and it is a result of her caste that despite she being an outsider, she is not brazenly humiliated, though she is often ignored and treated badly, until she makes a wrong move and is therefore thrown out of the house.

The borders Bela experiences, like in the context of Sabitri, begin with her leaving her parents’ home to travel to America, to be with her lover Sanjay. Unlike Sabitri, though she leaves without her mother’s blessings, prevent every attempt of Sabitri to keep Sanjay away from her “A man who - Sabitri had known this in every vibrating nerve of her body - was utterly wrong of her” (31). Like Sabitri, she also feels extremely lonely and out of place, after her displacement both when she first moves to America and later when she is pregnant and longs to be with her mother.

“Dangerous fantasies flitted through her mind. If she had allowed Sabitri to arrange her marriage, she would have been living in India. She would have gone to her mother’s home for the birthing, as was the tradition, to be cared for and pampered. Sabitri knew what she liked in a way that Sanjay never would” (103).

This realization, however, not merely leaves her with a sense of loneliness, but also leads her to decisions and actions that ultimately separate her both from Sanjay and her daughter Tara.

Diaspora being a theme more consistently and obviously explored by Divakaruni, in her earlier writings, *Before We Visit the Goddess* serves as a concern that constitutes a flitting but persistent backdrop but one which is nevertheless explored from diverse angles. As Divakaruni recounts in her interview with Google, she has managed to, in this book, not only a touch upon life in America, but also places a part of her book in Houston. Through this context, she brings out the experiences of the diasporic culture in an alien land and also captures the opposing emotions that go with it; through she does not talk on this aspect too much. Bela, on landing in America, finds the invisibility it gives her and the modernity in the culture enticing,

She threw her arms around him the way she never could have done in Kolkata and kissed him on the mouth. No one catcalled. No one harassed them or took umbrage or even noticed, except for an old man who offered them a pensive smile. When she had enough breath to speak again, Bela said to Sanjay, “I think I’m going to be happy in America. (92)

This sense of loss and appreciation is also experienced by her protagonist Bela, with time and as a result of her inability to even visit her mother, due to the approach of her husband Sanjay (who hates her mother Sabitri and is unwilling to forgive her, due to the comment she made in meeting him and appointing a person to watch over Bela, so that she wouldn’t meet Sanjay) and given that Bela has not come on legal papers, which might result in her not being able to return to America. Her longing for India and all that she has left behind thus keeps growing stronger and takes root within her, resulting in her attempt to convince her mother appearing as a projection of the need to convince herself,

“Dear Mother, I’m very sorry to tell you that I’m cancelling my trip to India. I know you were really looking forward to it, and to seeing Tara for the first time, and so was I. but Sanjay absolutely refuse to let us go. Yesterday we had a huge fight over it. He claims that it’s not safe. He’s also afraid that since he and I both left India with documents that weren’t exactly legal, I might be detained, and Tara along with me. He’s also afraid that certain parties might find out that we’re coming and harm us, since he’d been on their hit list before he escaped. I’m not sure if any of this is true, but since he feels so strongly, I’ve decided not to argue any more about it, at least for now.”(77)

A visiting professor, Dr. Venkatachalapathi, whom Tara escorts around, to visit the Meenakshi temple in America, as per his express wish, or rather that of his wife, himself goes through a scope of emotions or experience, in its context. When the temple appears before him, after their long journey, he finds,

“The temple was an architectural disappointment, through Dr. Venkatachalapathi, another valiant but doomed attempted by the immigrant community to re-create the Indian experience. This could never compare to the original Meenakshi Amman Kovil of Madurai, fourteen sculpted gates rising twenty stories tall. The energy

inside that sanctum, born of centuries of chanted prayers – how could you hope to re-create that in this flat landscape dotted with strange trees, on the wrong side of the black waters?” (127)

What is attracting however is that, as he decides to enter the temple, his perspective reflects an understanding of how the culture needs to adapt to suit the times and environment. Even when Tara hesitates away from entering the temple because of her appearance and the manner in which she is dressed, he asks her to come along, requesting her only to remove her eyebrow ring and offering her a shawl to cover herself. He however mentions to her a couple of small things that they need to do *Before We Visit the Goddess*. Moreover, when Tara gets curiously involved in the prayer, he is offering, in the memory of his daughter Meena, he decides to offer prayers (*archana*) also to her. Aware that the priest will not offer the prayer, without knowing Tara’s birth star, Dr. Venkatachalapathi tells the priest that Tara is a member of his family and asked the priest to offer prayers accordingly. The priest, though he does not really believe what Dr. Venkatachalapathi is saying thinks that he is merely an employee of the temple, goes ahead and offers the prayer.

What further adds complexity to the exploration of theme of approach to heritage is that Tara, who prides herself on being an American and has groomed herself like a typical young American girl, with spiky hair, rings on her eyebrow and the middle of her tongue, is yet not allowed to forget her lineage, by one of her only friends and colleague Blanca, who insist that Tara should connect with the Indian community, even if she has never been to India and does not desire to own up to her identity “She hands me a crumpled copy of the Indo-Houston Mirror. “You need to be in touch with your people”. It’s a sore point between us, what Blanca sees as my abandonment of Indian community and I consider self-preservation”. (50)

Divakaruni has explored all the sufferings of the immigrant people. The characters in her novel *Before We Visit the Goddess* show the clear picture of the in betweenness of the characters in a dramatic way. The insight provided in this chapter is an eye opener to view the different dimension of consciousness working within us. Divakaruni is a writer who writes to promote human understanding and compassion.

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**The Trials and Tribulations of the Marginalized in
Indira Parthasarathy's *Kurutipunnal***

Dr. S. Soumia

Assistant Professor of English

Sri Meenakshi Govt. Arts College for Women (Autonomous)

Madurai-2

Abstract

The paper studies the horrific nature of the Keezha Venmani massacre and throws light upon the character of the master mind, Kanniah Naidu. Violence inflicted upon the marginalized is also dealt with in the paper when the parallels between Festus Iyayi's novel, *Violence* and Parthasarathy's *Kurutippunal* are drawn upon and discussed. The paper proposes to establish that man has the power to develop his innate capacities so as to achieve dignity in spite of the hurdles in the world.

Keywords: Indira Parthasarathy, *Kurutippunal*, Marginalized, carnage, gruesome, inflict, aberration

Though most of the developing countries in the Asian and African continents gained Independence from their European colonizers in the 20th century, the marginalized citizens in these countries do not enjoy the fruits of real freedom and independence. Their freedom has been a virtual one and they are under the throngs of the elite, be it the upper caste or the economically rich or well educated or in any way the powerful people of the area. In addition to this factor, the marginalized are under the constant surveillance of the civic authorities, the bureaucracy and especially the Police force of the respective areas. Even after 72 years of Indian Independence and the fast paced development of our country in all fields it is evident that in most of the local issues, political or social, it is the marginalized people of the area, who are relatively illiterate, economically downtrodden and in turn powerless who are targeted by the police and civil authorities and umpteen number of cases have been registered against them. By such means the real culprits or perpetrators of the crime (who often belong to the powerful sections of society) are left scot-free. The marginalized accused do not know the ways and means to challenge these legal suits, are charge-sheeted, punished and end up their lives in prison. Nowadays illiterate economically poor youth of these marginalized sections are enticed to act as mercenaries and carry out some of the most gruesome murders of the recent decade in our country. In turn the real criminals are never brought before the chains of law and justice.

Suppression, violence, harassment are some of the miserable conditions the marginalized people are put up with in many developing countries especially in rural underdeveloped areas. As a result of the above mentioned three factors, the marginalized are tormented that they end up crippled, mentally deranged and some of them are even tortured to die in public as they had committed so called sins. Violence and harassment of the marginalized in most of the incidents happen to be perpetrated by a single person who connives many reasons and carries out the plan with the support of mercenaries or hooligans. A careful analysis of the personality of the master mind reveals that his or her psychological aberrations have triggered him up for the resultant carnage. In such cases "the doubly marginalized women" and innocent children face horrific deaths.

Indira Parthasarathy, Tamil dramatist and novelist, has discussed many social and political issues in his works. His *magnum opus Kurutippunal*, published in February 1975, reveals Parthasarathy's commitment for social transformation and his concern for the underprivileged. It is based on the Keezha Venmani carnage of 1967 in which forty two poor Harijans including twelve innocent children and twenty six helpless women were burnt alive in a land-lord-peasant clash. Parthasarathy's own experience at Keezha Venmani enabled him to understand the complexity in human nature. What Henry James says about the writer's duty to "catch the colour of life" (James 1169) in the description of the locale and its people is applicable to Indira Parthasarathy's personal experience at Keezha Venmani.

The paper studies the horrific nature of the massacre and throws light upon the character of the master mind, Kanniah Naidu. Violence inflicted upon the marginalized is also dealt with in the paper when the parallels between Festus Iyayi's novel, *Violence* and Parthasarathy's *Kurutippunal* are drawn upon and discussed. The paper proposes to establish that man has the power to develop his innate capacities so as to achieve dignity in spite of the hurdles in the world.

This novel is Parthasarathy's *tour de force* and won him the Sahitya Akademi Award. It was translated into English by K.N. Subramaniam under the title, *The River of Blood*.

Parthasarathy's *Kurutippunal* calls for more vigilance on the part of those at the forefront of the fight for social justice, political emancipation and economic prosperity. The novel portrays social and economic repression against the downtrodden. The dehumanizing attitude of the landlords is attacked vehemently through a number of incidents in the novel.

Kurutippunal depicts the miserable life of the poor people who live in a village near Tiruvarur in Tanjore district, Tamil Nadu. Gopal, who has done his doctoral research on sociology, comes to the village from Delhi to spend a few days, but stays in the village for two years. During this period, he has written only one letter to his friend, Siva who is in Delhi. In order to know what has happened to Gopal, Siva comes to the village, and finds his friend being engaged in the revolutionary activities against the landlords. The clash is between the landlords represented by Kanniah Naidu and the poor peasants represented by Gopal, Palani, Vadivelu and Ramaiah. Parthasarathy portrays the character of Kanniah Naidu both from the social and psychological perspectives. Kanniah Naidu is impotent and this defect manifests itself in various dimensions. He wants to take revenge on nature and on fellow human beings. He makes use of the caste factor to turn the fury of the villagers against Gopal and Siva. In a moment of despair, he sets fire to the huts of the poor peasants killing a number of women and innocent children.

The content of the novel is what Frantz Fanon describes in *The Wretched of the Earth*. The endless tension between the oppressor and the oppressed, and the resultant violence is what Fanon discusses and the traumatic events in *Kurutippunal* reflect Fanon's concept of decolonization and violence.

The character of Kanniah Naidu is highly complex because of the psychological aberrations emerging from the consciousness of deformity. Kanniah Naidu's physical appearance is described thus: "He has remained a bachelor though he is fifty years old. He has got a strong body and he looks like a thirty-year old man. His face always looks clean without a trace of hair" (*Kurutippunal* 41). In his first meeting with Kanniah Naidu, Gopal wonders how Naidu is keeping his appearance so "young and healthy" in spite of his affairs with many women in the nearby villages (*Kurutippunal* 41). It involves great irony because Kanniah Naidu is impotent. The end of the novel, which presents the climax, is a powerful event, showing a perfect combination of form and theme. Vadivelu tells Gopal how Kanniah Naidu and his men threw the helpless women and the innocent children into fire like "throwing pieces of wood in burning fire" (*Kurutippunal* 230). Vadivelu and Gopal run towards the huts of the poor peasants. They see "the flame rising like the tongue of a demon. The wind and the nearby trees made the fire spread in all directions. The poor people, who have been a prey to hunger and poverty, have now become a prey to injustice and arrogance. The helpless victims are being reduced to ashes. The agonizing cry of the poor slowly fades away in the embrace of fire" (*Kurutippunal* 230). Gopal looks at the river. It seems to him that the river is full of blood. Parthasarathy uses interior monologue here so as to reveal the gradual rise of the spirit of revolution in Gopal: "What is this? How has the river become incarnadine? Whose blood is this? How many times I have enjoyed the serene beauty of this river in moonlight! Now the same river is full of blood instead of water. Slowly and slowly increases the level of water! Blood, blood everywhere! The whole village is sinking in blood!" (*Kurutippunal* 231).

Kurutippunal has contributed immensely towards drawing attention to the exploitation existing in the social system. The portrayal of such situations of violent aggression and exploitation is a clear indication of Parthasarathy's commitment to focus on the yearnings and aspirations of the poor. While describing the sufferings of the less-privileged members of the society, Parthasarathy strikes an optimistic note by focusing on the gradual build-up of the revolutionary activities, aiming at finding a solution to the degrading experiences of the poor. The novel ends in an optimistic note that finds its full expression in the words of Gopal who takes a firm decision to fight vehemently against the landlords: "I am going to be immersed in the river of blood that belongs to the oppressed people. All the strength of the poor peasants should come to me. I'm not a coward" (*Kurutippunal* 254).

The treatment of the theme of faith in human possibilities even in the moment of a threatening crisis in *Kurutippunal* invites comparison with Festus Iyayi's novel, *Violence*. Iyayi portrays the sufferings of the downtrodden and emphasizes the need for the reconstruction of society. The beginning of violence shows the pathetic plight of Idemudia and his wife, Adisa: "He and his wife, Adisa were tenants in one of the low muds, but zinced houses along Owode Street. Adisa, who had been sweeping the badly cemented floor of the room dropped the broom and stretched her hand across the table which stood against the window... The broom was so short that she had to stoop substantially to sweep clean (1). The standard of living of the people

in *Kurutippunal* is not better than that in *Violence*. The only difference is that *Violence* depicts discrimination on the basis of colour whereas *Kurutippunal* shows discrimination on the basis of caste. In *Violence* the exploiter class is represented by Obofun and Queen; in *Kurutippunal* by Kanniah Naidu and his relatives. Iyayi shows how the poor people suffer at the hands of powerful people when Queen denies the wages to be given to Idemudia. Queen makes Idemudia and his friends work hard in off-loading the five hundred bags of cement but is not willing to pay the money to the workers. Obofun attempts to exploit Adisa's poverty to satisfy his sexual needs. Similarly in *Kurutippunal* the poor peasants work hard in the paddy fields but get only a little because all the fields are owned by Kanniah Naidu and his relatives. Kanniah Naidu keeps many women in the neighbouring villages as concubines in order to hide his impotency. When Vadivelu criticizes him commenting on his impotency, Kanniah Naidu takes cruel revenge on him. He subjects Vadivel and Pappathi to sexual abuse. Both *Kurutippunal* and *Violence* prove that the oppressor will not hesitate to go to any extent in taking revenge on the helpless people. *Violence* attacks the dehumanizing attitude of the exploiters who have devised the social system according to their convenience: "The type of economic and hence the political system which are operating in our country today brutalizes the individual, rapes his manhood" (*Violence*185). Iyayi puts forward his view through one of the characters in *Violence*: I feel and think it necessary that all the oppressed sections of our community ought to take up arms to overthrow the present oppressive system. The system has already proved that it operates through violence" (*Violence* 185).

Violence, according to Fanon, is a 'cleansing force' which liberates people from their hopelessness, inferiority complex and submissiveness and thereby restore their self-respect. It is their suffering in violence that instills hope and confidence to face any sort of difficulty and overcome it. Gopal's firm decision towards the end of the novel is to fight for the upliftment of the poor and the downtrodden makes the reader relate this event with Fanon's powerful lines in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "The people of the third world are in the process of shattering their chains"(34).

Kurutippunal and *Violence* have many similarities and end in an optimistic note. Both the novels portray the emergence of a revolution which will pave the way for the upliftment of the downtrodden. Both focus on the need for the preservation of human dignity.

As analysed in the opening paragraphs, subjugation of the marginalized happens in most of the third world countries, and the victims at some extent resolve to ward off the nihilistic feelings and pessimistic despair, and to muster confidence, self- respect and achieve dignity.

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Geographical Marginalisation in Context with Identity Crisis Projected by David Rubadiri and Derek Walcott in Their Poems

K. Uma, II M.A. English

**Department of English and Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai**

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to view the “Geographical Marginalisation” with the reference to the two poems, David Rubadiri’s “A Negro Labourer in Liverpool” and Derek Walcott’s “A Far Cry from Africa”. In Rubadiri’s poem, the poet spot lights the suffering of a Negro who is working in the land of free (the place of White) and how he longs for a hope. The title of the poem itself is a juxtapose and the toil of a Negro to get an identity is shown. In Walcott’s poem, “A Far Cry from Africa” the suffering of the native African is discussed and the condition of the native “Kikuyu” is mentioned. The poet uses the personification to show the pitiable condition of Arica during the battle by comparing the position of the White and of the Black. Both the poems depict out the voice of the voiceless.

Keywords: David Rubadiri, “A Negro Labourer in Liverpool”, Derek Walcott, “A Far Cry from Africa”, Battlefield, Impact, Migration, Quest for an Identity, Longing for a hope.

This is an attempt to focus on the poems which has the same theme ‘Geographical Marginalisation’ of two different poets like James David Rubadiri’s ‘A Negro Labourer in Liverpool’ and the poem ‘A Far Cry from Africa’ by Derek Walcott tell about the pitiable situation of the African people.

Literature is a word derived from Latin word ‘Littera’ means Letter in English. Literature is one of the arts which teaches us and makes us to enjoy through aesthetic sense. It is in the form of manuscript. Literature takes a vital role in any nation’s pride. The literary men may die but never their works which show the history, movement and the political status of them why they lived, Writers have the capacity to win the heart of the readers through their writing skill with many literary techniques.

“Geographical Marginalisation” can be done only through Migration, which is nothing but the movement from one place to the other geographical zone to seek the prosperity individually or in a group. Migration may be temporary or for the purpose of settlement whether it is because of voluntary or involuntary.

Among 53 Commonwealth nations, Africa is one which was invaded by the British by admiring the wealth but later they treated the people of Africa as slaves. The most pathetic condition is how women were treated. The White consider the Black women as a machine just to produce the children, they quench their sexual desire by abusing them. When Black and White are compared, the White men are in the peak and at the same time the Black women are in the lowest position. The African children were died due to malnutrition. At one point of time, the people of Africa begun to raise their voice against the cruel behaviour of the Britishers. Every nook and corner of African people struggle a lot for their freedom; for instance, Kikuyu', a group of tribal people formed themselves and names as 'Mau Mau' strive hard for eight years form 1952-1960. The African suppressed themselves by underestimating them as a Black and they long for the Blue Eyes like the White people. Toni Morrison spotlights the longing of the blue eye in the work 'Bluest Eye'. Though they were dominated they have the spirit of overcoming obstacles with a new hope is shown through the poem of Maya Angelou's 'Still I Rise'. The African Literature is otherwise known as 'Black Literature'.

In the beginning, African literature blooms in the form of Oral and in the later period it gradually developed into several genres like poetry, prose, drama, short story etc. Poetry is one of the greatest genres of literature through which the poet can expresses his inner feelings under different circumstance whether it may be subjective or objective with the end of happy or melancholy note. By using the numerous styles like figure of speech including personification, metaphor, zoomorphism, alliteration and by the various meter, the poet can attract the mind and heart of the readers. The good poetry can create the tension while reading. In poetry, there are various kinds like the epic, sonnet, ode, etc.

James David Rubadiri was a Malawian poet, playwright, diplomat and novelist. Rubadiri is a father of East African Poetry. After the independence of Malawi, in 1964 he became the first ambassador to the United States and the United Nations, He was taught to the University of Ibadan in Nigeria by the invitation of Wole Soyinka.

Sir Derek Alton Walcott is a St. Lucian poet, essayist, playwright and a traveller who is a descent of Africa. St. Lucia is an island under the colonization of British in West Indies. Walcott is a child of both the English Dutch and the Black African. Walcott as the blood of Africa worries a lot about the poor condition of the African people by the Britishers. In 1992, Walcott received the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Rubadiri's poem, 'A Negro Labourer in Liverpool' is a juxtapose with the Black man in Liverpool (the place of the White). In the title of the poem, article 'A' represents the lack of an identity of the Black man who works in Liverpool. In the poem's title, the word 'Labourer' shows how hardly the man is working.

In Walcott's poem, 'A Far Cry from Africa; the phrase 'A Far Cry' gives the meaning how far the cry comes from and reaches the poet in St. Lucia. The cry comes from the far distance by crossing the number of oceans. This poem depicts the reason for the cry of the African people.

Rubadiri views the life of Black labourer in Liverpool through the poem.

"I passed him
Slouching in dark backhouse pavement
head bowed
taunt
haggard" (lines 1-5)

The poet passes the man who is working hard in the backhouse pavement; his head was bowed so he could not find who is working. The labourer toiled himself a lot as he is in the state of a haggard. The bowed head represents the submissive position of the labourer and though he is not stable, he could not take rest.

"Our eyes met
but on his dark negro face
no sunny smile
no hope" (lines 10-13)

The poet and working man looked each other, but he could not find any smile or hope on the dark Negro face. The dark says not only the colour the Negro but also his life in blank without any colourful moments. The labourer watches a crowd of people and he searches for a hope and he longs for it. The only hope of him is shovel which is in his hand.

"the negro labourer in Liverpool
That from his motherland
With new hope
Sought for an identity" (lines 21-24)

When the labourer comes to Liverpool, he has a hope and dream about his life. The Negro dreams that he possesses an identity in the foreign land, but now the circumstance is too bad and here he searches his identity. The Negro toils a lot by working in the coal mine for the sake of Britishers and for the development of their nation. The hard working man is nothing in the image 'in the land of free' shows the independent life of Britishers. Though the Black people in the free land, they cannot be independent and enjoy freedom as much as White people can. The Black especially in the poem, 'A Negro Labourer in Liverpool' is a refugee whose life is in dark without any hope and he waits for his dawn to be colourful filled with joy and happiness.

The poem, 'A Far Cry from Africa' of Walcott spotlights the battlefield of Africa and the consequences of this "Corpses are scattered through a paradise" describes the cruel condition. The African land was full of dead bodies, wherever they turn, they could hear the lamentation and mournful cry.

"The salient of colonial policy
What is that to the White child hacked in bed?" (line 8 & 9)

The poet talks about the power of the colonization and he raises the question if the white child is killed, will they leave us. But without any compassion the white murdered a group of innocent African people. This is the allusion of Jews.

"In a white dust of ibises whose cries
Have wheeled since civilization's dawn
From the parched river or beast-teeming plain
The violence of beast on beast is read" (lines 12-15)

The poet says the people of White came here to civilize but they dominated the native and they made them as slaves. The White entered through the river, but they now rule the natives. If the native does not follow the rules and regulations made by the White, the Black sentenced to death.

"The gorilla wrestles with the superman,
I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have curse." (lines 25-28)

As Walcott is a blood combination of both the English Dutch and the Black Africa, he considers himself as a curse. He can't divide his vein to any one of the nations. Walcott says that White people tamed the Black as the superman tames the gorilla. Zoomorphism is used by the poet.

"Betray them both or give back what they give?
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?
How can I turn from Africa and live?" (lines 31-33)

The poet's rootlessness and the placeness is shown in the last part of the poem. The poet is in the dilemma to know who he is and his identity. In the poem, Walcott talks about the war of 'Kikuyu' a group of East Africa formed themselves as 'Mao Mao' whose freedom struggle takes a

vital role. Though the native people live in their motherland, but they are forced to obey the order of the White. Whether it may be a group or of an individual. In some case, the negro may have migrated himself to get the prosperity, but it was judged by the other in whose land, the man lives.

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Image of Empowered Women in Contemporary Indian Social Spectrum

Dr Punam Pandey

Assistant Professor of English
Dept. of Basic & Social Sciences
BUAT, Banda, UP
pandeypoonam48@gmail.com

Abstract

Chetan Bhagat, the voice of India's rising entrepreneurial class always takes up theme for his books which sketches his image as a writer of new India. His novel published in 2016 *One Indian Girl* has portrayed the clear picture of empowered Indian woman of 21st century. He leads his speculation towards the need of hour regarding women in Indian. Having looked into the novel it can be concluded that the present novel is based on feminism. In India it is general acceptance, girls with fair complexion are liked and valued. No one cares of their virtues and qualities. Leading female character in the novel is Radhika Mehata, who has been an unwanted child in her family. Despite being sharp minded and extra genius in study has been deprived of love, affection and care. By dint of her caliber she makes a promising career in the Distressed Debt group of Goldman Sachs, an investment bank and has been vice-president too. Even her progress becomes the subject of worry to her mother as no man can be found easily, equal to her in status, to be her life partner. Chetan Bhagat has revealed his own view on empowered woman. Women are not to be oppressed and suppressed. even they can go with her choice/ preference on their own way. It is time when women can tear their stereotyped image. It does not matter she has been in relationship with someone, is bound to bend knee. If she observes her partner is not supportive in the name of tradition, she should not spoil her career getting married to that fellow. Many feminist novels deal with the women's struggle for their identity but show unhappy end with the failure of women to carve new identity. Unlike other feminist novels *One Indian Girl* ends with the bold and frank decision of Radhika Mehata rejecting the offer of her two lovers – Debashish and Neel Gupta putting the reason of her rejection. Her decision reflects the expectation of each girl to be supported and treated equally. They are not things; they are human being, so should be treated humanely. Man and woman need each other; they are complete with each other but in this completeness both are equal. Wings are to fly not to cut.

My attempt through paper is to penetrate the image of empowered women in contemporary Indian social spectrum. Through Radhika Mehata, Bhagat has revealed his own view and touches the expectation of the present society. He has described that women are not socially empowered yet in Indian society.

Keywords: Chetan Bhagat, individualism, self-assertion, uttamang, Indian sensibility

Chetan Bhagat, best-selling author of India, has immersed as a voice of youth. He tried his hand in many fields but could not settled there. His instinct of creative thinking makes him perplexed and pushes him to show his caliber of genuine write who evinces his consensus on multi burning issues related young ones of India. Whatever he has expounded in his novels is expression of Indian youth of the present day. As Chetan Bhagat has been connected to IIT and IIM has successfully delved deep in the lives of aspirants. He depicts the aberration and challenges lying in the way of making their career and life successful and peaceful respectively. This way he has been the most likeable author of young generation. His best six novels are- Five Point Someone (2004), One Night @ the Call Centre (2005), The 3 Mistakes of My Life (2008), 2 States (2009), Revolution 2020 (2011), and Half Girl Friend (2014) have been translated into over a dozen language. His mostly novels are adopted in Bollywood films with slight change. In weaving the plots of the novels, he has focused on educational, political, economic, psychological and social constraints which hamper the progress of young people who are brimmed with abilities and skills but bent on knee before aberration. On these aspects Chetan Bhagat throws the adequate and sharp light from the perspective of young people. As for as the works of other Indian fiction writers are concerned, are seen ending with the note of compromise on female side. Unlike other Indian fiction writers, he ends his novels with bold and satisfying notes which touch the nerves of young Indian. As for as the present novel- One Indian Girl (2016) is concerned, revolves around one Indian girl, different from average Indian girls in lots ways. Bhagat 's speculation paves the way of young Indian and new India, is free from constraints which are hurdles in making new India. So, focus is shifted from socialism to individualism. Everyone dreams, few dares.

Novel One Indian Girl revolves around a brilliant and reverberant female protagonist names Radhika Mehta, who represents the image of new girls of new India in new Circumstances. Chetan Bhagat paints her character in the sharp light of individualism under which independence and self -reliance of individual is advocated. Radhika belongs to average family governed by social norms. Tradition oriented Indian family is not seen advocating the higher education for girls. For it makes family members' search tough to find suitable grooms. Related such concerns are reflected in the character of Radhika's mother. The novelist focuses on the growth and development of the country which will happen when focus will be on individual' s aspirations. We should value the aspiration of individuals; they should be let free to struggle in the new horizon of their choice.

One Indian Girl exhibits the aspiration of Radhika Mehta, who is a fearless girl with brain. She exceeds in her life competing her male rivals. She has expertise in drafting business deals, amalgamation and resurrection through sale of distressed assets. She serves the Distressed Debt Group of Goldman Sachs, an investment bank. Owing to her brilliant performance she is vice-president in the aforesaid bank and receives the handsome bonus. Despite it she is not liked society in which her family lives in. On one hand her elder sister Aditi Catches much attention everywhere because of her fair completion and on other hand she does not receive people's compliment as she

is with dark complexion. She develops feeling of inferiority related to her external beauty. But among intellectual she carries a weight, and few can stand before her. So she determines to carve her identity in her profession and feels like her killing with works. She satiates her thirst for identity. But reader can her seeking love and affection at the stake of her career. Here she acts like a typical Indian girl who happily accepts her subjugation to her partner with no speculation on right and wrong. The novel opens with the wedding preparation of Radhika Mehta at Marriotte at Goa, through flashbacks story moves further. Chetan Bhagat manifests the hollowness of Indian social traditions and customs which never affirm the people's action who transgress the old established rules/ for Chetan Bhagat has been attached to IIM, IIT and banking can understand and realize the struggle of aspirants. These aspirants have power to change the entire scenario of the country. One should not care much of old established social convictions which are great aberration in the development's way of new India. Brain wins the battle and breaks the unwanted and unprofessional tradition and customs. Speculation on pros and cons of multi issues from new perspective should be promoted and admired. Definitely Radhika Mehta is different from most of Indian girls who are accustomed to hide the secret of their life. Unlike them she openly confesses her secret related to Debashish and Neel Gupta. She does not care what her declaration will bring to her family as well as to herself. Through this female protagonist Chetan Bhagat poses a genuine question whether girl in relationship with boys before marriage is acceptable in new Indian society like boys or should be compelled to lead a life of compromise. The indirect question is for readers, who are the makers of new India. If boys are acceptable in society with their all secret or open secrets why not girls. Her fear can be felt in her following lines, even though she shows her careless to society reaction:

Hi, I am Radhika Mehta and I am getting married this week. I am twenty-seven years old. I grew up in Delhi. I now work in London at Goldman Sachs, an investment bank. I am vice-president in the Distressed Debt Group. Thank you for reading my story. He is, ever let me warn you. You may not like me too much. One, I make a lot of money. Two I have an opinion on everything. There things don't really make me too likeable, do they? (2)

Chetan Bhagat being the voice of young Indian never fails to expound the weakness of individuals. He projects the characters in the novel as he wants. He does not care about what the people will say or how they will react. He projects the importance of empowered position which is more conspicuous than anything else. He reveals, there is no value of one's sacrifice in society in name of tradition. Country needs brain and brain lies in head, and head is known *uttamang*. So, *uttamang* can bring the revolution. Concept of new India cannot be perceived without new empowered image of woman as women are half population. If girls get good education, will never permit other to make decision of their life. They are capable to think what is right and wrong for them. Chetan Bhagat affirms this empowered image of women with liberty and choice.

Chetan Bhagat has penetrated that in male- dominated society, no matter much change has occurred in our lives, but no change is perceptible in men's approach to women. Reason behind is stereotyped image of women is mostly liked in Indian society. To spend time with the girls with brain, men has no problem. They inspire and motivate them to fly high but cannot digest her superior position. They feel jealous and insulted. As accepting changed and empowered image is much hard to men. They don't want to hurt their ego. About the image of woman Mary Anne Fergusson says:

One peculiarity of the images of women throughout the history is that social stereotypes have been reinforced by archetype. Another way of putting this world be to say that in every age woman has been seen primarily as mother, wife, mistress and sex object- their roles in relationship to men. (4-5)

Both Debu and Neel in the life of Radhika make here realize that she is subjugated to men for her completeness and happiness. Debu throws her in the pool of dilemma when he manifests his desire to her of having a housewife, who cares to him as well as his children. Radhika comes to him giving up her job which confirms her image of successful and professional woman, for Debu. Although she surprises to know Debu's outlook and opinion upon marriage, she is ready to put her career secondary. Here, Indian sensibility oriented weak girl is seen. After being familiar with Debu's real character she steps back and listen her inner voice of a girl with a meaningful identity. She overcomes her emotional weakness which tarnishes the image of empowered girl. If her identity is separated from her, nothing is likeable in her personality. She projects the image of empowered Indian girl who does not care what people say. She is ready to face fury of Indian people which they will fling upon her. In the beginning of the novel, she clears her stand:

Hi, I am Radhika Mehta and I am getting married this week. I am twenty-seven years old. I grew up in Delhi. I now work in London, at Goldman Sachs, An Investment Bank. I am vice-president in the distressed Debt Group. Thank you for reading my story. however, let me warn you. You may not like me too much. One, I make a lot of money, two I have an opinion on everything, do they? (1)

Empowered image of girl is praised but socially not accepted in India. To close the chapter of Debu he drifts to another city where she encounters Neel Gupta, married man at her new office. He Takes her stern professional. He could not have seen soft heart and soft aspiration of an Indian girl with respect to family and motherhood. He has no issue regarding her job and career. He considers her unfit for motherhood and family. His approach hurt her individuality. He was twenty years older but fills the vacuum in her illustrating his familial responsibility. His reaction jolts her, and she says, "Exactly. So, what am I doing with you?" (206). Her individuality embarks upon her and she moves to London parting her ways to Neel.

This shows even in this era women are considered source of physical pleasure, they don't value her desires, dreams and aspirations. These are false notions of society. Women should be imparted liberty and equality as men are holding. Third male is Brijesh arrives in her life as her would be life partner. Her accepting Brijesh would a compromise on Radhika's side which she cannot bear. That is why she speculates in that matter seriously and decides no one has right to intrude on her liberty.

Indian fiction in English is replete with the female voice raised against liberty and rights for women. Especially fiction of female writer's project, the challenges and aberration in way of independent and dependent women in family and society. Manju Kapur, Shobha De, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Anita Nair, Shashi Deshpande, Kamala Markandaya etc. have projected the pangs of women adjusting between family and society. How their life become hell in name of social traditions and convictions. Their works depicts their caliber, which is not valued by men in male-oriented society. In society what men do, are valued and women's, underestimated. Because of this, women are deprived of contributing in economic growth of the country and accept the subjugation to men. In name of marriage girls' legs are chained as they are destined to get married and look after children with no complaints. If we brood upon what men as a husband confers to wife food, shelter and cloth. When girls are independent and capable to manage all by dint of their own efforts, why they are forced to accept life of compromise. Where are liberty and rights for women. Compromise always comes in women's part, why? A one book, "The High Caste Hindu women" nature of arranged marriage is expounded this way. When the conjugal relation is brightened by mutual love, the happy wife has nothing to complain except the absence of freedom of thought and action, but since wives have never known from the beginning what freedom is, they are well content to remain in bandage" (Tharu & Lalitha, 247)

When we examine the character of Radhika Mehta, we find, Chetan Bhagat has projected her in such strong position where many men cannot stand before her in competition of her profession. Even Debu, her lover feels inferior. His male ego pushes him to part away from Radhika:

'I want a simple life. I just want a simple Indian girls'
'I want to break up. I will move out'. (92)

He directly reveals his liking for a conventional girl who will be available at the service of Debu and his family, 'I have an image of the wife I want the mother of the kinds I want. I am not judging you, but I think I want a housewife' (91), profession career oriented Radhika is not fit in that frame. It shows, men are entangled between tradition and modernity. In all spheres of life empowered women are accepted except social. Debu feels hurt when Radhika speaks with him loudly and fingers at him. He cannot tolerate and blames her to be so rude

owing to her strong and better financial status. He taunts her, “You must be right, after all, you get the higher bonus, so what I know, yeah? (89). He does not care how his words hurt her. Image of new women immersed in the works of G.B. Shaw and later it is perceptible in the works of so many writers. This new image of woman has like ability but so many qualities too are further added to. Those are authenticity, contour, boldness, ebullience, frankness, vehement assertion and sadness. All these of gifts of women’s education. Education instils confidence in people and teach how to revolt against exploitation. Chetan Bhagat weaving the plot of *One Indian Girl* uses private understanding not public. He projects her as an independent member of society and emphasizes the significance of individuality. Hence, Radhika is sometimes defiant, sometimes mainly assertion that she is only human and not promiscuous. When he decides not to marry even with Brijesh, manifests her preference to life free from established tradition and customs which put secondary. So, her action describes her individualistic action and she keeps right of selecting partner in her hands. she cannot let others govern her life.

Chetan Bhagat has penned the obstacles in the way of making career for girls. His individualistic outlook of the novelist has placed Radhika in the position when she asks question from, ‘who will care of her happiness’. She is pseudo talented and derives pleasure in her works pressure too. She never thinks to give up the battle in name of stress and personal problems. She likes to move ahead for self- assertion rather than self- effacement. Like without meaningful identity is in vain. Any how she does not wish to lose her individualistic hold. Such empowered Indian girls should be accepted and honoured socially for their move for right of choice. Men and women should be treated equally as women grab all for those men are worshipped as husband.

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Generational Differences: Migrant Women in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth, Hell-Heaven and Only Goodness*

Jayashree. M
Ph.D. Research Scholar

Abstract

This paper will discuss the women of different generations who are entrapped in-between cultures and the conflicted subject positions which they occupy, with reference to the short stories *Unaccustomed Earth*, *Hell-Heaven*, and *Only Goodness* in Jhumpa Lahiri's collection *Unaccustomed Earth*. The paradigm has been shifting in the literary theory since the inception of diaspora literature as it constructs a new form of identity which negotiates borders and boundaries. The relocation process often necessitates the renegotiation and repositioning of family and gender positions as migrants come across challenging and opposing standards and exigencies. Women in such unstable situations often worsen the circumstances of women as they, by and large, become the community's symbols. *Unaccustomed Earth* symbolizes the new earth and soil in which the descendants of immigrants as well as their parents submerge their roots and culture. The titles convey a dual meaning. First, it is suggestive of the world of the first generation immigrants who are now not accustomed to the world of their children. Secondly, a different kind of world is occupied by the children of immigrants who often look up to the associative life which they share with their parents but can no longer connect emotionally and psychologically with them. Lately, we have detected abrupt shifts in discernment of the women writers on the nations of subjective, national and cultural identities. They are more concerned with the innumerable problems which originate from the interactions and amalgamations of varied cultures which perplex their ethnic identities and their impact on the women.

Keywords: Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*, *Hell-Heaven*, and *Only Goodness*, Generation, culture, paradigms, negotiates, migrants, gender, community, emotionally and psychologically, amalgamations.

Introduction

“Women in diaspora are considered as the other's other”. According to Sunil Bhatia there are three ways in which otherness is constructed “generic otherness, marked otherness, and disruptive otherness”. Generic otherness refers to a general identifying mark about a person's identity which creates an environment of otherness”. The marked otherness focuses on “specific identifying markers, such as accent, language, and mannerisms that mark a person as different”. The disruptive otherness generates “deep feelings of alienation and marginality” to migrants (2007:113). Lahiri exposes two generation of women; she generally writes about the relationship between mother and daughter.

Stephen Lawler points out the relationship between mother and daughter “are usually seen as having a closer social, psychic or emotional identification” as many daughters are also mothers, many of them mother of daughters” (2000:3). The daughter has identified with her mother while growing up. Again, the girl is bewildered when she is exposed to two opposing ideologies. She travels through the poignant impasse of whether to carry on with the old tradition which she has observed while growing up or to embrace the liberated life infused into her by the modernized American society which is free from traditional morality.

Discussion and Interpretation

The abrupt superimposition of western values disorients the lives of first generation women as it demands an urgent need to restructure their identities to translate themselves into the western way of living to reconcile both cultures which in turn bring about mental visions of loneliness and cultural conflicts. Jasbir Jain avers that there are two ways in which the relationship of women to the dislocation can be seen first: “the women in a subordinate role, who as a wife follows her husband to a foreign land, just as she would to her in laws’ family and the other is the shift from one to the other and the re-positioning of loyalties” which will follow a similar track (2002:134). The other breeds of women are those who were born and brought up in the American culture and for them “home” and “belonging” exist neither in fragmentary nor in partial memories.

The second generation women have different perspectives on tradition and customs. They resist and subvert the subject positioning which their mothers uphold. Unaccustomed Earth unfolds the story of how Ruma, a daughter of an immigrants’ mother, identified mother’s life through a voyage to the memories and nostalgia after her death and how it influences the life which she is leading now. The women in the first generation diaspora arrive in the host countries through arranged marriages which their parents have organized for them and come to the West as embellishment. They faithfully and submissively go after their husbands like any pigeonholed Indian women in the host land far from the protective life of Indian ménage and always stick to the conventional values absorbed into them by their families in India. T. Satyanayarana and S. Katyayani state that “the first generation women find it difficult to forget the culture and values system of the old world, and to get assimilated to the new world while the second and the third generation women are found partially successful in this. The reason for their success may be traced to proximity in time and place to modernity and the distance to tradition.” (2006:282)

Yasim Hussain observes that the south Asians “may be connected by a common race ,a national origin” and a shared history but the subsequent generation, who are brought up in “a country that is culturally, socially and religiously different from the ethnic culture maintained within the home environment,” will have a different perception on “the individual’s conception of self” (2005:25-26). But for the succeeding generations such ethnic consciousness imprisons them in the culture which they no longer desire to associate with.

The second generation like Ruma desires to avoid the path which her mother had gone through. She believes that “moving to a foreign place for the sake of marriage, caring exclusively for children and a household has served as a warning, a path to avoid” (11).

They share the same experiences although they are different. They are “living in between” different nations, feeling neither here nor there, unable to indulge in sentiments of belonging to either place” (2010:213-214). Ruma’s father noticed that “like his wife, Ruma was not alone in this new place, overwhelmed, without friends, carrying for a young child” (40). Her life was following the identical prototype of uncertainty and ambiguity like her -- “the roots did not go deep” (35) as she appeared to be obsessed and burdened with a sense of vague and hybrid mix of her root.

The Hell-Heaven is a story of Aparna who lived a life of solitariness and silence. The apathetic attitude of her husband deepened the ordeals of being a woman in the liminal zone. Her marriage was ‘an assumed consequence of the life she had been raised to lead’ (67). Usha pitied her mother. As she got older, she perceived “What a desolate life she led. She had never worked and during the day she watched soap operas to pass the time” (76). Her only job was to clean and cook for the family. The older generations can only reassert their female subjectivities through silent resistance and conciliation whereas the children are quite vocal about their personal preferences. It is to be noted that the differences that exist between these two generations “arise from exposure to the integrating services of the majority society from birth. Experience of education system and the employment sphere influences their attitudes and relationships. The child is confronted with both cultures at the same time and beings to absorb totally different values of family life and society” (Hussain2005:26).

Only Goodness is a story about the consequence of unbearable parental expectations. Zhou and Lee observe that Asian-American children are subjected to “the unduly familial obligation to obey their elders and repay parental sacrifices”. The parents put enormous amount of pressure to excel in everything. But to the children “their parents appear too rigid and “abnormal” that is, unacculturated, old-fashioned, and traditional disciplinarians” (2004:15-16). The constant comparisons to other Bengali children made both Sudha and Rahual quite stressful and taxing. Their parents thought that they have “now successfully raised two children in America” (129), but the reality is that they have been pressing their children with excessive demands which becomes a reason for their detachment from their parents. The theme of movement and migration persists in this story. Sudha gives the details of her mother’s traumatic and painful journey from one country to another. The dislocation, relocation and again (re)location from India to London and from London to America was a cultural shock for her mother who was handicapped linguistically and geographically. She somehow may perhaps understand her parents ‘sense of dislocation and estrangement which is like “aliment that ebbed and flower, like a cancer ”’ (138). Mandal observes,

the zone of marriage and family has altered a lot in its internal structure resulting in varied interracial and intercultural social- sexual relations... (2007:46).

The clash between cultures is quite noticeable when the migrant offspring determine to relinquish their own community in order to marry a white man instead of choosing the man from the same cult. In *Unaccustomed Earth*, Ruma's mother was against her daughter getting married to Adam, a non-Indian. She rebuked her daughter by saying "you are ashamed of yourself, of being Indian that is the bottom line" (26). At the end, the women in the first generation finally acquiesce themselves in their children who do not bear any resemblance to them in features, language, manner, customs and clothing. Ruma's mother accepted Adam as her son in law. Aparna, on the other hand, could not stop her daughter from acquiring the cultures in which she was born and brought up. The inter-caste marriage, if not openly accepted, is acknowledged by the parents. The conflicts between the earlier generation and the subsequent generation will persist as it involves a complex discourse on cultural representation, nation, ethnicity and home.

Conclusion

However, with the passage of time they learn to become independent and a majority of them refashion themselves by dismantling the stereotypical portraiture of women. This can be considered as one positive sign in the endeavour of those women who are constantly on the lookout for some change and transformation.

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Social Exclusion and the Challenges of Growing Up as a Marginalised Child in Maya Angelou's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*

Pradeep

Abstract

African-American Literature acts as an archetype of how literary texts and artistic exploration can influence the dynamics of the race in American society. The black women's writings of African-Americans had permuted the violating principles of the white community over the southern black people. The subservient nature of black people accelerates to exhaust due to the contribution of writers, artists, and social activists from African descents. The black intellectuals seized the opportunity to express themselves during the Harlem Renaissance and the unity among American Negroes, challenged the socially constructed obstacles in the American nation. Unlike in India and West-Indies, the rigid class system in America is color oriented rather than class-oriented. African-Americans are well aware of the fact that social laws, amendments, concessions could never erase the conflicts in society, amending the education of children is the only way to end inequality. Apart from the usual discussion on sufferings of the stereotypical African-American traits, this paper intends to analyze the national issues faced by the marginalized children like survival issues, insecurity, sexual assault, violence, denial of education and improper parenthood. This paper further argues that the conceptualizations of African American social structure challenge the life of the marginalized children in terms of racial segregation and discrimination. Although the undeniable black women writers like Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston shared their black experience in their works, Maya Angelou expresses the various dimensions of social exclusion remarkably from her childhood to early adulthood in her *I Know Why the Caged Birds Sing* in a more benevolent way.

Keywords: Maya Angelou, *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*, African-American Community, Marginalization, Children's Rights, Racial Prejudice, Social Injustice.

Introduction

Maya Angelou, a civil right activist, poet, dramatist, and memoirist, who belong to the African-American community has been named as the black woman's poet laureate, not merely, and also probably said to be the first African-American female conductor on a cable car system. Maya Angelou is widely honored and acclaimed for her seven autobiographies, out of that *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is the debut autobiographical work published in 1969 which fostered the literary career of Maya Angelou favorably attained both public as well as critic reputation.

As a result of the resolution, completing the next six more autobiographical memoirs, Maya Angelou's literary acquirement made her engage in the pursuit of poetry collections, screenplay

writing, casting in movies, and so on. Her literary and artistic contribution towards her dominated society made her receive the most esteemed civilian award in her country designated Presidential Medal of Freedom. The first memoir *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is the reflection of the social exclusion process of her own childhood experiences which display the ascendancy of the white supremacy over the African American community.

Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969) is an autobiography, exhibiting the 1930s American South and several exclusionary processes in the everyday lives of African Americans. This inspirational autobiography embellishes the coming-of-age journey of Maya Angelou that constitutes the denial of social participation of black Americans in terms of education, politics, economic status, and personal security. The white-dominated American society augments its power by politically limiting the rights of black Americans and gradually changing the law to suppress the growth of the African American community. Ergo, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* beautifully evokes the marginalized life journey of Maya Angelou's from being a child to being a child's mother.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings opens up with the impoverished marriage of Maya Angelou's parents, resulting three-year-old Maya and her four-year-old brother Bailey to be under the care of grandmother Momma at a small country town named Stamps in Arkansas. The town Stamps besieged with racial segregation and social inequality between the black and white challenges the routine life of Maya and her community people. Being a marginalized child, the socially constructed notion troubles Maya and her childhood development. Despite, Maya's limited standard of living and intense dislike towards the submissive nature of the African American community, her love towards her community people was inevitable. When Maya was seven, she was stunned by the arrival of her parents named Vivian and Bailey Johnson. Maya was forced to pursue her life in San Francisco along with her glamorous mother, Vivian, who employs herself in an unstructured lifestyle. Maya was brutally raped by Freeman when she was eight and muted for several years after the death of her mother's boyfriend Freeman.

On the other hand, life in California along with her father ended up in a mess and Maya voluntarily excluded herself, merely, to stay with homeless teens in a junkyard. At the age of fifteen, Maya challenged racial discrimination which neglected most of the employment opportunities for African American women, yet Maya succeeded breaking the racial policy by becoming the first African American female conductor on San Francisco streetcars. Later, a one-time sexual encounter leads Maya to pregnancy, and after her graduation from Mission High school, she gave birth to a son. Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* ends with Maya as an unemployed young mother in California, leading to a sequel *Gather Together in My Name* (1974).

Children's Position in the African American community

Imposing the concept of Marginalisation in children's lifestyle cannot be considered as common social sufferings that happen to other individuals in a society. Moderately, it acts as a

sequence of the discriminating process that has been taken up to the next generation and functions as a continuation of selective group supremacy over the other group. In simple terms, the most influential particular group of a society that has a habit of exercising intimidation or subjugation doesn't have any aspire to withdraw the social conflicts such as color, ethnicity, race, class, and gender over the other minority group. A problem faced by a marginalized woman/man is never the same as the problem faced by a marginalized child. The reason is that the socially constructed stereotypes are seen to apply to the next generations to possess the supreme authority by carrying the process to the children who are the upcoming generation.

Children of the African American community start to endure the black and white conflicts in American society, even at the very beginning of their childhood days. Maya Angelou expresses the complexity of social stratification of a marginalized child as "If growing up is a painful for the Southern Black girl, being aware of her displacement is the rust on the razor that threatens the throat" (6). The social experiences of the African American community children are so miserable resembling both physical anguish as well as mental anguish. James Baldwin, one of the prominent African American writer praises *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* for portraying African American childhood experiences as, "I know that not since the days of my childhood, when people in books were more real than the people one saw every day, have I found myself so moved". The marginal position of African American children deceives social participation, especially in terms of education, and the frequent migration executes the black children to white people like immigrants who fail to contribute to the nation's development.

The white children are not an exception of the unequal social system and execute their role in mistreating the black children through some extent they abuse even the elders of the black community people. The outcome of prejudice leads white children to picture black children as an inferior being, and the white children who live on Momma's farmland have been called poor white trash by black children. Maya Angelou's expresses her rage of the unfair treatment of white children over the black elders and her inability towards the power of white children in *I Know Why the Cage Birds Sing* as, "I wanted to throw a handful of black pepper in their faces, to throw lye on them, to scream that they were dirty, scummy peckerwoods, but I knew I was as clearly imprisoned behind the scenes as the actors outside were confined to their roles" (29,30).

Due to the pre-formed negative social challenges, Maya wished to become white and hesitated herself for being black, later she started loving things associated with her own culture. Maya Angelou attribution of black skin color as, "The age-faded color made my skin look dirty like mud" (4) and white skin color as "I Knew God was white too" (54) is more enough to explain the racial prejudice and black subordinate position in American society. Maya thinks that turning to be a white child could make her beautiful, and she would be admired and respected equally as the other white girls in Arkansas.

Marginality Exposed in Children's Life

Marginalized children are a particular group of children dominated by the other social groups and fail to accomplish a proper social, political, economic and cultural benefits from their respective nation that emerges as a problem from the very fundamental stages of their life. The marginalized children have been given lesser importance or sometimes denied in receiving the primary perquisites from society. Even the fringe benefits for the marginalized children seems interrogative, due to the frequent change in the law of amendment, which often causes discomfort instead of promoting the well-being of the marginalized child.

The complex social code defines children more by their race, ethnicity, and culture rather than by their behavior and moral values. The discrimination and subordination of slavery had abandoned after the 13th amendment in the United States in 1865 and the 14th amendment in 1868 endorsed equal rights for every citizen and 15th amendment guaranteed the constitutional right to vote in 1870. Nevertheless, the dominance of whites in the society, workplace, and politics remained over generation to generation, and no written laws could promote the marginal status of the African American community. As an outcome, the marginalized life of South American black children, enhanced as a matter of suspicion and their future does not seem to be very promising due to migration, family disintegration, and parenting problems. The numerous encounters of racial prejudice in their day to day life affects the marginalized children in all aspects of their personality development.

Maya experienced the complex problem of marginality at her eighth grade of school when she suffered from two very painful cavities. To suppress the pain, Maya along with her grandmother Momma consulted a nearby Dentist Lincoln, a white doctor in Stamps who owns Momma a favor. Despite her inclination, the white dentist Lincoln refuses to treat Maya for being black and holds a racial policy to not to treat color people. And when Momma further argued over the dentist, he ridicules in an abusive manner, saying, "I 'd rather stick my hand in a dog's mouth than in a nigger's" and insists "raising your voice won't make me change my mind" (203). Maya Angelou symbolizes that the rise in the voices of the marginalized community would never transform the oriental thoughts of the white prejudice people, preferably, only the community development could make them exist to survive.

Maya Angelou was a part of one of the most visibly marginalized minorities to experience racial inequalities in the western world. She evokes the marginal position of African American children via shared her struggles in Southern California, an urban part of American society where she resides at a junkyard, dirtied with the remains of old cars along with homeless teens. Angelou fantasizes the setting of her residence as "The car was an island and the junkyard a sea, and I was all alone and full of warm" (270).

Maya finds the position of the African American community at her first George Washington High school in San Fransisco where the white children have better vocabularies and the southern black children lacks knowledge of words and were least in the counts. Maya Angelou found herself unable to settle down in high school and expresses her discomfort in crossing the

white neighborhood, "as the streetcar traversed my ghetto I experienced a mixture of dread and trauma" (230). Social exclusion executes African American communities as one of the least literate social groups across the globe. Marginalization affects the academic achievement of southern black children, and the education standard won't sound very promising unless the racial system would completely eradicate.

Impact of Marginalization in Childhood Development

The Impact of Marginalization grieves the African American communities in numerous ways, especially of children, such as child labor, frequent migration, exploitation of wealth, unemployment, sexual abuse, personal insecurity, and poverty. In general, to interact with social issues in a certain way, it is inequitable to pass out without addressing the sociological perspective of Marxism. The Marxist theory affirms that exploitation of the wealth and poverty-stricken class are a part of an inevitable consequence of a capitalist society. Maya Angelou put the hardships of working-class people into words denoting "I thought them all hateful to have allowed themselves to be worked like oxen, and even more shameful to try to pretend that things were not as bad as they were" (131). Marx preceded the race conflict theory, known as a fundamental part of social conflict theory, whose primary purpose, eventually is to process the racial emancipation and anti-subordination which is engrained mostly in the social system of America.

Poverty, child labor, unemployment, migration, and exploitation have been closely connected and interwoven with each other, and recognized as the major problem for the marginalized groups in the African American community. Regarding Marxism, these marginalized problems are the results of the direct consequences of social inequality and also sustains a principle that a particular social group can be rich (white), only if the other social group (black) is poor. Maya Angelou's in her *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* reveals the social inequality between the two communities as "the hostility of the powerless against the powerful, the poor against the rich, the worker against the worked for and the ragged against the well dressed" (27).

The fraternity of the marginalized children relies on their family bondings and interpersonal relationships between their community people. On account of the problem of migration, these marginalized children lack proper parenting and child-rearing, which is a chief source for childhood development. The emotional development of love and affection of the marginalized children towards their families and kinship relations is restricted ascribed to incompatible family structure.

The partial structure of Maya Angelou's family and incompatible marriage of her parents affected the emotional state of Maya and her brother Bailey. When Maya learns that her parents are still alive, she says to Bailey that "I couldn't believe that our mother would laugh and eat oranges in the sunshine without her children" (56). Maya believed that her parents do not belong to the environment where she belongs and feels completely strange to live with them declaring that, "He was a stranger, and if he chose to leave us with a stranger, it was all of one piece" (65).

The sexual abuse and exploitation of children have recognized as the worsen impairment ever against marginalized children and are viewed as one of the brutal impacts of the marginality. Early pregnancy is another major cause of marginalization, which denies black children to regain their childhood innocence. When Maya Angelou was eight, she went through a traumatic experience of being brutally raped by her mother's boyfriend named Freeman, and this physical and psychological distressing "act of rape on an eight-year-old body" made her mute for several years, drastically affecting her childhood days (84). Maya Angelou unveils this brutal experience as, "My legs throbbed, or rather the inside of my thighs throbbed, with the same force that Mr. Freeman's heart had beaten" (85).

Elevating the Marginalized Identity of Blacks

Social exclusion occurs in a time of history and determines the life of the individuals or collective groups according to the rational knowledge and social values shared within the nation. A large number of white American men imposed the Jim Crow laws which were oddly designed to ensure the dominance of whites in the society, directly and indirectly, to further marginalize the African American community by limiting the political, economic and social opportunities to the southern black people.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, abolished the Jim Crow law and the nourishment of the New Negro Movement of 1920 helped the global people attain an increased understanding of racial conflicts constructed within American society. Even after many beneficial laws, the marginalized people remain excluded from the social circle in participating in any form of social events and mostly gathers negative attention. All the African American marginalized group hopes are to reconstruct the pre-racial American society into a post-racial American society.

Similarly, all the marginalized characters in Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* such as Maya, Bailey, Momma, Vivian, Daddy Bailey, and Uncle Willie put maximum efforts to promote their community grade in their corresponding way. Momma bears the discriminatory behavior of white Americans via simply avoiding them as much as possible. Maya's parents Bailey avails pretense to deal with the disappointment and being an heir of a mixed-race Vivian has enough freedom to prefer a glamorous job. The subsequent illegal behavior of whites transfigured Bailey into a teenage rebellion, and Uncle Willie believed upholding discipline would flourish the future of black community people.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982) displays the unspeakable sufferings of humiliation and oppression faced by marginalized children. The brutal rape of Celie by her father, Alphonso, and the infanticide of *Beloved* committed by her mother, Sethe, explains the personal insecurity of marginalized children within their family. Moreover, Richard Wright in his memoir *Black Boy* (1945), demonstrates the survival of childhood from Northern racism and segregation and pointed out the local state laws bestowed to worsen the facilities for African American children. Richard Wright's odd mission in life to study people and literature helps him to overcome white racists and makes Richard a successful author.

Likewise, Maya Angelou's passion for education, literature love and power of words helps not only to elevate her reputation and also promoted her community pride. Mrs. Flowers introduces the power of spoken words to Maya Angelou by saying that the words are beautiful on the page but powerful when spoken aloud. Mrs. Flowers appeals to Maya like "women in English novels who walked the moors with their loyal dogs racing at a respectful distance" and Maya admires her by saying that "she made me proud to be Negro, just by being herself" (103). The elevation of the marginalized black children lies in their academic achievement and word power because "words mean more than what is set down on paper" (106). Maya Angelou's love for literature teaches her the "lessons in living" and the books of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the epic poem *Beowulf*, molded her knowledge. Maya became conscious of the significance of education, and with the power of education, she received a sense of self-worth and a new level of self-confidence that urged her to complete her graduation.

Maya serves as an ideal figure in elevating the marginalized identity of black Americans using the source of education, arts, and various forms of literary expression. Maya's commitment to "evening classes of drama and dance" (233) and multiple artistic expression emerges in 1930s Harlem Renaissance, which served as a consequential platform for African Americans to express their social thoughts. The Harlem Renaissance also provided economic opportunities to the black Americans, which benefitted Maya to receive the scholarship, as she acknowledges, "At fourteen I accepted a scholarship and got one for the next year as well" (232).

Maya's explains her enthusiasm towards studies as "I, along with all the other excited students, read the San Francisco papers, Time magazine, Life and everything else available to me" (231). The Harlem Renaissance of the 1930s guides a path towards the Civil Rights Movement, which contrived the stage for Maya to explore her intellectual abilities in forthcoming days.

Conclusion

Growing up as a marginalized child is not an easy task in a society engrained with social stratification. Marginalized children have been expected much to be socially and politically aware more than any of the other age groups in their respective community. Maya Angelou's contribution to Black history and the Civil Rights movement made her not only an icon of black culture but also a great inspiration to marginalized children. Maya Angelou shares her childhood experiences by referring to the words of Charles Dickens *A Tale of Two Cities* as "It was the best of times and worst of times..." (108). Maya Angelou's life experiences reasons out that, the disposition of marginalized children could easily trigger them to perform anti-social behavior, which can function as a barrier in the nation-building. The effects of marginality could devastate the emotions of children in a twofold manner and influences the children's moral decisions. The moral choices taken by the children belonging to marginalized communities are very significant in the nation-building and social development. Every individual has the responsibility to wipe out the malignant social divisions like class, race, religion, culture, and color ere intruding into the cognizances of children.

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Outthrust of Dalit Consciousness in Select Novels of Mulk Raj Anand & Mahasweta Devi

R. Abirami, M.A., M.Phil., DCA

Assistant Professor of English, Senthamarai College of Arts & Science
Ph.D. Research Scholar in English, EMG Yadava College for Women
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai - 21

Abstract

“Dalit literature is marked by revolt and negativism, since it closely associated with the hopes for freedom by a group of people who as untouchables, are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality” (Mukherjee 1). Dalit writing is a post-independence literary phenomenon. Dalit literature has its own significance. Dalits were always considered as marginalised people, oppressed and others by the Indian society. Inequality is the root cause for this marginalisation. The word Dalit is not new to us, it was used in the 1930s as a Hindi and Marathi translation of “depressed classes”, a term the British used for what are now called the Scheduled castes. The word “Dalit” has originated from Sanskrit ‘Dalita’ which means ‘oppressed’. Dalits have various names in different parts of India, such as ‘dasa’, ‘dasya’, ‘raksasa’, ‘asura’, ‘avarna’, ‘nisoda’, ‘panchama’, ‘chandala’ etc., There are varieties of nomenclatures such as ‘untouchables’, ‘harijans’, ‘weaker sections’, ‘atishudras’, ‘dalits’, ‘depressed classes’, ‘others’, ‘servile classes’, ‘avamas’, ‘antyajas’, ‘scheduled castes’. Mulk Raj Anand novels reveal consciousness for the Dalits all over the places. Mahasweta Devi is very much committed to society, and she hopefully tried to remove the evils of the society for the oppressed and the downtrodden. This paper attempts to give the Dalit consciousness in the select novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi.

Keywords: Mulk Raj Anand, Mahasweta Devi, Dalit consciousness, untouchables, sufferings, underclass, subaltern, marginality, aloofness, suppressed, discrimination.

Mulk Raj Anand was born on December 12, 1905 at Peshwar and died on September 28, 2004 at Pune. He was a prominent Indian author of novels, short stories and critical essays in English. He is very much known for his realistic and sympathetic portrayal of the poor in India. He was the son of a coppersmith and he developed himself with more positive thoughts. He always used to help the poor and the downtrodden. Anand a famous writer who gained his world-wide recognition for his novels *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936). Anand wrote other novels and short-story collections and also edited numerous magazines and journals including MARG, an art quarterly that he founded in 1946. Prose fiction in English began in 1902, the most important novelist during this period is Mulk Raj Anand, who fulminated against class and caste distinction in a series of novels such as, *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937) and *The Big Heart* (1945).

Mahasweta Devi, a prominent Indian Bengali fiction writer and social political activist who immersed herself in the lives of India's poor and marginalized as she chronicled the injustices against them in fiction. She was born on Jan 14, 1926 and died in Kolkata on July 28 at the age of 90. In more than 100 novels and short-stories she wrote of India's tribal communities and Maoist rebels, prostitutes, nomads, beggars and labourers. Her writing addressed one single word that is "injustice". G.N. Devy, a writer and activist who worked closely with Ms. Devi said, "Wherever she saw what she thought was injustice, she plunged into the struggle and never looked back". She had written her works mainly in Bengali but incorporating tribal dialects. Her works has been translated into English, Japanese, Italian, French and several Indian languages.

At the age of thirty, Mahasweta Devi wrote her first novel *The Queen of Jhansi*. Devi spent most of her years in documenting the life among India's tribal communities. She championed the cause of 25 million tribal people in India, who belong to approximately 150 different tribes. Her writing reflects the ugliness, squalor and misery in the lives of the tribal people.

Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi, have some similarities in concern with the society. They both gave voice to the sufferings and the oppressed conditions of the downtrodden. The following works gives the brief note in the select novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi.

Anand's third great novel, *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) was published in the year 1937. It gives us the pathetic conditions of the labourers in the tea plantation of Assam. Anand's furious attack was targeted on the British masters of the tea plantations. The novel presents both the planters and the labourers with their life combined with nature. *Two Leaves and a Bud* mainly denotes the class conflict between two groups the British heartless masters and the innocent poor Indian coolies. Gangu is the protagonist in this novel, he suffers throughout the novel in all the circumstances. This novel also has the element of friendship, love through the

characters of Narain, Dr. Havre and Barbara. The novel is rich with the harsh and forced activities of the British masters. Gangu and his family faces all sorts of troubles and they didn't move with the regular life patterns. "class" and "caste" system is a greatest evil which prevails in this novel.

Many a critic come together and criticizes the efforts of Anand, S.C. Harrex says, "*Two Leaves and a Bud* fails to integrate philosophy and drama in an artistically satisfying way." (9). Saros Cowasjee, though he tries to prove that Anand's presentation of life in the tea plantations is based on facts and that he does not exaggerate the cruelties meted out to the laborers in the tea plantations, comes out with a general remark that in fiction, straight facts in themselves mean little, and they must always be subordinate to the main interests-character and the story." (10).

The Big Heart (1945) is Anand's seventh novel and also a great novel. It deals with a small community of coppersmiths of Amritsar, who suddenly come to face with machine civilization. The basic conflict in *The Big Heart* is between tradition and modernity. It also deals with the conflict between the hereditary coppersmith and the capitalists. The novel shows us the changing social reality of India. Ananta the protagonist is a coppersmith by profession. It records the events of a single day in the life of Ananta and he is a man of big heart. Ananta returns to his home-town of Amritsar after having worked in Bombay and Ahmadabad. He lives with a woman named Janaki who is consumed by tuberculosis. Premila Paul says: Janaki is a similar non-conformist woman (12). Ananta starts his own factory and considers himself superior that it is a precious gift of science. He has a strong belief in the machine age, where he thinks unity of labourers begins here. Ananta's co-workers hate industries because of machines. At one instant he killed his co-worker Ralia because he didn't want to lose his trade. Mulk Raj Anand here very strictly against to the caste divisions, and he wants to have the acceptance of machines and the unity of labourers, the situation of poor and the emergence of machine age is clearly evident through this novel.

The Private Life of An Indian Prince is a novel by Mulk Raj Anand, and it is published in the year 1953. Through this novel Anand gives us the most impressive and important elements. This novel tells us the abolition of the princely states system in India. The novel has an autobiographical tone. *The Private Life of An Indian Prince* was launched by the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in the year 2004. Anand gives us the deep study of human nature through this novel. Maharaja Ashok Kumar of Shampur asserts complete independence for his small hill-state rather than join the Indian union. He is encouraged by his mistress Ganga Dasi, an illiterate hill-woman. To feed his mistress greedy, he wrests large sums of money from his starving peasantry. At once instant he loses both his princely states power and his mistress. Later he exiles to London there he seduces a shop girl with all his former princely elegance, but he was still in love with his mistress. This in the end led his downfall from the kingdom.

The novel *Old Woman and The Cow* (1960) shows us the plight of women. Gauri is the protagonist of this novel. She suffers a lot in all circumstances in which she moves on. Gauri struggles for her own identity and she was treated as a subordinate woman to a heartless man Panchi. Gaur's mother Laxmi becomes a victim and this novel also shows us how women are just considered as an mere object of desire by men. In the beginning of the novel Gauri is projected as a calm woman and silently she is suffering under the hands of her mother-in-law and her husband Panchi. Gauri was tormented for dowry and later she was driven out of the house, she was trapped in the evils of patriarchy. Gauri by her character docile and devoted wife was finally tortured by Panchi in all aspects. Laxmi sold Gauri for money. In the end she explores as a brave, bold woman and a unique woman in the novel.

Mahasweta Devi's *The Queen of Jhansi* was published originally in the year 1956 in Bengali is a reconstruction of the life of Rani Lakshmi Bai. Later it was translated into English. *The Queen of Jhansi* remains the India's most important historical figures, a legendary heroine who led troops against the British in the uprising of 1857, now widely described as the first Indian War of Independence. A spirited young woman warrior who died on the battlefield but lives on in the minds of an entire people. Mahasweta Devi's first book is a work that defies categories, simultaneously a history, a biography, and a personal statement that says as much about the author as it does about her subject, a valuable contribution to the reclamation of history, and historiography, by feminist writers.

Lakshmi Bai the Rani of Jhansi was the queen of the princely state of Jhansi in North India. She was one of the leading figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for Indian nationalists. The Peshwa called her "chhabili", which means playful". According to Vishnu Bhatt Godse the Rani would exercise at weightlifting, wrestling and steeplechasing before breakfast. An intelligent and simply-dressed woman, she ruled in a business-like manner.

Mother of 1084 is a Bengali novel written by Ramon Magsaysay Award winner Mahasweta Devi. *Mother of 1084* was a political analysis in the 1970s West Bengal. It was written in 1974 on the backdrop of Naxalite revolution in the Seventies. It is a story of a mother whose son, corpse number 1084 in the morgue, was brutally killed by the state because of his ideology of advocating the brutal killing of class enemies, collaborators with the State and counter-revolutionaries within the party. The story begins on the eve of Brati's close accomplice and tries to justify Brati's actions and his revolutionary mentalities. Throughout the story she is portrayed as a strong woman who fought against the odds. She is advised to forget her son. It's a story of a mother as she relives years later the death of her son in the political upheaval that left almost no home untouched.

The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesh shows the lives of the underdogs, the Lachhimas, the Rukmanis, the Mohors and the Haroas as a contrast to the lives of their all power overlords the

Medinas and Ganeshes. Lachhima, whose leashed bitterness anger of a lifetime against Medini and Ganesh is liberated at the end of the novel when Ganesh begs her to save his life, decides to save him, but on her own terms. The title of the work itself becomes a tool for subversion in this sprawling novel which takes the reader through a multi-layered narrative into the socio-economic malaise of post-independence rural India. Mahasweta Devi's corrosive humour and cryptic style are at their best as she takes on issues of agrarian land relations, inter-caste violence, so-called rural development and the position of women in rural India. As Simone de Beauvoir states; "One is not born a woman, one becomes a woman." (The Second Sex 301)

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Bacha Posh: The Invisible Girl

Diksha, Ph.D. Scholar

Abstract

According to New York Times, *Bacha Posh* is a cultural practice in parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, in which some of the families without the male child pick a daughter to live and behave as a boy. This masquerade is achieved through cross-dressing which leads to gender swapping of the pre-pubescent girls. These newly created boys can enjoy almost equal freedom like the boys in Afghanistan. It becomes really hard to imagine that there are girls who enjoy almost equal freedom as boys. However, this freedom comes at a great cost, as these girls have to eventually return to being normal girls once they hit puberty. They will have to marry, become mothers and follow all the set rules for women in Afghanistan.

The women folk in Afghanistan are one of the most vulnerable creatures. They cannot be on their own in the public domain or at least the Afghan society is of the given opinion. This is the reason why each and every woman in Afghanistan has to venture out of their houses with a male chaperon. Moreover, *Bacha Posh* can also be seen as an outcome of the belief, which states covertly that each and every family must have a son who can carry forward the name of the family and can inherit the property of the father. The girl child is not only unwelcome but also unwanted in the country, that their mere existence is erased. Whatever may be the reason of creating a *Bacha Posh*, it is fatal for the Afghan society as the tradition negates the existence of half of the society. This tradition is not only unjust but renders the girl child even more invisible. Hence it deep roots the all-ready prevalent patriarchy and misogyny in the country.

So, this paper would attempt to study and analyse the deplorable condition of Afghan girls in particular and woman through the lens of this practice called *Bacha Posh*. What identity crisis a girl who is raised as a boy faces, when she is asked to undo all that she has learnt so far. Moreover, how she is marginalized when she is pushed back to the domestic sphere after a breath of short-lived freedom.

Keywords: *Bacha Posh*, freedom, identity and identity disorder, cross-dressing, gender dysphoria.

Introduction

Afghanistan as a nation has never been at peace and harmony. It is frequently marred by war, violence and insecurity: location of Afghanistan is such that many dynasties and countries were interested in the conquest of this Asian country. However, the citizens of Afghanistan are divided into multiple ethnic groups like Pashtuns, Hazaras, Uzbeks and Tajiks and these tribal men are so free spirited, fiercely independent and fighting men that they fail to get controlled by any other power. Hence, we can conclude that Afghanistan sways between western political ideology and internal religious groups. Western countries take the advantage of internal unrest and assert their control. Taliban was the outcome and the latest example of this chaos (1996-2001). So one can imagine the condition and position of both the gender in the given scenario. Men become hyper masculine and patriarchal while women are pushed to the domestic sphere with lost identity. The life of a woman becomes impossible as she is subjugated and segregated, and this is how a *bacha posh* is born.

"For economic and social reasons, many Afghan parents want to have a son. This preference has led to some of them practicing the long-standing tradition of *Bacha Posh*- disguising girls as boys." (BBC. 1) It is essential to have a son in Afghanistan, those families who don't have an heir decide to raise one of their daughters as boy. This hidden societal practice of Afghanistan is called *Bacha posh*. The practice of cross-dressing has been followed across the ages for different reasons. Both Western and Eastern history is filled with the girls who have dressed up as boys. According to Sabet "Bacha Posh: An Afghan Social Tradition Where girls are raised as boys" "In almost every era of history, there have been women who took on the role of men when being a woman became impossible to sustain. Jenny Nordberg argues that there were hundreds of women who lived as men between the 16th and 19th centuries." (Sabet) So from her argument it is clearly visible that a number of girls have lived as boys.

"In the first century, Triaria of Rome joined her emperor husband in war, wearing men's armor. Zenobia was a third-century queen in Syria who grew up as a boy and went on to fight the Roman Empire on the horseback. Joan of arc was famously said to have seen as an archangel in 1424, causing her to adopt the look of a male soldier and help fight France's against England." (Nordberg 198)

These women have been documented in history for their extraordinary courage and valour. But why a girl living in modern-day Afghanistan should be disguised as a boy? The probable answer can be lack of freedom and breathing space. It comes as a shocking revelation to us, when we get to hear about these *bacha posh* girls who have the access to the similar freedom which the other gender enjoys. However, this speck of freedom these girls enjoy doesn't last for too long. They eventually have to go back to the sphere of domesticity because as per the norms of Afghan society, that's where girls belong. But the question, which becomes rather more significant at this juncture is, can 'freedom in disguise' can actually be called 'freedom' in the true sense of the term? One could further infer that freedom is granted to Afghan girls, but they must undo who they are to access freedom. Girls must erase their gender, they must behave like a boy, and they must conceal everything, which could make them appear feminine in the public dominion.

A woman disguising as a man to access freedom, is an explicit indication of societal, cultural and

political breakdown and this practice must change to build an egalitarian social structure. In Afghanistan, the practice of *bacha posh* is an outcome of a social belief that each and every family must have a son. The rigid patriarchal setup in Afghan society welcomes and cherishes the male child. Moreover, in a country, which severely lacks rule of law, not having a son is seen as a sign of weakness. A male chaperon (husband, brother or son) should accompany a woman whenever she steps out of her house. Thus, a married woman must give birth to a son. One who is unable to produce heirs can be seen as “*Dokhtar Zai*” – one who only brings daughter. The woman who only begets a daughter is seen as lacking something. She is not considered a complete woman and essentially evil.

“When one gender is so important and other is unwanted, there will always be those who try to pass to the other side; says Najia Nasim, the Afghanistan country director for U.S based woman for Afghan woman.”

“Why Afghanistan is still the worst place in the world to be a woman” (qtd.in.times.com). There are innumerable crimes against girls and women like forced marriage, child marriage, wife beatings, honour killing, rapes etc. ‘*Bacha posh*’ is the short-term remedy to attain freedom. But if we look closely it is actually a curse in the garb of a blessing. One can see how gender and freedom are closely linked to each other in Afghanistan. A small girl sometimes happily other times forcefully changes her clothes and becomes a boy. She gets to play football, go to school, roam around in the streets, and anything and everything under the sun, something she can’t even think of doing as a girl.

In addition to this, the economic dependency on man makes her a burden while a son is expected to have a job, earn money, and look after his parents in old age. To counter this, some re-assign their daughter’s gender at birth, or at the time of education. There’s even a rumor that a *bacha posh* daughter will lead to the birth of a son when the mother conceives again. So, this small experiment is done by the parents to bring some good luck for them in the next pregnancy. Freedom has a very simple meaning for the girls of this nation, in order to avoid unwanted marriage and to be able to leave the house they are ready to give up their identity. The girl child being a *bacha posh* is a price to pay for freedom, to study, to have a profession and to marry. However, the girl as a *bacha posh* fear that her true-identity would be revealed. There are also permanent psychological scars left after a *bacha posh* is transitioned to reality. The masquerade ends once the girl hits puberty and becomes of marriageable age. This is the time when real problem and confusion surfaces.

Often times a *bacha posh* faces gender identity crisis that sometimes leads to gender dysphoria, which an Afghan girl faces concerning the practice of *bacha posh* vis-a-vis the emotional and psychological trauma a *bacha posh* has to go through. American psychiatric association states that “gender dysphoria involves a marked difference between person’s physical or assigned gender and the gender with which he/she/they identify.” Afghan girls who are raised as a *bacha posh* feel gender dysphoria at the time of their puberty, they cannot adjust with their female gender; some girls struggle to find out what is happening to them. They come under a difficult situation in life, when the changes happening in the mind and the body are not in coherence with each other. They undergo through a state of mental trauma and confusion. These girls lie in the *trishanku* state forever, they are not able to place themselves in the larger society in general and woman in particular. The younger girls show the symptoms of irritation and anger, once the “privilege”

is about to be snatched away from them and the others who are married are apprehensive of their role as a wife or a mother. So this statement by Hashimi is quite befitting here,

“In Afghanistan there are girls, there are boys, and there are the bacha posh, a temporary third gender for girls who live as boys” (Hashimi 2015).

“A baby girl is a sign of humiliation, a failure. He is a bacha, the word for child. A boy. She is the “other”: a *dokhtar*, a daughter”. So, if not a real son, let’s at least pretend to have a son. One doesn’t have to pay a price for changing the gender of the child. The skin-deep son is not only supposed to reinstate the family’s honour and pride but also serves as a good luck charm for the parents to conceive a male child in future. The transformation confers a very practical benefit as well, since a male or a bacha posh child can work outside the home, these girls contribute in the family income.

Parents never think, what will happen to the identity of the ‘self’ when a boy is switched back to being a girl. She must unlearn her gender defined identity, her speech, her walk, her mobility outside the home- as she slips back into her modest and ill-fitted clothing and lets her hair grow out. It is a practice that goes back generations though its origin is not easily traced nor is its prevalence known. Emotionally the transition can be quite dramatic as it is essentially imposing an identity crisis on a young psyche, the adjustment period can be difficult. An Afghan girl who is no longer a child but, on her way to becoming a woman should immediately be shielded and protected to ensure her virginity and reputation for future marriage. She should accept her fate and become a victim of male patriarchy and chauvinism. They are many girls like Zehra who is unable to fit in the company of woman, because they have lived like boys and they think they in the idiom of male.

“Standing on top of a table, she was an animal on display. There was cheering and loud laughter. Her body was frozen, and she could not move. When tears rolled down her cheeks, she did not lift her hands to wipe them off. That she cried engaged them even more. “Look, look “And she was looked at some more. Some clapped their hands with excitement. Finally, she buried her face in her hands, screaming, to block out the sound. (Nordberg 95) This episode of trauma occurred with Zehra in school. When she was discovered by her group of classmates that she is a girl. It might not be a physical form of violence, but psychological violence done by her peer group will remain with her in the future.

There are many women who say that the brief period of life as a *bacha posh* has strengthened them as a woman. After observing the outside male world and how it works, they have become prudent and practical human beings. It is important to note that even these women who believe in the optimistic side of discourse were confused at the time of transition though not unhappy. They act as agents of patriarchy and somehow believe that whatever the parents will do is best for them. So, these women lack a strain of freethinking and the psyche works according to the dominant belief system.

“Were you happy to become a woman?”

Sakina, now in her forties, ponders it for a moment. She was not unhappy. The right word might be confused. “I felt all right. It was my parent’s decision. I did not go outside anymore when I became a girl. That was a thing I was sad about. I stayed inside” (Nordberg 131). However, all the bacha posh in Afghanistan do not end up like Sakina. There are multiple cases of women who have been divorced or left like Shukria. There are many who choose to remain forever on the other side. The family threatens to leave them or marry them off which is an act of violation.

After reading a lot of memoirs, one comes across that there are many kinds and levels of so-called third gender of Afghanistan. There are those who are changed by their parents at the time of birth, many are changed during the time of education. Then there are ones who choose to become bacha posh to access more freedom. Many are forced to do so to earn a family for their living, they don’t want to become one. Some parents do this experimentation to get a male child; others do it to strengthen the girl child. Moreover, switching back happens at the time of puberty or at the time of marriage. Some transition happily while others choose to resist. So, the Afghan families are playing with the identity of these kids for their own distorted reasons. The heart of controversy over this practice is when the entire world is talking of the women’s rights and equality of men and woman. The practice of bacha posh is quite ambiguous. Is it the extension of patriarchy or subversion of patriarchy? Though the writer Jenny Nordberg in an interview to the Metrofocus takes a neutral stand on the subject saying that it is both. However, it seems more like a bane than a boon to these girls.

“It’s a creative, some would say desperate, way to buck the system in a suppressive, and gender segregated society. In Afghanistan, men make most of the decisions and woman and girls hold very little value. From the moment she is born, an Afghan girl has very few rights and little control over her own life. She often cannot leave the house without an escort. She must guard her behavior and appear modest at all times.” (Nordberg 2014)

Conclusion

Though the institution of bacha posh has an element of creativity and resistance. But what are these girls being transformed into – A boy. It furthers the invisibility of these girls; it seems that they do not exist at all. Even in the public spaces these girls venture as boys. So, this custom is simply strengthening the patriarchal set up because the presence of the opposite gender is not even known to the other side. So, what appears to be the fate of these girls in the long run? Can they really go back to being a girl again? The answers to these questions are not easy seeing the larger society of Afghanistan. The time as Bacha posh can be seen as a period of concession, but the practice itself is flawed. First of all, it is unnatural as Jenny Nordberg calls it ‘nature versus nurture’ experiment.

The primary purpose of this paper was to look into the complex arena of gender and its reception in Afghanistan. As stated earlier, the paper attempts to establish that being a bacha posh can be detrimental both from the perspectives of identity formation and psyche formulation of a young girl. It is time that

Afghan society should seriously think of the long-term resolutions concerning the discourse of identity and gender instead of looking for a remedy, which doesn't last long.

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The Stone Angel: Search for Wilderness

V. Jadeppa

Assistant Professor

Dept of Studies and Research in English

Vijayanagar Sri Krishna Devaraya University

Vinayaka Nagara

Ballari – 583105

Karnataka

jadeshkumar36@gmail.com

Mob No: 962029

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The Stone Angel, published in 1964, is Margaret Laurence's first novel which was written out of her Canadian background. The stone Angel begins the Manawaka cycle of Laurence. But, in chronology, it is her second novel in publishment. The actual writing of the first draft of *The Stone Angel* was occurred in Vancouver in 1961 and the beginning of 1962. The novel was written during the time when her talent was forcing its choice upon her. After migrating from Canada to England, the first draft of the novel was finished. After distancing and detaching herself from Canadian background, *The Stone Angel* was published in England, America and Canada.

George Woodcock isolates four ways in which *The Stone Angel* has been important to the development of Canadian fiction. Firstly, Myths are to sustain our convictions which give us a figurative place to stand on. Secondly, it helped to shift the male voice of Canadian fiction to include female voices. Third is Laurence's experimentation with time structure opened up technical possibilities of Canadian novelists. Fourth is *The Stone Angel* articulated the theme of survival, which is main point to the development of Canadian literary identity.

As Usha Pathania quite rightly observes, “The Stone Angel delineates the psychic turmoil, fear and anxiety of Hagar Shipley who fails to relate herself to her husband and children. And, the unfulfilling filial ties and an uneasy matrimonial alliance turn her into fearful, suspicious old woman who is afraid of rejection”.

In the words of M. F. Salat, “The fictional world of *The Stone Angel* is set in the period of her grandparents generation which was rooted in the stern puritanical values of rigid authoritarianism and hard work like the Somali men whom Laurence came to admire precisely because they remind her of her own Scottish-Irish ancestors”

The Stone Angel is a pathetic tale of the narrator and protagonist, Hagar Shipley who wanders in wilderness and undertakes a halting, unwilling, rebellious journey towards self-knowledge. Hagar Shipley struggles with darkness, being a victim of personal bias. Margret Laurence aptly asserts her plight thus:

In that sense, a part of Hagar had been dead for
Years through pride and her strict sense of
Dignity even before she was old and sick. But in
The hospital she has to come to grips with the
Reality of dying both physically and spiritually
Hagar’s story is an attempt to survive as wholly
As possible, emotionally and mentally until the
Moment of death.

The novel relates, in the first person, the narrator and protagonist, Hagar Shipley, a ninety year old woman’s fierce attempts to survive with dignity, toting the load of excess mental baggage that everyone carries, until the moment of death.

The fictional world of *The Stone Angel* is set in the period of her grandparents’ generation which was rooted in the stern puritanical values of rigid authoritarianism and hard work like the Somali men whom Laurence came to admire precisely because they reminded her of her own Scottish-Irish ancestors. Laurence, however, had mixed feelings towards that whole generation of pioneers, as she says and the exploration of that inherited period of her past in fictional terms in *The Stone Angel* enabled Laurence not only understand it and come to terms with it but also to love and value it. However, since the past, she fictionalizes in the novel, is as much personal as a communal inheritance. Therefore, incorporates as an ideological proportion. It is owing to this “one of the great functions of art. The preservation of lost times and worlds is made in such a way that outsiders can imaginatively apprehend them”.

The Stone Angel expresses the changing role of women’s lives in the 1970’s. Though her later works like the ‘*The Diviners*’ depicts very different roles for women than her earlier novels do. It is to say that Laurence throughout her career was faithfully dedicated to presenting a female perspective on contemporary life, most skilfully painting the choices and consequences of those choices. Women must make those choices to find meaning and purpose in life. A novel’s

success largely depends on its ability to maintain the reader's interest in the final outcome of the story.

Laurence creates a memorable character what is like to be very old, physically frail, depended on others and tormented by memories of the past. She also depicts the sudden dawning of she has gone wrong in life, and what has been the cause of her unhappiness. The novel *The Stone Angel* suggests there is hope that even those set in their ways can find the inspiration to change for the better, and that change, even at the last stage of life, is never wasted.

Hagar Shipley is ninety, when the book begins. Hagar Shipley wanders in wilderness and, like *The Stone Angel* in the Manawaka cemetery, the prairie town where she grew up, "she was doubly blind, not only stone but unrenowned with even pretence of sight". She is grotesque with the fat ugliness of her old age, as her nature is twisted and distorted by the self-willed tragedies of her life. Stanley David in his edited work 'Critical reflection on Margret Laurence' writes in preface "The Stone Angel" is Hagar Shipley's personal account of the last days of life. She is proud, bitter, sick and frightened old woman with a whip lash tongue to cut and mock. Life in *The Stone Angel* alternates between two time levels: the present and the past. The actual time-span of the narration is only a few days. Clara Thomas about the time span of the narration says:

The actual events of the novel take place over a short time-span-two, perhaps three weeks.

But in the sharp struggle of her last days, Hagar recalls, defends, questions, and finally accepts and understand all the events and the feelings that have been important to her in her ninety years. She moves from the present to the past and back again with an ease that is completely familiar to those who have listened to and swatched the old.

In an interview she gave to Michel Faber, Margaret Laurence asserts that the major theme in *The Stone Angel* is that of survival. But here she goes to step further and conclude that "fitting into that theme and perhaps more important there is the sense of a possibility of a kind of redemption".

The structure of *The Stone Angel* is replete with dualities. The dualities are Hagar in her old age and Hagar reliving her past. Hagar's mother died when she was young. Hagar thinks that she had inherited the much cherished values of her father while her brothers, Dan and Matt, have taken after their mother. She thinks her mother was frail, docile and weak – willed. When she used to wonder, why Dan and Matt inherited her daintiness while she was big boned and husky an ox. Hagar is extremely conscious of the hard earned success of her father and her own position in Manawaka circles. Mocking at her house maid, auntie dolls desire to marry her father. Hagar thinks that her father could never have stopped to the level of marrying his housekeeper.

Yet, she later rebels against the social hierarchy and despite the opposition of her father; she gets married to a farmer, Brampton Shipley. The rebellious and romantic spirit in her personality asserts itself only to be replaced by qualities of security, dignity and respectability. Hagar was sent out of Manawaka to learn how to dress and behave like a lady. When she returns after two years she knew embroidery, and French and menu planning for a five course meals and poetry and how to take a firm hand with servants and the most becoming way of dressing her hair unfortunately Hagar marries Bram, against all opposition and sane advice, Bram, fourteen years older than her. He does not change even after his marriage to a cultural girl like Hagar. He does not stop hobnobbing with half-breed girls and puts in a little effort to improve his communication skills and manners. The rebellious and romantic spirit in her occasionally asserts only to be replaced by qualities of order, decorum, and respectability associated with Manawaka. Even after her marriage, she is unable to give up her class-conscious self-image and strongly disapproves of whatever Bram does. In fact, she likes to be remembered as the daughter of Jason Currie rather than the wife of Bram. The basic contradiction in their marital life is articulated by Hagar herself.

Hagar lives with her son Marvin and his wife Doris both aged sixties and lives in a house in Vancouver which she worked for and brought a house which is the sum of all her achievement. Hagar's immediate reaction to her son's proposal to sell the house is one of outrage even before she realizes that this would mean her going into silver threads, an old peoples' nursing home. The house's familiarity, its possessions, and the token it holds from her past—the oak chair that belonged to her father, Jason Currie, and the cut glass decanter, her wedding gift from Brampton Shipley. Hagar is still delight by gratification of the senses. In fact, she is often greedy of them. She loves the silk dress and tasty food, whatever the cost to her tired digestive system. She is ill, stabbed with a pain under her ribs that grips her without warning, grotesquely fat and uncertain on her feet, sometimes incontinent, unable to care for herself and yet resentful of Doris and Marvin's fussy care and bumbling concern. Completely at the mercy of her physical debility and revolted at its manifestations and yet merciless towards those who try to help her.

The present depicts old Hagar's determined efforts to refuse to accept her infirmity and avoid going to the Nursing Home for the old, silver threads, although it causes untold misery to her son Marvin and daughter-in-law Doris with whom she stays. Her selfishness does not allow her to recognise the fact that both Marvin and Doris are also getting on in years and do not have the necessary strength to take care of her. Hagar was out of sheer stubbornness and wilfulness that she has inherited from her father, Jason Currie, runs away to deserted fresh cannery from where she is rescued and hospitalized. And finally, when the past and the present have fused in the cannery and all the errors have been laid bare and admitted, there is still time in the short time left for Hagar for her to make some signal act of restitution. Sometimes Hagar moves between past and present with no logical connection, more often the past is evoked for her by some thought, some sight or sound in the present. Then, again, she will be jolted out of the reverie in the past by some pressure from the present, a sound or physical sensation that impinges on the reverie.

Laurence provides in this novel the metaphysical analogue to reckon with the Canadian of identity. The novel attempts to present the destructive efforts of imperialistic and subjugating social-cultural constructs on individuals. The dilemma and powerlessness of women, their tendency to accept male definition of themselves, their self-deprecating tone and their inward rage reveal for Margaret Laurence the analogues plight and predicament of Canada itself.

Outthrust of Dalit Consciousness in Select Novels of Mulk Raj Anand & Mahasweta Devi

R. Abirami, M.A., M.Phil., DCA

**Assistant Professor of English, Senthamarai College of Arts & Science
Ph.D. Research Scholar in English, EMG Yadava College for Women
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai - 21**

Abstract

“Dalit literature is marked by revolt and negativism, since it closely associated with the hopes for freedom by a group of people who as untouchables, are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality” (Mukherjee 1). Dalit writing is a post-independence literary phenomenon. Dalit literature has its own significance. Dalits were always considered as marginalised people, oppressed and others by the Indian society. Inequality is the root cause for this marginalisation. The word Dalit is not new to us, it was used in the 1930s as a Hindi and Marathi translation of “depressed classes”, a term the British used for what are now called the Scheduled castes. The word “Dalit” has originated from Sanskrit ‘Dalita’ which means ‘oppressed’. Dalits have various names in different parts of India, such as ‘dasa’, ‘dasya’, ‘raksasa’, ‘asura’, ‘avarna’, ‘nisoda’, ‘panchama’, ‘chandala’ etc., There are varieties of nomenclatures such as ‘untouchables’, ‘harijans’, ‘weaker sections’, ‘atishudras’, ‘dalits’, ‘depressed classes’, ‘others’, ‘servile classes’, ‘avamas’, ‘antyajas’, ‘scheduled castes’. Mulk Raj Anand novels reveal consciousness for the Dalits all over the places. Mahasweta Devi is very much committed to society, and she hopefully tried to remove the evils of the society for the

oppressed and the downtrodden. This paper attempts to give the Dalit consciousness in the select novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi.

Keywords: Mulk Raj Anand, Mahasweta Devi, Dalit consciousness, untouchables, sufferings, underclass, subaltern, marginality, aloofness, suppressed, discrimination.

Mulk Raj Anand was born on December 12, 1905 at Peshwar and died on September 28, 2004 at Pune. He was a prominent Indian author of novels, short stories and critical essays in English. He is very much known for his realistic and sympathetic portrayal of the poor in India. He was the son of a coppersmith and he developed himself with more positive thoughts. He always used to help the poor and the downtrodden. Anand a famous writer who gained his world-wide recognition for his novels *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936). Anand wrote other novels and short-story collections and also edited numerous magazines and journals including MARG, an art quarterly that he founded in 1946. Prose fiction in English began in 1902, the most important novelist during this period is Mulk Raj Anand, who fulminated against class and caste distinction in a series of novels such as, *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937) and *The Big Heart* (1945).

Mahasweta Devi, a prominent Indian Bengali fiction writer and social political activist who immersed herself in the lives of India's poor and marginalized as she chronicled the injustices against them in fiction. She was born on Jan 14, 1926 and died in Kolkata on July 28 at the age of 90. In more than 100 novels and short-stories she wrote of India's tribal communities and Maoist rebels, prostitutes, nomads, beggars and labourers. Her writing addressed one single word that is "injustice". G.N. Devy, a writer and activist who worked closely with Ms. Devi said, "Wherever she saw what she thought was injustice, she plunged into the struggle and never looked back". She had written her works mainly in Bengali but incorporating tribal dialects. Her works has been translated into English, Japanese, Italian, French and several Indian languages.

At the age of thirty, Mahasweta Devi wrote her first novel *The Queen of Jhansi*. Devi spent most of her years in documenting the life among India's tribal communities. She championed the cause of 25 million tribal people in India, who belong to approximately 150 different tribes. Her writing reflects the ugliness, squalor and misery in the lives of the tribal people.

Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi, have some similarities in concern with the society. They both gave voice to the sufferings and the oppressed conditions of the downtrodden. The following works gives the brief note in the select novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi.

Anand's third great novel, *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) was published in the year 1937. It gives us the pathetic conditions of the labourers in the tea plantation of Assam. Anand's furious attack was targeted on the British masters of the tea plantations. The novel presents both the planters and the labourers with their life combined with nature. *Two Leaves and a Bud* mainly denotes the class conflict between two groups the British heartless masters and the innocent poor Indian coolies. Gangu is the protagonist in this novel, he suffers throughout the novel in all the circumstances. This novel also has the element of friendship, love through the characters of Narain, Dr. Havre and Barbara. The novel is rich with the harsh and forced activities of the British masters. Gangu and his family faces all sorts of troubles and they didn't move with the regular life patterns. "class" and "caste" system is a greatest evil which prevails in this novel.

Many a critic come together and criticizes the efforts of Anand, S.C. Harrex says, "*Two Leaves and a Bud* fails to integrate philosophy and drama in an artistically satisfying way." (9). Saros Cowasjee, though he tries to prove that Anand's presentation of life in the tea plantations is based on facts and that he does not exaggerate the cruelties meted out to the laborers in the tea plantations, comes out with a general remark that in fiction, straight facts in themselves mean little, and they must always be subordinate to the main interests-character and the story." (10).

The Big Heart (1945) is Anand's seventh novel and also a great novel. It deals with a small community of coppersmiths of Amritsar, who suddenly come to face with machine civilization. The basic conflict in *The Big Heart* is between tradition and modernity. It also deals with the conflict between the hereditary coppersmith and the capitalists. The novel shows us the changing social reality of India. Ananta the protagonist is a coppersmith by profession. It records the events of a single day in the life of Ananta and he is a man of big heart. Ananta returns to his home-town of Amritsar after having worked in Bombay and Ahmadabad. He lives with a woman named Janaki who is consumed by tuberculosis. Premila Paul says: Janaki is a similar non-conformist woman (12). Ananta starts his own factory and considers himself superior that it is a precious gift of science. He has a strong belief in the machine age, where he thinks unity of labourers begins here. Ananta's co-workers hate industries because of machines. At one instant he killed his co-worker Ralia because he didn't want to lose his trade. Mulk Raj Anand here very strictly against to the caste divisions, and he wants to have the acceptance of machines and the unity of labourers, the situation of poor and the emergence of machine age is clearly evident through this novel.

The Private Life of An Indian Prince is a novel by Mulk Raj Anand, and it is published in the year 1953. Through this novel Anand gives us the most impressive and important elements. This novel tells us the abolition of the princely states system in India. The novel has an autobiographical tone. *The Private Life of An Indian Prince* was launched by the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in the year 2004. Anand gives us the deep study of human nature

through this novel. Maharaja Ashok Kumar of Shampur asserts complete independence for his small hill-state rather than join the Indian union. He is encouraged by his mistress Ganga Dasi, an illiterate hill-woman. To feed his mistress greedy, he wrests large sums of money from his starving peasantry. At once instant he loses both his princely states power and his mistress. Later he exiles to London there he seduces a shop girl with all his former princely elegance, but he was still in love with his mistress. This in the end led his downfall from the kingdom.

The novel *Old Woman and The Cow* (1960) shows us the plight of women. Gauri is the protagonist of this novel. She suffers a lot in all circumstances in which she moves on. Gauri struggles for her own identity and she was treated as a subordinate woman to a heartless man Panchi. Gaur's mother Laxmi becomes a victim and this novel also shows us how woman are just considered as an mere object of desire by men. In the beginning of the novel Gauri is projected as a calm woman and silently she is suffering under the hands of her mother-in-law and her husband Panchi. Gauri was tormented for dowry and later she was driven out of the house, she was trapped in the evils of patriarchy. Gauri by her character docile and devoted wife was finally tortured by Panchi in all aspects. Laxmi sold Gauri for money. In the end she explores as a brave, bold woman and a unique woman in the novel.

Mahasweta Devi's *The Queen of Jhansi* was published originally in the year 1956 in Bengali is a reconstruction of the life of Rani Lakshmi Bai. Later it was translated into English. *The Queen of Jhansi* remains the India's most important historical figures, a legendary heroine who led troops against the British in the uprising of 1857, now widely described as the first Indian War of Independence. A spirited young woman warrior who died on the battlefield but lives on in the minds of an entire people. Mahasweta Devi's first book is a work that defies categories, simultaneously a history, a biography, and a personal statement that says as much about the author as it does about her subject, a valuable contribution to the reclamation of history, and historiography, by feminist writers.

Lakshmbai the Rani of Jhansi was the queen of the princely state of Jhansi in North India. She was one of the leading figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for Indian nationalists. The Peshwa called her "chhabili", which means playful". According to Vishnu Bhatt Godse the Rani would exercise at weightlifting, wrestling and steeplechasing before breakfast. An intelligent and simply-dressed woman, she ruled in a business-like manner.

Mother of 1084 is a Bengali novel written by Ramon Magsaysay Award winner Mahasweta Devi. *Mother of 1084* was a political analysis in the 1970s West Bengal. It was written in 1974 on the backdrop of Naxalite revolution in the Seventies. It is a story of a mother whose son, corpse number 1084 in the morgue, was brutally killed by the state because of his ideology of advocating the brutal killing of class enemies, collaborators with the State and counter-revolutionaries within the party. The story begins on the eve of Brati's close accomplice

and tries to justify Brati's actions and his revolutionary mentalities. Throughout the story she is portrayed as a strong woman who fought against the odds. She is advised to forget her son. It's a story of a mother as she relives years later the death of her son in the political upheaval that left almost no home untouched.

The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesh shows the lives of the underdogs, the Lachhimas, the Rukmanis, the Mohors and the Haroas as a contrast to the lives of their all power overlords the Medinas and Ganeshes. Lachhima, whose leashed bitterness anger of a lifetime against Medini and Ganesh is liberated at the end of the novel when Ganesh begs her to save his life, decides to save him, but on her own terms. The title of the work itself becomes a tool for subversion in this sprawling novel which takes the reader through a multi-layered narrative into the socio-economic malaise of post-independence rural India. Mahasweta Devi's corrosive humour and cryptic style are at their best as she takes on issues of agrarian land relations, inter-caste violence, so-called rural development and the position of women in rural India. As Simone de Beauvoir states; "One is not born a woman, one becomes a woman." (The Second Sex 301)

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Education: A Right or a Limitation – The Voice of the Differently-Abled

Jemima Joshuin T., M.Phil. Scholar
Gandhigram Rural Institute
Gandhigram

Abstract

The research paper focuses on the learning disability of Samantha Abeel and the physical disability of Helen Keller concerning their Life Writings, *My Thirteenth Winter* and *The Story of My Life* respectively. It brings to limelight the struggles faced by a person with learning differences and how they and their family are blamed for various reasons. It also throws light on how they are seen as an outcast and are discriminated in the so-called normal society. It seeks to bring forth how learning disabilities are seen as a taboo even in the modern world. On the other hand, Helen Keller was accused of Cryptomnesia for unknowingly plagiarizing a story of Margaret T Canby. Unlike Samantha Abeel, Helen was given acceptance from people but, the examination system was highly challenging for her due to the varieties of Braille available. This was inhuman on the organisation's part to have made her appear for her exam without any human assistance to help her deafness and blindness. The research article tries to bring out how these sufferings of both the writers stand as the voice of the differently-abled and how it calls for a collective plea and collective identity in the field of education. It brings forth to establish that the method of learning and the pace of it are different, but that does not make them any less of a

person in having equal rights to acquire knowledge and to possess an identity they wish to have. The disability theory of Alice Hall with reference to *Literature and Disability* is incorporated.

Keywords: Dyscalculia, Coming Out Narrative, Cryptomnesia, Collective Identity, Disability Rights.

Education is one of the primary rights that is given to every individual across the world. In a modern world like this, Education has become a base to all occupations and it has become a need for survival. However, the method and the process of gaining knowledge may vary according to the needs and capability of the individual. Even though one side of the world is convinced with special education, the other side has its own preconceived notions towards it. In a country such as India, Disabilities are often seen as a curse or a taboo and are not readily accepted. Disability studies take its origin from the 1990 passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In Literature, it takes its root from Post Colonialism and Queer theory. The Key texts taken for research are the Life Writings of Samantha Abeel and Helen Keller, who have reached great heights by getting themselves educated despite their disabilities and the prejudices attached to it. Samantha Abeel, who got diagnosed with dyscalculia found it very hard to accept her identity as a person with a cognitive difference. In her work, *My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir*, she gives instances from her second grade on how it was extremely difficult for her to calculate the time which her classmates did with much ease. “I can name the numbers I see, and I know the hands that stretch out from its center are supposed to give me the answer I am looking for, but for me the direction they point to doesn’t mean anything.” (Abeel 13)

She went to an extreme to conceal her identity in order to suit the mask of a “Smart Kid”. She was a prodigy in all her creative writing classes but she felt strained on the subjects that demanded mathematical applications and sequential processing. Even though she was well versed in many aspects of education, she always felt a need to mask her disability from others in order to escape the prejudices that were attached to it. In one instance, where her mother explains her basic subtraction application, “Come on Sam, You know you can get this... It makes sense...” “I can’t” I say through broken sobs. “I don’t know.” My mom begins to cry as well, er calm exterior broken.” (Abeel 18)

Unlike Samantha Abeel, Helen Keller was cognitively intelligent but physically disabled. This was extremely difficult for her when she appeared for her examinations at her Radcliffe. She expresses her bitterness on the management for treating her that way in her autobiography, *The Story of My Life*. Being in the world of darkness, her only light was gaining knowledge from various sources. Education at school level was not difficult because Ms. Anne Sullivan taught her realistically. In fact, She says, Teaching was not like teaching, it was more like gaining knowledge through various means. It was against the traditional method of teaching as it cannot be used to a person who is visual and hearing impaired.

When she entered college, it became arduous for her to listen to the lecture and take notes in her Braille. Although Ms. Anne Sullivan helped her by pronouncing each word on her hand, it was difficult for her also to tirelessly utter each word in Keller's hand. As Helen Keller was an avid reader, she spent most of her time in reading books which made her to master German, English Literature and many other fields in Education.

When Samantha Abeel's mother understood about having a learning disability from an online article, she became aware that the traditional method of learning will not be of any help to her daughter and hence she decided to put her in a classroom that is for special kids which would be of help to Samantha Abeel. This paved the way to a variety of judgments and accusations on Samantha's Mother. She was seen as a mother who is standing up for her daughter's laziness and was accused of discouraging her own daughter. The teacher who was in charge of the special students went to an extent of telling that, "Do you have any idea what you will be doing to your daughter by placing her in a room with those kinds of kids?" (Abeel 93)

Being fully aware that continuing in the same class with other normal students would kill Samantha's self-esteem to nothing, she was persistent in her views in making her daughter enrol herself in the special education class where she need not mask her disability and where she need not pretend as if she knew everything.

In *Literature and Disability*, Alice Hall brings out, how a Life Writing can be called an "Activism" where the disabled fight for their equal rights in all spheres of life and they work for a collective identity. "These accounts often shift the focus from a view of auto/biography as an individualistic endeavour, as "the acme of independent, liberal, individual self-expression in Literature" (Coogan 42). As Helen Keller is the first deaf-blind woman to receive education and to graduate from college. The Life Writing acts as a source of which others can follow her footsteps. Similarly, Abeel's Memoir also brings out the unuttered sufferings of a person with a cognitive difference. They both had a different way of gaining knowledge and that becomes a paradigm of the Marginalized.

Both the Life writing seek right for their collective identity which Simi Linton mentions in her *Claiming Disability*, where she explains how disability can be of many types and yet come under one umbrella with an identity as disabled or differently-abled, as they are all marginalized in the same way from the other so-called normal people.

The Life Writing stands as a "Coming out Narrative" where the authors bring to limelight the need to come out and to cherish life as the others do. Alice Hall says, "... Yet it can also be viewed in both cases as an empowering act of celebration, of proudly naming and claiming a positive identity that counters histories of enforced silence." (Hall 134)

Thus, through the Life Writings, both the authors have provided a paradigm that the process of gaining knowledge may vary according to the capability of the individual. It is a right and never a limitation as it can be well received irrespective of the disability they possess and the social status they come from.

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Agony of Wives and Handmaids in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*

Hitesh Karan
Research Scholar
Jiwaji University
Gwalior- 474011 INDIA

Abstract

In this paper, I intend to explore how the protagonist ("OF FRED", since she belongs to Fred) of *The Handmaid's Tale* endure such malice in her public and private life. Offred and many others like her are subjected to unwarranted physical, emotional and mental cruelty in the name of God. Society had twisted the words of God because most of the society is rendered infertile (Men are sterile, and Women are barren) and now they need breeder and hence comes fertile women who become the property/slave of the wealthy women who wants to have babies but can't. Atwood here is focusing on victimized females and asking us a question what would happen if women's rights reverted or taken away? I intend to explore the need for females to expand their own discourse, which shouldn't be radical or extremist with the help of this text.

Keywords: Margaret Atwood. *The Handmaid's Tale*, First and second wave feminism, feminist backlash, barren, fertile, sterile, bearer, sexually immoral, simulacra, slavery, subjugation

Introduction

Margaret Atwood, a Canadian author, depicts a dystopian society where men are sterile, and women are barren, but the need of a child is a need above all else. So, this society started doing ungodly things in the name of God. This society is a theoretic society and they know nothing just the survival of the human race. For that they need breeders, hence comes fertile women. They started capturing fertile woman's aka The Handmaids. They are being sent to a RAD center where they are processed by 'Aunts'. These so called Aunts brainwashed them in the name of the God that they are here to fulfill the wish of the god; to replenish the Earth by producing child to the commander of the Republic of Gilead. If they start to toe the line, well and good but if they don't then these Aunts who are there to take care of these Handmaids starts torture them in the worst possible way. If these Handmaids made a slightest mistake, they have to lose a body part like if a Handmaid raised her voice, her tongue will cut out. If a Handmaid caught reading, she will lose her hand. This is the world showed to us by Margaret Atwood. In a way Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* shows the same influence which we have seen in *Huxley's Brave New World* and *Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* deals with the survival of women's in a male dominated society. Male always wants to dominate his house, his society, and his world and here I'm saying 'his' because every male thinks the same. Each and Every Man wants to be the king of their own world. When some of these men started to think and work together, we get a theocratic society. In *The Handmaid's Tale* there is a group of Men's, who works like that and we know them as Commanders of the society. These Commanders makes the policies for a theocratic society; what's best for the society and what's best for them. These men started to impose policies which resulted in subjugation of women's in the society.

An Indian Poet and Feminist, Dr. Pawan Karan, once said that a woman's freedom start with the money she has in her purse. According to him, for ages men remained in power because they had never let money slip through their hands. If a woman wants freedom, she needs the money for it but man has dominance over it and that's the reason she isn't free. That's exactly what happened in the totalitarian and a theocratic government aka The Republic of Gilead; they started cutting women's rights in the society and by that started making them their property/slave. At first in The republic of Gilead, commanders passed a decree that women can't work at all; neither in public sector nor in private sector. That's was the first step of men towards a male dependent society. If a woman can't work, then she has no money and if she has no money, she has no freedom. Second step was to remove all the women's owning-ship weather by inheritance or self-owning. Women's in Gilead can't own a single thing on their name. That will either be transferred to her husband or her father or anyone else for that matter just not to the women.

Margaret Atwood herself divulges that she writes speculative fiction (the scene which will become true in not-so-distant future. She once said "I didn't have to invent a lot" in *The Handmaid's Tale*. All the things "I transposed" was always here. I just mold that "to a different time and place, but the motifs are all historical motifs" (Bouson, 1993: 136). Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is a dystopian novel which depicts a futuristic world; United States of America which has become a totalitarian and a theocratic state and now it is known as The Republic of Gilead which is run by religious extremist; where we see profane technological developments but with puritanical fundamentalism or practices. As a research, I found out that we are living in a world that Atwood imagines. If we look closely in the world in relation to *The Handmaid's Tale* we can see, Women are given little to no right in Gilead, same as in countries like Pakistan where women's rights are nonexistent and many other countries where women are subjugated by men.

Women in Gilead belong to the men and that's the cruel reality there whether it was the 'Marthas' who serve in the household or the 'wives' serving to their husbands' commandants. The 'Handmaid' serving as breeders, the women of Jezebels' serving as prostitutes for the Commanders' pleasure, or those who were thrown in the Colonies serving society, there was apparent slavery in Gilead. Even the lower-class men *aka* drivers, were slaves as well, with no given freedom. Everyone becomes a slave for the betterment of the society.

The novel begins with our female protagonist who is unnamed, recounting her time; when it all began to crumble in her life, she starts running for her life and the life of her family. She is running from the government who has passed the law of capturing all the fertile women in the state. She was running with family and trying to cross the border through Maine but couldn't do it and at last she is captured with her daughter and the husband was killed by the government. Here forth the life of subjugation, slavery, torment, torture and excruciation begins. Here the life in Agony begins of our female protagonist OFFRED (because she belongs to Commander Fred). The name Offred provides us numerous nuances like, offered or afraid. The use of birth names in Gilead is "forbidden" and must remain "buried": "I keep the knowledge of this name like something hidden, some treasure I'll come back to dig up, one day" (*The Handmaid's Tale*: 84). But, in reality, she was a Handmaid, who will serve her Master.

When she was identified as fertile woman, she was to be sent with many others to the Rachel and Leah Re-Education Center *aka* Red Center where her indoctrination begins under the supervision of Aunt Lydia, who is in charge of brainwashing these girls by using the biblical sermon from the Old Testament. In Gilead, Handmaids have to obey the Men and the Aunts (who take orders from men). Women are alive only to serve a single purpose that is to have the babies of the high-status military officers. Handmaids are voiceless, childbearing vessels. These women are chosen by the Gilead for their latent embryonic ability to bear children at a time when sterility is severely high and live births have reached perilously low levels. Although the women's biological function is privilege, she becomes marginalized as a human being. Main aim is to find healthy, fertile women who can produce offspring for that imperative group of men *aka* commanders who got status, power and influence. Their posting begins when they are

indoctrinated by the Aunts. Handmaids were sent to their commanding officers where they take the name of their masters like Offred, Ofglen, Ofryan and Ofstevan. They take the name and become property/slave of the commanders.

Offred was sent to Commander Fred who is sterile and wife Serena who is barren like most of the society. Once a month every handmaid has to lie with their respective commanders in order to get impregnated by their Masters. They have to be impregnated while lying between the knees of their Commanders' wives; if they become pregnant with commanders, their child becomes theirs. Once breastfeeding is concluded, their connection to the toddler will be terminated, and she will move to another house to become impregnated again. Handmaids don't want to lie down but doing it, and the wives who are traumatized by this sickened act, still performing for the sake of a child. This whole practice is called Ceremony because it has to look like biblical otherwise how they can get their wives onboard with such a sickened and aghast act. That was one of the most dismayed and disgusted things I read in the novel, but anything is possible in the name of God in any religion. This is when you find out the real agony of the wives, the angst she feels. It is evident that when the religious decrees are proliferating, there is no way of declining it because there is no political process that can be used to dispute it. That's how Gilead works by creating propaganda whether it's a terrorist attack or a religious one.

The central idea of this ceremony comes from the Old Testament, in which Rachel says to Jacob

“And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no Children, Rachel envied her sister, and said unto Jacob, Give me Children, or else I die.” And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of thy womb? And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have Children by her”. (Genesis, 30:1-3).

In Gilead, "Anatomy is destiny" (Coad, 2001: 54); those Handmaids who can't get pregnant would not have any value to the state. They can either join 'Jezebel' (if they are pretty) or they can join 'The Unwomen' where all of the infertile or defiant women being sent to clean up nuclear waste in an area called the Colonies. Moira defines colonies as

“The other Colonies are worse, though, the toxic dumps and the radiation spills. They figure you've got three years maximum, at those, before your nose falls off and your skin pulls away like rubber gloves. They don't bother to feed you much, or give you protective clothing or anything, it's cheaper not to”.

Gilead is a repressive and highly alienating structure of society, especially for women. In Gilead a woman did not have a right to speak in the society *aka* freedom of speech went into garbage. This is alike for every woman: commanders' wives, handmaids, marthas, jezebel and the unwomen. Men torture them in worst way possible like sleeping with handmaids because they

have fertile ovaries, making their wives watching this aghast act. If they can't produce a child, they will either be sent to jezebel or they can join unwomen. Men are free in this society bounded with no regulation at all and they have created this society with the help of God by twisting the words of Old Testament.

In the Republic of Gilead, position and purpose are clearly conveyed by the cloths and the color of it. The Commanders' wives wear 'Blue' color, having the highest rank among women. The Aunts wear 'Brown' color; they are the brainwasher of the society, training girls to become a sex-slave. The Marthas who wear 'Green' are the housekeepers and the Unwomen wear 'Gray' because they are infertile or old women who clean up toxic waste in the Colonies. The Handmaids wear 'Red' emblematic to blood, birth, sex and life.

Conclusion

Atwood asserts: "*The Handmaid's Tale* does not get a single detail that hasn't happened in the past, it shows parallel reality, either in current conditions or former facts" (McCombs 284). Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* has shown us a world where nothing else matters other than the survival of human race. For that Gilead can go to any distance. Gilead has become a military state under martial law purview. President is dead and now Commanders have taken over the state. In Gilead, no one is having any kind of freedom except commanders and the commanders are the religious fanatics who will impose every kind of law on women's just to have them subjugated. In Gilead we see women are kidnapped in the name of the god and then they are subjugated, tormented, tortured, and harassed in the worst way possible. Gilead cut them off, from their jobs & the basic rights a woman should have. In the end they just become voiceless, childbearing vessels for the state. Every Woman in Gilead is subjected to different types of beleaguers. The protagonist once confesses in the novel,

We didn't wake up;
 "That was when they suspended the Constitution. They said it would be temporary.
 There wasn't even any rioting in the streets. People stayed home at night, watching television, looking for some direction. There wasn't even an enemy you could put your finger on"
 We didn't wake up.

The female identity in *The Handmaid's Tale* depends entirely on the form of a patriarchy society. Women's bodies are nothing but malleable objects. All the women in Gilead have to move in pairs i.e. they have no privacy. Only privacy they got is when the visit fertility doctors; other than this, nothing at all.

Through *The Handmaid's Tale*, Atwood brings the nightmarish world into light where commanders and the handmaids follow patriarchal custom from utopian and dystopian world illustrated by writers like Plato, More, Huxley and Atwood herself.

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**Subjugation and Antagonism in the Colonised Societies in the
Selected Short Stories of D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham:
A Comparative Study**

Lavanya G.

Assistant Professor

Department of Humanities

Bannari Amman Institute of Technology

Sathyamangalam, Tamilnadu, India

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the contribution of D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham to the English society by their literary endeavours through selected short stories. The Victorian period was a transitional period and witnessed significant growth in the literary pursuits of English literature. It dealt with the contemporary issues and problems of the day, including

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social, economic, religious and intellectual subjects, troubles in relation to the industrial revolution. The British colonisation has caused various physical and traumatic afflictions on them for centuries. The emergence of postcolonial literature considered the subjugated souls of the indigenous nations that were under the colonial rule. The postcolonial study gathers the historical and literary legacies of the nations that were afflicted under this regime. The repercussions of the colonial ruthlessness have had an effect of turmoil on the various established institutions of the cluttered societies of the indigenous. The colonised groups were forced to relinquish their authority over their social and cultural practices. The colonial literature neglected the social and cultural conventions of the indigenous peoples considering them inferior to the colonial culture. The Western supremacy regarded the Orient as inferior to their status. The peoples were associated with the subhuman qualities. Critics of the thirties believed that a writer must use grandiloquent words, mystifying ideas and a complicated style, to be considered as a serious writer. Whereas D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham were the simple story tellers, their style was vivid and direct. Both had an intuitive feeling and knowledge of the drifts and fashions in the contemporary literary society, they well fathom the emotional needs of their readers. The authors explore human nature through frank discussions of sex, psychology, and religion and combines accurate social setting with penetrating psychological analysis and eagerness to explore areas beneath the surface of human behavior.

Introduction

The British entered the portals of India and other countries with the motive of getting supremacy or economic hegemony over a land of rich heritage and culture. One of the main reasons for the Europeans to sail the oceans was to find new trade routes to Asia, especially, to India. Loomba expresses the real essence of Colonialism as

“the conquest and control of other people’s lands and goods” (2).

Britishers took over many countries including India with authoritative commands and devised a mechanism to channelize the flourishing economy of the targeted land in order to augment the economic status of England. Hence, a study of this relationship between the colonizers and its colony is important to understand in this paper the present developments and future prospects of colonized nations. They not only succeeded in controlling most of the colonised territory, but also successfully colonized various aspects of the imperialised lands like culture, politics, economy and education. Britishers also became an inseparable part of targeted lands. Hence, in their conquest of India, Burma and Malaysia two important objectives of the British emerge: Profit and spreading civilization among the countries. This paper briefly examines how the hostile and atrocious policies of the British, intended to achieve the above mentioned objectives, systematically impoverished the people, both physically and mentally.

The British colonisation has caused various physical and traumatic afflictions on them for centuries. The emergence of postcolonial literature considered the subjugated souls of the indigenous nations that were under the colonial rule. The postcolonial study gathers the historical

and literary legacies of the nations that were afflicted under British regime. The repercussions of the colonial ruthlessness have had an effect of turmoil on the various established institutions of the cluttered societies of the indigenous. The colonised groups were forced to relinquish their authority over their social and cultural practices.

Britishers implemented their ideologies by establishing power centers with the help of English people and such persons' mindset and implications are beautifully captured in the short stories of D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham. The short story is not shortened form of a novel. It consists of all the components of fiction that is plot, character, and setting but these tools are treated within a certain limit. All the elements need to be given an equal importance to curvy the intended idea of the author. Sometimes one may dominate the other two. Edward Albert defines short story in History of English Literature as

A short story is, or should be, a simple thing; it aims at producing the single vivid effect; it has to seize the attentions at the outset and never relaxing, gather it together more and more until the climax is reached. The limits of human capacity to attend closely therefore set limit to it. It must explode and finish before interruption occurs or fatigue sets in (203).

The language of a short story is simple and easy to understand. The popularity of the short story has grown and spread from England, France, Russia and America. Kipling, Guy de Maupassant, Anton Chekov, D H Lawrence and Somerset Maugham are the masters of this particular genre, who created a great impact on other writers of this form, till today it is reflected in their short stories.

The Trauma of Dislocation in D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham Short Stories

English had ruled more than fifty percent of the World; the colonial aggression was exercised in the literary pursuits also. In colonial literature, there was no reference to the regional and national socio-cultural patterns of the indigenous nations. The colonial literature neglected the social and cultural conventions of the indigenous peoples considering them inferior to the colonial culture. The Western supremacy regarded the Orient as inferior to their status. The peoples were associated with the subhuman qualities says Edward Said in his book *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*.

“[...] the Orient is represented in terms of the qualities that the Westerners do not wish to attribute themselves, qualities like decadence, laziness, stupidity, sensuality, effeminacy, etc. The people in the East are seen as ‘masses and not as individuals’” (91).

Britishers views were considered to be true without proper validation. D H Lawrence travelled extensively, and, therefore, their stories are set in different parts of the world. While

Lawrence wrote about people in European countries and Mexico, the themes around which his stories are woven includes ones such as the effect of War on the lives of people altering them permanently, the class and race distinctions in the society they lived in, and also their perception of people from different parts of the world.

Lawrence wanted to capture the social changes sweeping across the continent, making an impact on the complex lives of a variety of individuals, destroying the decaying old order, and rejuvenating whatever had the potential to grow. He wanted to lead his readers into awareness and make him acknowledge how the world was changing. David Herbert Lawrence's perception that the world he lived in was oppressive, and his writing clearly reflected the brutal restrictions imposed on individuals and their choices. There are several examples of members of the aristocratic society looking down upon people of common blood in Lawrence's stories. Hadrian, a young man in *You Touched Me*, talks of the presence of class distinctions in English society. Hadrian was telling about Canada. He was going back there when his leave was up.

'You wouldn't like to stop in England, then?' said Mr. Rockley. 'No, I wouldn't stop in England,' said Hadrian. 'How's that? There's plenty of electrician here,' said Mr. Rockley. 'Yes. But there's too much difference between the men and the employers over here--too much of that for me,' said Hadrian (379).

The daughters of his adopted father, however, look down upon him and criticize him for not knowing his place. Initially they do not want to acknowledge that their days at the helm of power are coming to an end. In this story, the orphan and a lady of means get married, and this symbolizes the leveling of differences. Lawrence describes members of the working class with a certain admiration of their qualities by saying that they were the rough, inarticulate, powerfully emotional men and women. (186). An educated person like the doctor actually felt energized by being in contact with such people in the short story *The Horse Dealer's Daughter*.

Lawrence's *The Princess* exhibits a similar disdain, schooled as the central character has been by her father that she was the last of the royal blood. The frustration of the common man is exposed when her guide rapes her repeatedly. Lawrence did not just stop with highlighting the difference between the two classes. He often made an effort to describe the emotional energy and intuitive intelligence of the labourer, and how it impressed the members of the upper class.

Lawrence. In *The Force of Circumstance*, Doris comes to learn from her husband that before his marriage, he had started to live with a fifteen year old native woman, who had borne three children. Guy had paid for her to live with him, but he had no qualms in asking her to leave, once he had decided to take an English wife. On her part Doris, who ultimately leaves him, does not do it because it was wrong on his part to leave a woman like that. She even says repeatedly that she is not angry with him and she understands why he had lived like that. This shows how none of the characters realize that they had a callous and racist view of Malays as inferior beings that did not deserve just treatment. Guy even says that he did not feel any love for his kids. In

many of the stories white men look on natives as inferior, and even towards the end of the story, there is no acknowledgement of natives as anything but strange and immoral. The missionary in Fear says of the Chinese people that they were a lying people, untrustworthy, cruel, and dirty (486).

D. H. Lawrence describes the Mexican native's deep feeling of connection with the sun and the moon, in contrast to the rich white miner, who is excessive fond of money, which is why the main character in his story *The Woman who Rode Away* found the tribal life so meaningful that she was ready to be sacrificed by the natives to bring a better life for the forest dwellers, rather than live a dull but secure life with her husband and children. In *The Blind Man*, the soldier who had lost his sight is able to live a fulfilled life in his farm.

He milked the cows, carried in the pails, turned the separator, attended to the pigs and horses. Life was still very full and strangely serene... (133).

It is only in his later stories that Lawrence describes the de humanizing effects of the world war which created havoc in every single home in Europe. At the very beginning of *The Lady Bird* the author talks about such a terrible loss in the life of Lady Beveridge.

... she herself might have died of sheer agony, in the years 1916 and 1917, when her boys were killed, and her brother, and death seemed to mowing in wide swathes through her family (83).

Lady Beveridge is one of the characters who got over her loss with great determination.

Maugham being the contemporary of D.H. Lawrence wrote more than hundred short stories with varied themes and in different situations and places. Many of his stories were set in Malaysia or related to many parts of the world. His stories overflow with, simplicity of ordinary happenings and everyday occurrences. Commenting on the achievement of William Somerset Maugham as a short story writer, T.O. Beach Croft in *The Modest Art: A survey of the short story* in English says,

Perhaps the greatest of all literary influences on the short story in the years following the Second World War has been the tremendous prestige of Somerset Maugham both in his practice and his critical opinion (214).

Maugham created a niche for himself in writing the short stories especially depicting about the people who lead unhealthy life due to war and colonisation of the Britishers all over the world. When they are exposed to a new culture and tradition, the basic root is shaken in understanding the lifestyle of the people. They also take time to get accustomed with the natives.

Maugham has got gentle feelings towards the subjugated; he stoops down to their level and displays it in his short stories with apathetic tone. He puts himself in the place of the sufferers to understand their intricate feelings of them and registers in his short stories carefully without

missing the spirit of it. This aspect of Maugham was flashed light on by Angus Wilson in Introduction W Somerset Maugham:

A Maugham Twelve...yet basically it is, I believe, with exiles that his place lay and about whom he wrote most feelingly (67).

Maugham was an agnostic. Quite early in life he concluded that there was no meaning in life except what one gives it oneself. He succeeded in giving a pattern to his life. But this did not satisfy him. Throughout his life he was engaged in an insatiable quest for the meaning of life. He travelled far and wide in this pursuit. The presence of this quest and a few instances of the human condition in this direction, what men and women have made of their lives, are etched in his short stories and he seldom allowed the inquirer in him to dominate the entertainment.

The Trembling of a Leaf presents the aftermath of war and colonial antagonism. Due to the war and colonization, many people from England moved to various parts of the world for different purposes and this isolation had developed an exquisite sensitiveness to their predicament. As Klaus W. Jonas says of their reincarnation as fictional characters in Maugham and the East: *The Human Condition: Freedom in The World of Somerset Maugham*:

An Anthology, the heroes of these short stories are those weak and unsettled natures who are equally subject to undivided joy and to boundless, extreme despair (102).

It was true that the Europeans were the rulers who were powerful and strong. Because of the establishment of the Britishers all over the world, many English people were sent to all parts of the world to rule and monitor the colonial countries. They found it hard to mingle with the natives and they also had a divide because of their domination over the natives of the country in which they lived. They were away from home on an alien soil forming a minority in the midst of the natives. The major minority of them came to these remote places because of economic reasons. A few like Lawson in *The Pool* for health reasons and a few others like Ginger Ted in *The Vessel of Wrath* came out of their homeland because they were unwanted at home. Very few are happy in these unfamiliar surroundings. Like Walker in *Mackintosh*, Warburton in *The Outstation*, and Arnold Jackson and Edward Barnard in *The Fall of Edward*, many came to their hometown because of their bad contact with the natives of the colonial countries Anthony Curtis in *The Pattern of Maugham*:

A Critical Portrait considers that Maugham's short story turn on the passions of a white man for a coloured woman and in none is the outcome of a happy one (158).

Most of them pay dearly for their passion. They developed fascination towards the native young girls. They took advantage of them and tried to persuade them for physical relationship and a few British occupants crossed the border limitations by getting married to them. Later they suffered alienation among their clan of people. In all these relationships the initial happiness and

enthusiasm faded when the British occupants faced humiliation among their group. They were secluded from the mainstream of their country when they moved back to their native place and many a time, they felt embarrassed due to their wedding with the native girl. Hence L Brander remarks that in Somerset Maugham: *A Guide* in The South Sea short story all had a savage realism and ugly violence in which the characters usually achieved their own degradation (107).

Ted Morgan observes that in Somerset Maugham:

A Guide, Maugham filed the patent on a certain kind of story, set in the tropics and usually describing the undoing of the characters because they have failed to understand their surroundings (256).

Mackintosh and Lawson are rendered a sort of void because of their surroundings and find escape in suicide. Artists are essentially aloof people and are apt to seek solitude.

In comparison, Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham are uniformly serious and never frivolous on any topic. A remarkable contrast in the approach of the writers to their short stories had become an apparent when we examine how they wrote the ending. The episodes in Lawrence's stories are just that. They are an interesting account of a short period in the lives of the characters, and although their lives have been altered through these episodes, it rarely comes to an end. Lawrence's ending permit us to feel the unpredictability of life, as we are not sure what is going to happen next in the lives of these characters. Maugham's stories, however, often end with a comical twist in the fortunes of the characters, in suicides and tragic deaths, as the writer wraps up the lives of the characters which have been altered irreversibly. Life in Lawrence's stories is in a flux, and we feel life continuing in myriad pathways even after the story ends. David Herbert Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham perception that the world they lived in was oppressive, they were similar, and their writings clearly reflected the brutal restrictions imposed on individuals and their choices. This should be considered the mark of an unhealthy society. The difference lies in their portrayal of this oppressive state of affairs. Lawrence focuses on how the oppressed fought their way out of their predicament, while Maugham captures the exclusivity and sophistication of the oppressors and the coarseness and vulgarity of the oppressed in greater detail. He dwells more on the comic peculiarities of the situation than on any visible growth or change that overcomes the oppression.

Conclusion

D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham express the intricate emotions of England through various short stories in order to protect and guide the society in the right path. No matter the struggles they may undergo. They instructed and inculcated the positive attitude in their countrymen through their short stories to settle the traumatic postwar effects of England. They took up the powerful weapon of Literature to moralise the society.

D H Lawrence and W Somerset Maugham succeeded in achieving the highest aim of art that is to stimulate the social reformers who used literature as propagandist's platform to moralise the English society. The debased world, which debilitates vitality so disastrously, takes many forms in their stories. They show their deep concern for the struggles and fortunes of men and women who have to bear the brunt of the prevailing social order and the new values created by a new civilization, which strikes the very roots of spirituality. Their purpose of writing these literary pieces of art are to explicitly express their view on the changing attitude of the people of England according to their day today lifestyle. To sum up, the writers were eminently successful in recreating episodes of life through their short stories. They took up many themes that were relevant to the readers of their day and handled with skill and imagination.

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**Dialectics of Dalit Reterritorialization:
A Study of Select Stories of Sridara Ganesan:
*Meesai (Moustache)***

Dr. V. Vellaichamy
Assistant Professor
Govt. Arts College
Melur 625 106
Madurai District, Tamilnadu

Abstract

Sridara Ganesan is a Dalit writer and his contribution to Tamil Dalit Writing is noteworthy. The present researcher has taken two stories from *Meesai* (Moustache). The story, “Ammavin Purusargal” (Mother’s Husbands) deals with a question of a young Dalit woman’s identity crisis about her birth. It highlights the uniqueness of Dalit motherhood and Dalit womanhood in the society. It also shows the hurdles in Dalit families for their growth and development in the society against the mainstream. The story, “Sakkilitchi” (An Arunthathi Woman) is a threat to upper caste men who exercise sexual violence against Dalit women. It also questions the upper castes’ belief in casteism and their sexuality against Dalit women in the society. It also undermines the upper castes’ casteist behaviour in abusing and oppressing the Dalits in the society. It also attempts to dismantle the upper castes’ strong notion and belief in caste system. It critically tries to find out the root cause of Dalits’ de-territorialization in the society. The paper, “Dialectics of Dalit Re-territorialization: A Study of the Select Stories of Sridara Ganesan’s *Meesai*” purports to analyze the ways and methods of Dalit re-territorialization in various aspects of their life against the mainstream society.

Keywords: Sridhara Ganesan, *Meesai*, Motherhood, Caste Identity, Casteism, De-territorialization, Re-territorialization

Sridara Ganesan is a prolific writer in Tamil Dalit Writing. He has contributed a number of novels and short stories to Tamil Dalit literature. His writing is always to liberate Dalits from the social clutches and to reclaim the denied human rights from the majority people and from the government. He discusses the pertinent Dalit issues such as Dalit identity, dignity and honour in the society. The story raises questions to the Tamil mainstream society on the basis of social structure and hierarchy in the society. It also lists the ways of behaviour and attitude of upper caste Hindus to oppress Dalits in general and Dalit women in particular. It also seeks solidarity from all the people in the society. As a whole, he attempts to show Dalit reterritorialization in their personal space, power, culture, dignity, honour, image, status, and caste identity. It also enables Dalits including women to live peacefully with the upper caste Hindus and with their men in the society.

Sridara Ganesan discusses the significance of Dalit women’s redefinition and their reterritorialization in the story, Ammavin Purusargal (Mother’s Husbands) and in the story, Sakkilichi (Arunthathi woman). He develops the theme of Dalit woman’s reterritorialization by unfolding their unique way of settling the problems against the Hindu caste people in the society.

The issue in the story, Ammavin Purusargal (Mother's Husbands) revolves around a young educated Dalit woman and a Dalit mother in the society. Both the mother and the daughter try to reterritorialize peacefully with a remarkable status in the society. The problem of the respected Dalit mother in the story is to settle her daughter peacefully in her life whereas the problem of the daughter is to create an ideal world of her own in the society.

The main theme of the story is built in their relationships with the members of the society. The problem comes to the daughter's ears in the schools about the scandals of her mother's affairs in the society. She wishes to discover the wrongness in her mother's lonely life. Besides that, her close relatives and her well-wishers affectionately tell her, "Ungaammaiyai mathiri irukkathemma Rajathi mathiri iru. Yaraiyum nambi mosam pogathe" (Ammavin Purusargal, 67). Don't be like your mother. Be as a Rajathi. Don't be deceived on trusting anyone.

It has psychologically forced her to familiarize the people around her in the society. She is ready to take up the practical obstacles for searching her true father without any intimation to her mother. She comes to know from an old Dalit man that she has had three husbands. She has heard that she cannot cope up with anyone in her life. The first husband is a drunkard, second, mentally sick person and the third one is the contractor. Moreover, the old man assures her that he is her father and he has stated that one day he will take her to her father. The present researcher investigates the life of Dalit mother with her husbands.

The first husband is a drunkard who always beat her black and blue. One day, he drank a substance of insecticide and died on account of his failure in life. The second has become mentally ill and later on he died. The writer notes about the death of the man due to the cheating of his other caste friend in his business. After that, she was befriended by the contractor Naickkar (upper caste man) in the workplace. He begins to roam around her, and he has kept her in a separate house despite his earlier marriage and his children. One day he quarrelled with her stating that she was keeping another man in her life. She gets angry and tears the photo taken together as a symbol of marriage. Then, he has gone. The contractor (Naickkar) keeps her for his sexual fulfillment will not show Dalit woman in the society as his wife. But she wants him to give a peaceful life by marrying her. Moreover, he has purposefully said to her that she keeps another man because he wants to leave her permanently. This is one of the tricks by man against women in the society. Finally, she determines that she can lead her life alone in the society. Dalit women do not care for widowhood, but the upper caste Brahmin widows wear white saree and are immersed in chanting Gayathiri mantra, etc. in the locked dark room. According to writer Sridara Ganesan, the name of the father (Head of the family) is missing in many family ration-cards of Tamil Nadu. But the society abuses the deserted Dalit woman on the assumption that they may have illicit affairs and they address them as 'Prostitutes' in the society. Everyone (including the upper caste) should know that it is not the fault of Dalit woman, but it is the social predicament of Dalit women in the society.

Sridara Ganesan presents Dalit re-territorialization on exposing the identity of a Dalit young woman. She is the daughter of Naickka and Paraiya woman. An old Dalit narrates the whole thing to the Dalit young woman about her father and mother. He states that the father is a rich man and runs a big tea stall in Tuticorin town. He is not surprised to see her daughter. He does not show any emotional bond towards her and he is not serious and does not even express any concern and care for his daughter. But she is overwhelmed to meet her father. Sridara Ganesan writes; “Athilum raththa uravu konda oruvarai, appa ennudaiya appa, engappa enru sollakudiyavarai enrellam ninaikaile avalathu manam kuthuugalam kondathu” (Ammavin Purusargal, 71). She is excited to meet her own father to see, to talk, and she can announce that he is her father. But rather he tells her, “Oh! Neethana athu?” (Ammavin Purusargal, 72). Are you the one? On hearing the words, she is dumbfounded, and she has become silent and does not wish to talk anything to him and she wishes to move quickly. Then, he asks the boy (worker) to keep a stool for her to sit there. He states, “Ongamma oru Parachi, Parachi puthiyai ketkathe. Nan theriyathanama irunththiten. Enna irunthalum, ‘nee oru Naickkatchi’ yaar ketalum em peyarai cholli, ‘Naickkar magalunnu cholli’” (Ammavin Purusargal, 73). Your mother is a Paraiya woman. Don’t listen to the advice of Paraiya woman. I was not aware of this. Despite that, you are a daughter of Naickka. Whoever asks you, tell my name. Tell them I am the daughter of Naickka. Listening to the words of Naickka, she has felt a gulp of fire in her stomach. She is averse to stand in front of him. The writer states, “Melum avalathu adivaitril neruppai vaithu chutta mathiri unarnthal” (Ammavin Purusargal, 73).

During the conversation, one woman of her age (his daughter) approaches him with her two children. She tells him that her husband loiters here and there and asks him to give any work for him in the tea stall. He agreed to that. Then she asks him who she is. He replied that she has come to ask for a job for his brother in our stall. She is frozen on hearing the words of the Naickka man (father). She does not wish to stand there and at the same time she wishes to give him a counter statement immediately. She replies, “Aamma ...aamma.... Nan oru Parachi mava, athilum puththi ketta Parachi mava, avalukku nalavathu oru purusanai kootikodunga. Aval ini oru pillaiyai peththu, enakku oru thambiyai kodukkattum, avana kondu vanthu, omma kadaiila velakki cherthu vidukiren ...” (Ammavin Purusargal, 74). Yes... yes.... I am the daughter of Paraiya and senseless Parachi’s daughter. Give her a fourth husband, afterwards, she will give me a brother by begetting. Then, I will disown him as a servant in your shop. Then, she has moved from there. She does not want the identity of the man who has fathered her but rather she wishes to be a Dalit woman in the society. Hence, the daughter reterritorializes her identity in the society.

Sridhara Ganesan also discusses re-territorialization of Dalit woman in the story, Sakkilichi. The Dalit woman who appears in the story re-territorializes her identity by escaping the sexual threat by the Upper caste man in the story, Sakkilichi. The word, Sakkilichi is used to abuse the low caste woman. She works for a Naickkar man with her husband. The Naickkar lives alone in his bungalow. He has many acres of land. He employs many servants in his land and in his house. One day he invites the Arunthathi woman for giving him sexual company for a night.

The Naickkar also promises that he will give her money and Jewells. On hearing the words from him, she has been upset. She does not know what to do and how to react to the situation. She cannot obey the Naickkar man because she and her husband work together for a long time and at the same time, she needs to protect herself from the particular action. She is mentally worried. Finally, she decides to go to Master's bungalow. On seeing her, the Naickkar is excited and started glorifying her beauty. She assures him that she will give him sexual company for the night. She asks him to remove his shirt. Finally, she has taken the castration rod and she has crushed his reproductive organ. Then, she escapes from the house. Sridhara Ganesan has created the Dalit woman courageously in the story. She has broken the stereotypes of Dalit womanhood. Hence, the Dalit woman re-territorializes her dignity and honour.

Sridhara Ganesan develops the Dalits' day today situation for Dalits' re-territorialization in the society. He has used the situation of Castrating pigs in the story. Castration of male pigs is quite common in breeding pigs. Dalit people are good at breeding pigs in their houses. Castration of male pigs is done because for increasing the weight of pigs. Sridhara Ganesan uses this situation in the story, Sakkilichi. The Dalit woman, having reached her home finds that her father in law takes Castration rods and he has crushed the reproductive organ of the male pig. Sridhara Ganesan reflects the day today situation of Dalits' life in the story, Sakkilichi. The Dalit woman then realizes the significance of using the castration rod for tackling the Naickkar in the house. Sridhara Ganesan writes, "Avarathu kilattu aan kuriil athai vaithu, orae amukku. Avvalavuthan, Naikkararadamirunthu Aaa innu sathan vanthathu. Athuvum kooda theruvil thirigira oru pottai naikkakka martra theru naiigal kulaikira saththathil edupadamale poirtru" (Sakkilichi, 105). Placing the Castration rod on his reproductive organ, give only one crush. He moans loudly. It is not audible in the cry of street male dogs. Sridhara Ganesan hence differs from other mainstream writers on using Dalits' life uniquely in the story. The upper caste people have a strong notion that Dalit people are dirty, and they live in slums. They breed pigs for their livelihood. Pigs are also dirty in nature. The upper caste people despise Dalits and Pigs. Hence, Sridhara Ganesan has successfully turned the Dalits' situation to reterritorialize Dalits' identity and honour in the society.

Sridhara Ganesan also underlines Dalit woman sensibility in the story, *Ammavin Purusargal* (Mother's husbands). Dalit woman sensibility is to capture the unique problems and the unique sensibility of Dalit women in the work of art. Dalit woman's sensibility lies in the title of the stories, the attitude of Dalit mother and the daughter and the emotional outburst of Dalit woman against the sexual threat. The title *Ammavin Purusargal* (Mother's Husbands) itself is drawn from Dalit's life. It is different from the titles of Tamil mainstream writings in Tamil Nadu. The writer is not at all ashamed on giving this title because the title is appropriate to Dalit woman. Moreover, the title is unique in expressing the problem of Dalit women in Tamil Nadu. The upper caste people never openly state the number of husbands for a woman.

Sridhara Ganesan's second story, Sakkilichi (Arunthathi woman) directly uses the name of a low Caste in the society. It is a bold attempt to name the story like this. The story seriously criticizes the people who make fun of Arunthathiyars in the society. At first, the present researcher underlines the attitude of the mother from the story. The respected Dalit mother always wishes her daughter's settlement. She never opens her mouth about her past life to her daughter, but she states, "Kadantha kaalathai partri pesathe. Ippa ullathai partri pesu, ippa ulla nillamaikalai partri pesu. Nallaikku nee sonthakkalkalla nikkanum. Appadi nippiya?" (Ammavin Purusargal, 68). Don't speak about the past. Speak about the present. Speak about the present situation. You must stand on your own legs. Will you? These words do not come from her mouth, but this is an outcome of her bitter experience in her life. She knows how to lead life in the caste discriminated society. She has the responsibility to guide her daughter in the proper direction.

The writer states that the daughter has never seen her mother tired of her life and she always keeps her face smiling. She does not have wickedness in her mind, and she does not even scold anyone in the society. She does even love the street dogs and cats. She always helps the old folks in her street. Sridhara Ganesan says, "Evvalavu peria kastathilum nilai kulaiyamattal. Thaangi kolval. Ammavin siriththa mugam maraathu. Ivvalavu nalla amnavukku oru ketta gunam undu. Oru sudu sol thaanga mattal. Antha illappai siramathudan sari seithu kolval. Amnavukku aaruthal solla vendiyathillai. Aval valainthulum thannai nimirthikollum thairiyam avalukku undu" (Ammavin Purusargal, 69-70). The mother will stand up whatever the difficulties she encounters. She endures it. She won't change her face. She has a bad habit of tolerating reproachful words. She gets adjusted to all these in her life. No need to tell her a word of consolation. She has the courage to rectify her mistake in her life. The attitude of the mother is expressed through a woman (who wishes to ask the Dalit mother to give her daughter in marriage with his son) visiting the family. The old man utters, "Periyavare athai sonar. Oru nal avar, salai vipathil adipattukidakkum pothu yarr enru theriyatha amma , oru auto pidiththu, avarai thookki vaithu, aaspathiriil serththu , uyirai kappatriya sambavam atthanaiyum vivariththar" (Ammavin Purusargal, 75). The old man said that he had met an accident. Her mother hired an auto and admitted him in the hospital and saved him without knowing his name. Finally, she settles her daughter in marriage with the good family. Hence, she re-territorializes her identity in the society.

Sridhara Ganesan also captures Dalit woman's sensibility very seriously in the story, Sakkilichi. The Dalit woman who appears in the story is very bold. She belongs to an Arunthathi caste. She is worried about the invitation of the old Naickkar for sexual company in his house. She has left the Naickkar's house without informing her husband. She cannot do anything in her home. She does not know what to do in the situation. She does not know if she has to convey the problem to her husband or not. She is perplexed in the situation. The writer writes; "Avalathu mugam surungi kidakku. Ippadi kettutane. Enna saiya? Yarukkittap poi solla?nnu ore kavalai" (Sakkilichi, 99). Her face has been wrinkled. He has asked such a thing. What to do? She is worried to whom to address this issue. She retrospectively thinks back and states, "Konjam kalara, alaga, latchanama

irunthal kilavan kooda vidamattukkaan? Udane vaannu kooppidukiran. Ithai mathiri Naickkatchiyai poi kooppida mudiyuma? Sakkilichinna avvalavu illakaramava potchu?” (Sakkilichi, 101). The old man does not even leave a pretty, beautiful and good structured woman. He has called her immediately. Can he invite a Naickkar woman to his bed? Is it easier to sleep with Sakkilichi? Finally, she has decided to be chaste and at the same time she has to cheat him at the high time. Then, she devised to act carefully to re-territorialize her dignity and honour in her family and in the society.

The present researcher feels that the polished habits, the civilized self-culture and the manners of the respected Dalit woman cannot be practiced in one generation but she has evolved her character from the enslavement of her people for many centuries under mainstream people and she acts gently with others in the society. It can be inferred that the Dalit mother being aware about the politics of caste and gender discrimination, disposes herself as a new Dalit woman in the society. She appears as a self-cultured woman and she breaks away the stereotype of Dalit womanhood. She challenges the upper caste’s values and culture by redefining her identity in the society.

The paper highlights the re-territorialization of Dalit women’s caste identity and their cultural identity by discussing their virtual action in their encounters in their life.

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**Exploration of Diasporic Sense and Sensibility in
Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Queen of Dreams***

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Literature - Exploring the Nuances*

S. Ancy Jeba Sundari
Ph.D. Research Scholar
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai- 625001

Dr. (Mrs.) M.R. Rashila
Research Guide
Head and Associate Professor
Sourashtra College,
Pasumalai
Madurai- 626004

Abstract

Exploring diasporic sense and sensibility has always been a challenging venture. There is an everlasting confrontation between cultural and religious differences when it comes to Immigrant Literature. Decoding the differences beyond its boundaries would be anchoring in assimilation of two worlds and two cultures. Staying away from one's country for different reasons will be accepted by immigrants physically but their unconscious mind reminds them of their nostalgic past which is deeply connected with their homeland. As an immigrant, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni herself is well aware of all such complexities of mind and Immigrants' approach to the newly adopted country. She has explicated diasporic sense and sensibility in all her works, especially in *Queen of Dreams*.

Queen of Dreams (2004) is about the settlers of a Bengali family in America who struggle to mingle with the new land's awaiting challenges to have a safe and fearless livelihood. Divakaruni has delineated how Indian immigrant women attempt to reconstruct their identity by encountering multiple cultures and experiences through her protagonists. She has defined the identity of Mrs. Gupta- first-generation Indian Immigrant mother, Rakhi, second- generation American-born daughter and Jona, third- generation American-born daughter. They are torn between their past and present life and their dilemma in adopting the new land's life-style that results in finding new ways and hope to lead a prospective life.

Keywords: Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *Queen of Dreams*, Diaspora, Immigrant Literature, identity, multiple cultures and experiences.

Exploring diasporic sense and sensibility has always been a challenging venture. There is an everlasting confrontation between cultural and religious differences when it comes to Immigrant Literature. Decoding the differences beyond its boundaries would be anchoring in assimilation of two worlds and two cultures. Staying away from one's country for different reasons will be accepted by immigrants physically but their unconscious mind reminds them of their nostalgic past which is deeply connected with their homeland. As an immigrant, Chitra

Banerjee Divakaruni herself is well aware of all such complexities of mind and Immigrants' approach to the newly adopted country.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a prize-winning novelist, is a leading figure in South Asian-American women Diasporic literature. Most of her novels including *Sister of My Heart* (1999), *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *Queen of Dreams* (2004) and *Oleander Girl* (2012) are used to explore female's suppression regarding diasporic identity and familial bonds- intricate, intertwined, and intimate in all stages of life in an alien land. In general, irrespective of gender, every person has to interlock their identity with their past roots. Divakaruni has explicated diasporic sense and sensibility in *Queen of Dreams* meticulously. Barry describes *Queen of Dreams* that "uses the past to read the present, revealing the politics of our own society by what we choose to emphasise or suppress of the past" (*Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* 178).

Queen of Dreams (2004) is about the settlers of a Bengali family in America who struggle to mingle with the new land's awaiting challenges to have a safe and fearless livelihood. Divakaruni has delineated how Indian immigrant women attempt to reconstruct their identity by encountering multiple cultures and experiences through her protagonists. She has defined the identity of Mrs. Gupta, first - generation Indian Immigrant mother and a dream interpreter by profession, Rakhi, second- generation American-born daughter and Jona, third- generation American-born daughter. They are torn between their past and present life and their dilemma in adopting the new land's lifestyle that results in finding new ways and hope to lead a prospective life.

Having the first-hand experience of the Indian diaspora, Chitra Banerjee presents the Indian female diaspora and the reasons of estranged relationships, complexities of mind, the plight of immigrants, and their tremendous steps to reconcile with an adopted country. They are having an urge to create an identity amid in cultural and religious differences. Making an effort to merge with utterly new surroundings would be resulting in the reconciliation of misunderstanding, mistrust, depression, estrangement, longing for one's own country, economic, cultural, social and political differences. Going through all these difficult phases is an acid test to the immigrants in the process of amalgamation at their beginning level.

Rakhi, the protagonist of the novel *Queen of Dreams* always aspires to attain a unique identity like her mother Mrs. Gupta, a dream interpreter who is the first- generation immigrant. Especially Rakhi faces many struggles to find her Indian root and true identity after her mother's death. She does not know anything about her Bengali Indian culture as she has been brought up in America. The thought of her own country is in her imaginary world as if she fantasies to visit India and communicating with Indian people. Rakhi admits, "I hungered for all things Indian because my mother never spoke of the country she has grown up in — just as she never spoke of her past" (QD 58). Rakhi is also longing to connect with Pan-Indian culture because as an Indian Immigrant, she wants to create her memories with her rootedness.

Amalgamating with the new milieu, initially, immigrants are perplexed to respond to hybrid ethnic identities such as Socio-cultural norms, ethnoreligious affinities, economic issues and re-negotiation of their identity. There is no place for personal desire during the process of cultural negotiation. Their state is well- explained by Agnew as “Cultural differences, or the sense of being an outsider or a foreigner, can make the individual feel alienated and heighten the feelings of sadness, nostalgia, and create a longing for home” (66). It is evident in the case of Mrs. Gupta who never shared her memories and felt alienation though she is a dream teller. She has experienced double marginalization because of her gift she isolated herself from her family and as a first- generation immigrant; it is very difficult to adopt the alien soil and she cannot dream at all.

In the process of seeking quest and thirst for identity shatters familial bond. Mrs. Gupta concentrates only on creating her own identity as a Bengali diasporic dream- teller yet she does not care for her family and their feelings. Mr.Gupta tells Rakhi about her relationship with family after her death,

‘Year later after she died, my father would say, “Not true, she didn’t love me, not really, she never let me get that closer, the place right at the center of her – that was reserved for her dreams, gods or demons, whoever they were, she never shared that with anyone Not even you,...and I would be forced to admit that he too was right”. (QD 8)

Mrs. Gupta’s dream journal is the only thing that can be associated with the memories of her family members. She can be remembered only by the dream journal even after her death. From Rakhi’s childhood itself, she undergoes alienation in her house. When Rakhi is eight years old, she asks her mother “Why don’t you sleep with dad? I kept asking, or at least with me, like Mallika’s mother does? Don’t you love us?” (QD 6) and her mother answers that though she loves them, she can’t sleep with them because she is a dream teller and she cannot concentrate if someone is in bed with her” (QD 7). As a child, Rakhi is confused, whether her mother loves them or her profession of the dream interpreter.

Growing up as an introvert and pessimist results in distorted familial relationships due to a lack of concern of her parents on her. Even she keeps herself away from her husband Sonny and daughter Jonaki. Though Rakhi and Sonny are separated, her husband is willing to help her after her mother’s death. At that time, Rakhi realizes the importance of family which is the paramount strength and support at times of trials and tribulations. As a third-generation Indian American, Jonaki never questions about her ancestral history or she never shows any interest in knowing that nostalgic past of her grandparents. But Jona inherits her Indian grandmother’s magical gift of dream telling. Both Jona and Rakhi never fully understand the potential of this gift. But it goes to the third-generation Indian American who does not know the traditions in memories associated with it.

An Americanised version of Indianness plays an inevitable role throughout the novel. Gupta's family finds it difficult to come out of the Indianness even though they are comfortably settled in America. To keep their Indian identity, they have owned a chai House (tea shop) in Berkeley, California. They never want to forget their past and they always cherish to be a part of Indian culture and tradition. Mr. Gupta experiences his nostalgic feelings through Indian food and music which are a pivotal part and parcel of living aids of any human's identities. Wenyang explains Food as an identity in his work *Eating Identities: Reading food in Asian American literature* as "food and eating occupy a significant place in the formation of [South] Asian American subjectivity" (8).

Regarding Rakhi, she struggles with the mixed feeling of insecurity and individuality with the notion of exploring her true colour. Though she is not able to experience her Indian identity, she tries to express it through her paintings in an alien space.

The turmoil between the ethnic outsiders and insiders in migrant communities is a worldwide conflict in all countries. The innocent immigrants are being tortured by natives in many ways though consciously or unconsciously. It is quite evident when the Americans have brutally attacked Rakhi and her father and they try to explain to them that they are born and brought up in America. Their reply is the naked reality of immigrants is not accepted yet they try to mingle with natives. Patriots never allow them to talk and spits on their faces and said, "You ain't no American! It's fuckers like you who planned this attack on the innocent people of this country" (QD 267).

Another major incident, the 9/11 tragedy makes Rakhi and her family feeling insecure about their existence which questions their safety as they are really in their own nest or not. When the storm strikes, the results of the disaster instigate them to comprehend their root is not in America. They are severely injured due to the racial attacks on Muslims and other brown-skinned people by American people. This terrible incident demolishes her self-confident and she undergoes a period of self-doubt on herself. She questions "But if I wasn't American, then what was I?". The statement, "You ain't no American" ceaselessly rings in Rakhi's mind. After that incident, they come across,

Since the assault at the Kurma house, she'd been too afraid to go anywhere alone at night. Things she'd hardly noticed before – a group of people waiting at an intersection, footsteps behind her as she walked to her car, someone asking her if she had the time – loomed in her mind, throwing out monstrous shadows. Just thinking about them made her breath fast and shallow. (QD 299-300)

Rakhi's ardent words are an instance of her perspective on America is very positive, "I don't have to put up a flag to prove that "I am American! I'm American already. I love this country" (QD 264). But they have been stigmatized as Indian- American Diasporic people which cannot be changed though they want to shed off the label. Yet they find all possible ways to adopt into the new soil by accepting the reality as it is.

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Oppression of the Oppressed: A Study of Vijay Tendulkar's *Kanyadaan*

M. Gayatri, Research Scholar
Dept. of English and Foreign Languages
Alagappa University, Karaikudi

Dr. S. Subbiah
Former Head of the Department
Dept. of English and Foreign Languages
Alagappa University, Karaikudi

Abstract

India named for Unity in diversity has not only diversified culture, but also disparate caste and class united together as the different beads in a string. The word 'caste' originates from the Portuguese – *casta* meaning 'race' or 'descent'. In India the hierarchal order of the castes differs and changes from place to place and from one region to another. The social group to which an individual belongs by birth decides his caste and the order in which the castes are arranged decides the oppressed and the oppressor.

Vijay Tendulkar, the social critic of traditional India, penned his *Kanyadaan* with special focus on socialism dedicated to the cause of the upliftment of the untouchables or Dalits. Though belonging to the upper class Marathi family, Tendulkar revolts through his writing for the social justice and political equality of the lower classes. Although his *Kanyadaan* centralises the mismatch marriage of Arun Athavale (a Shudra by birth) and Jyoti (a Brahman by birth) and several other issues, Tendulkar appears to be highly focused on the inner Psyche of the 'marginalised'.

Keywords: Vijay Tendulkar, *Kanyadaan*, Tradition, Caste, Dalit, Marginalised, Psyche

Class and Caste are so intricately intertwined in our country that it is solemnised as the "part of the individual's mind and contents of his conscience". Though we have stepped in the 72nd year of Independence, the suppression of the upper castes and the sufferings of the Dalit and the marginalised is still a case under eradication. For decades, the socialists and the politicians instead of downgrading the issue of inequality seem to have a cold snap under the issue. Vijay Tendulkar's *Kanyadaan* (Giving away of bride or Gift of a daughter) (1983), is a at him when it was staged in Marathi. Recalling the event, Tendulkar says, "You are honouring me with the Saraswati Samman today for the play for which I once had a slipper hurled at me. Perhaps it is the

fate of the play to have earned both this honour and that insult. As its creator, I respect both verdicts.”

Casting seven main characters, *Kanyadaan* is a two act drama containing five scenes in all, each placed in the locale of Puna. Nath Devalikar (MLA) and Seva are an old socialist couple actively involved in their political work. The activist couple have a twenty year old daughter Jyoti and a twenty three year old son Jayaprakash. Jyoti falls in love with the highly talented and educated Dalit boy, Arun Athavale. Jyoti announces that she has agreed to marry a Dalit boy and thereby showing acceptance to her father’s idealism who preached her Gandhian philosophy, ideals and morals. Nath is overjoyed when he hears the brave decision of his daughter in marrying the underprivileged Arun, whereas Seva revolts and Jayaprakash also stands by his mother’s side. In support to her views, Seva points to the class difference and puts forward the opinion that Jyoti should be careful in marrying because it is the women who suffer in any relationship. She says “My anxiety is not over his being a dalit. You know very well that Nath and I have been fighting untouchability tooth and nail... You have been brought up in a specific culture. To erase or to change all this overnight is just not possible. He is different in every way. You may not be able to handle it.” (13)

Nath bothers least about Seva’s viewpoints and takes pride of the view that his generation has broken the shackles of tradition and has established grounds for both caste and gender equity. The only idea that baffles him is when Jyoti frankly admits that she isn’t marrying Arun because of love but to prove that she doesn’t look down on him as an untouchable. When Jyoti brings Arun home, he is seen feeling uncomfortable in the big house of Jyoti. He asks Jyoti not to leave him as if he has entered the lion’s den. His discomfort reveals the marginality that he has undergone throughout his life which makes him feel suffocated and nervous. He emotionally takes us to his background when he says, “I feel uncomfortable in big houses... if you see my father’s hut you’ll understand. Ten of us big and small, lived in that eight feet by ten feet. The heat of our bodies to warm us in winter. No clothes on our back, no food in our stomach, but we felt very safe.” (16).

Arun is now an educated individual who knows the nooks and corners, and the ups and downs of the society where he lives. He has created a self for himself, but the inner “Self” is still maligned and suppressed with the thoughts of marginalised which makes him utter Jyoti that her romantic world is entirely different from the real world. She cannot mix up in the scavenger’s world which evokes only disgust to the civilised men. Whereas Jyoti regards her marriage to him as a challenge, a forward thought and a progressive act, Arun keeps on degrading her challenges with his difference. He shoots foul language and makes excuses with a moving speech on Dalit- “Our grandfathers and great grandfathers used to roam, barefoot, miles and miles, in the heat, in the rain, day and night...till the rags on their butt fell apart...used to wander shouting ‘Johaar, Maayi-baap! Sir-Madam, sweeper!’ and their calls polluted the brahmins’ ears” (17). Throughout their conversation Arun keeps on distinguishing the lifestyle and attitudes of both the classes (the shravana and the shudras). He says, “How can there be any give and take between our ways and your fragrant, ghee spread, wheat bread culture?”(17) He adds further that reflects the psyche of

the downtrodden thus, “Will you marry me and eat stinking bread with spoilt dal in my father’s hut? Without vomiting? Can you shit every day in our slum’s village toilet like my mother?” (17).

Arun takes advantage of Jyoti’s determination to marry him in spite of his foul behaviour. He sets his rights on Jyoti as a double domineering agent-(1) as a husband or a male (2) as a human who was oppressed due to the so-called caste conflicts. The gender violence and class/caste violence instinct in Arun finds these as his right to abuse and torment his wife physically and emotionally and hence he beats and twists Jyoti’s arm as a potential wife-beater. The sadism in him reflects when he sings, “*Hasli re hasli, ek baamaneen fasli*- It’s a jolly game, caught a Brahmin dame.” (18) This attitude of Arun, Prasad says, “is as much an expression of attitudes of the character as a provocative taunt directed at the conservative caste bound audiences” (Prasad 14). Hence Tendulkar shifts the focus from class-caste divide and problems to that of attitudes of gender and oppressive behaviour.

Seva makes it very clear to Jyoti that marital (personal) life cannot gel up with social reformation and in rescuing the victim we ourselves will turn victims to their age old oppression. But Jyoti dismisses her mother’s anxiety by adding cheer through her self confidence in handling Arun. Finally, Seva and Jeyaprakash are made to go with Jyoti’s decision of marrying Arun. Nath and Jyoti wish to put an end to the caste based society whereas the illusion cracks their wishes and makes them wake up to the reality of life that “Apples are apples and oranges are oranges” (Rao 651). The marriage of Arun and Jyoti is seen as a *challenge* by everyone. Seva and Jeyaprakash see it as a challenge that must be dropped but Nath and Jyoti see it as a challenge which must not be declined as they are on the verge of promoting reformation in the traditional society and the failure to which “would go against their principles and be one more treacherous nail in the coffin of caste- equality.” (Prasad14) Arun keeps on insisting Jyoti about the consequences of their marriage. There would be no loss to him, he says, “It’s your marriage which will fizzle out” (18). He sees Jyoti representing the brahmin community whom he has to subdue and conquer with his Dalit masculinity.

We see Jyoti married in the beginning of Act II and her family dipped in turmoil and worried about the life of Jyoti. Arun comes home every night taking alcohol and beats his wife heartlessly as an illiterate would do to his wife. Not having a house of his own and unable to stay in his in-laws’ house, Arun takes refuge in his friends’ house one after the other with Jyoti. The unsatisfactory marital relationship and the stormy and violent behaviour of her husband makes Jyoti arrive at a decision of separating from Arun. The seemingly drunkard Arun arrives at the door of his in-laws and tries to pacify Jyoti by blaming his generation and the suppression thus-

When have I claimed that I am civilized and cultured like your people? From childhood I have seen my father come drunk every day, and beat my mother half dead, seen her cry her heart out. Even now I hear the echoes of her broken sobs. No one was there to wipe her tears... What am I but the son of scavenger. We don’t know the non-violent ways of Brahmins like you. (43-44)

Jyoti surrenders to these emotional words and Arun reclaims his wife. Even Arun's lamentation moves Nath who understands that he (Arun) is regretting and so when they leave, Nath feels happy about his daughter who has made the marriage go without any obstruction. He says, "Jyoti, I feel so proud of you, the training I gave you has not been in vain" (45).

Arun's autobiography gets published and receives exceptional reviews but he who writes a beautiful autobiography, describes the humiliation he has undergone with extraordinary sensitivity, continues to torment his pregnant wife mercilessly. Jyoti's family is made to take all this harshness quietly and Nath is even blackmailed to chair a meeting to praise the book which he has to admit is brilliant. At the end, Nath whimpers his faith in Gandhian principle, idealism and humanity. He feels defeated as his experiment has failed in spite of offering his daughter in the cruel game of matrimony. But Jyoti commits herself to be the wife of Dalit since she chose the path and there can't be any return to which she is fully devoted. She subsumes herself to her suffering, to her husband's foiling over the class conflict and wife – beating wrath. She justifies to her father that casteism is not a barrier between two souls as love governs the world.

Kanyadaan fairly represents the view that cleansing of society and dusting the rage and oppression of people is not possible. Through the protagonist, Tendulkar asserts that like Jews who have created a minimalistic state, formerly victimised people tend to become victimisers in turn. "The oppressed are overjoyed when they get a chance to oppress others" (51) and hence yesterday's victims turn today's victimizer.

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Women and Marginalization in Jaishree Misra's *A Scandalous Secret*

R. Karpagam, Research Scholar
Dept. of English and Foreign Languages
Alagappa University, Karaikudi

Dr. P. Madhan
Associate Professor
Dept. of English and Foreign Languages
Alagappa University, Karaikudi

Abstract

The Indian culture nurtures and highly values the family integrity and so the stretching of traditional values becomes a part of an individual's dreams in life. Hence in India westernization of the culture becomes a social taboo. The walls of confinement become a part of married woman's life, the fascination towards one's own dream and the related decisions shatter due to the preservation of culture.

Jaishree Misra's, novel *A Scandalous Secret* portrays the pressure and mental conflict faced by the protagonist Neha due to the conventional culture. Neha, obsessed in love with her Professor, surrenders herself to his lust. The early pregnancy of the former and the distressing state makes her desert her new-born daughter to an English couple. The society where premarital sex and maternity is considered a sin makes her abandon her child and marry an Indian according to the wishes of her parents. The concealed relationship with her daughter makes her stand between truth and trauma and makes her marginalised in terms of cultural ethics. This paper will elaborately deal with 'Women and Marginalisation' as it is portrayed in Jaishree Misra's fictional works.

Keywords: Jaishree Misra, *A Scandalous Secret*, Women, Society, Cultural ethics, Westernisation, marginalisation

Jaishree Misra was born in New Delhi to a Malayali family in 1961. In 2000 she started her writing career. All her novels give awareness to the people, particularly women. Her novel *A Scandalous Secret* deals with the story of a woman, who gave birth to a child in her teens. Her

daughter was born with special needs, led her to the realm of Special Education in 1990. At that time, she left for England to do a post graduate diploma at the institute of Education in London.

Misra's novels deal with female predicament, not only about female sufferings but also about how female children affects. She takes efforts to give solution to many problems described in her novels. Through her novels, she is interested in teaching lesson to the readers. Misra has relentlessly campaigns for women to abandon their inferiority complexes and to be proud of being born as a woman. She teaches women to shed their submissive attitudes and ways to deal with life and develop as women who have increased genuine strengthening to confront any sort of test throughout everyday life.

Jaishree Misra, a prominent writer in English literature is the great niece of the late Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, who is the famous Malayalam writer. She has worked for several years in the Child Care Department of Social Services in Buckinghamshire. She has also worked as a film classifier at the British Board of Film Classification in London, England.

Jaishree Misra offers real life situations and her characters are real human beings with soul. Naturally, their path to achieve deliverance is not a flower bed to walk on but a thorny path filled with obstruction, mind break-down and ruins. Only by overcoming clogs and hindrance, Jaishree Misra's women achieve freedom in the real sense. She does not wish to be the obedient mouthpiece of male writers.

Though Jaishree Misra does not give any alternatives to the problems that are faced by Indian women, the final decision of her novel presents some hope to the readers. Misra is trying to grant some awareness to women through her novel to free them from this society, which treats them as slaves. She is well known for her realistic exposure of the problems faced by the highbrow urban women of Kerala, Delhi and London.

Jaishree Misra's seventh work of fiction is *A Scandalous Secret* and the third in her 'Secret' series. Neha Chaturvedi, who appears as the protagonist of this novel, lives a life that is straight out of a fairytale. Married to the rich, influential and highly dignified Sharat Chaturvedi, Neha is a blissfully happy woman and the envy of many in her family and friends. At the age of eighteen, as a young student, she went to Oxford for a degree but left unceremoniously after a year.

Today she has left her past completely behind her and is now totally involved in the new life she and Sharat have created. Sharat, her husband, is 'her rock'. Riches, glamour, and grandeur she has it all. Yet, she also has an eighteen year old secret tucked away in the inner recesses of her heart – 'a scandalous secret' that she sternly does not permit herself to dwell upon till a letter with a British postage arrives unexpectedly to tear away the fabric of her composure and equanimity forever.

Sonya, the daughter Neha forsook and gave up for adoption as an eighteen-year old student in Oxford, is the second protagonist of the story. Adopted and brought up by the loving Richard and Laura Shaw, Sonya has enjoyed a warm and protected childhood and is the apple of her parents' eyes. As a child Sonya has 'wanted for nothing'. Her parents have given her everything within their modest reach- including ballet and horse riding lessons. Though an integral part of this loving English family, questions about her true parentage have been 'like a missing piece in a jigsaw puzzle'.

At eighteen she is a confident young lady, standing poised to take off in her career, having already gained admission to Oxford. But being eighteen also grants her the legal right, under U.K. laws, to trace her roots. Thus, Sonya has traced her birth mother, Neha Chaturvedi to Delhi, India and is set to go there to meet Neha and find answers to questions that have haunted her all her young life. Sonya writes to Neha to inform her of her imminent arrival.

Neha's golden world comes crashing down. She is conflict ridden and a wreck. Should she confide in Sharat? Would Sharat ever understand her? Would their relationship survive this new revelation? Would Sonya advent spell doom for their marriage, their social standing, and Sharat's political ambitions?

Sonya comes to Delhi with Estelle, her best friend of thirteen years, the owner of the B&B they stay in, the garrulous Mrs. Mahajan introduces them to Keshav, their driver and guide and Sonya finds herself attracted to him.

Neha goes to Ananda to calm the tremendous emotional anguish in her mind where she meets Arif, an elderly lawyer. He plays a pivotal role in helping Neha to relive the agony of her past and realize that she was not entirely to shame for all that had happened in Oxford eighteen years back. It is the peace of Ananda and Arif's counsel that convinces Neha that she would fight circumstances tooth and nail to save her marriage to Sharat. Arif also plays a crucial role in helping Sharat to come to terms with the sudden upheaval in his life and put things in perspective. Neha's confrontation with Sonya, their conflict and its eventual resolution follow as does Neha's confrontation with Sharat.

Marginalization can be of different types based on colour, race, religion, culture, gender and ethnicity. Women are marginalized right from their birth based on their gender. Jaishree Misra presents the struggle and misery faced by women generally. She further depicts the success of her women characters overcoming their struggles.

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The Ideology on Nationalism Modelled with a Utilitarian Objective for the Critics: Rabindranath Tagore and Frantz Fanon in Their Essays on Nationalism

Magdelene Aneetee Browne H

Research Associate
School of Advanced Sciences (SAS)
VIT Chennai, Tamilnadu, India
aneetee.93@gmail.com

Dr. Patchainayagi S.

Assistant Professor
School of Advanced Sciences (SAS)
VIT Chennai, Tamilnadu, India
patchainayagi.s@gmail.com

Abstract

The existence of an individual is confined within a dual imagination of either affirming national identities or the desire to transcend themselves to a global and a transnational alliance of economy and culture. Rabindranath Tagore and Frantz Fanon break the stereotypical construction of the idea on Nationalism with their unique approach towards building an economically strong and developed nation, moving beyond emotional boundaries. Tagore aims for the economic recovery of the country under the tag of nationalism and Fanon discusses about the power that shifted to the middle class revolutionaries from the colonizers after independence and their deficiency in ruling over the county. Both the anti-imperialistic critics bring out a different perspective on nationalism in India.

Keywords: Rabindranath Tagore, Frantz Fanon, Nationalism, Economic development, Neocolonialism, Anti-imperialism.

The eminent post-colonial critic Gayatri Spivak articulates nationalism “a reverse or displaced legitimation of colonialism,” doomed to repeat the “epistemic violence” of the colonialism which it had ones rejected. Meanwhile throughout history people have been in close association or emotionally bound with their native soil, the tradition and culture that grows innately and to establish an authority over their territory. It was only after the 18th century that the concept of nationalism assorted to a sentiment molding, public and private life becomes one of the greatest or even the one of the major determining factors of the history of the modern era.

Nationalism is often considered as an out-dated topic of discussion because of its characteristics that is universal with a dynamic vitality and at times it is mistaken as a permanent factor in political behavior. Later in the 19th century the word ‘nationalism’ was used in the facets of justifying the constructions that the revolutionaries created under the label of imperialism and jingoism (aggressive form of patriotism), and xenophobia in countries such as The United States, Italy, Great Britain and France.

In the 20th century a few scholars also endorsed the rise of fascism to nationalism which was taken to an extreme during the same period but in the later period of the 20th century, the term nationalism was often used to label the indigenous movements which strived to seek Equality, Autonomy and Recognition. On a broad-spectrum nationalism was commonly used to describe the way the people of the country define themselves. Nationalism fundamentally sorts people into two— one either is or is not a member of “my nation.” Nationalism prospers through the use of such elements as national folklore, symbols, heroes, sports, music, belief, and the idea that there is a national identity or character.

The postcolonial space encompasses important key concepts and themes under history and memory along with the viability of the nation-state and the perilous concerns of nationalism and its nation. Postcolonial authors or critics mostly channelize their focus on massacre, ferocity, oppression of the guiltless individuals and the humiliations they face under the grounds of religion, caste, and race. Amitav Gosh, Salman Rushdie, V.S Naipaul, Shashi Tharoor, Rohinton Mistry are a few authors who move within such focus areas.

The significance and implication of a nation or nationalism in this situation becomes extremely problematized. This ideology has to be either celebrated or the importance should be denied towards the boundaries or the discourse that is constructed around it. The individual’s life is in a constant dilemma of asserting national identities towards his nation or to transcend themselves to a global transnational culture and economy. An unknown poet records “The dream of seeing all human life, despite its immense variety, as one, and the planet earth as one opens space for nothing else, but limitless personal liberty can only belong to the third imagination” to a poet. The liberal thinkers’ dream was that the idea of nationalism would progressively get diluted in years’ time, which incidentally finds expression in one of Gellner’s statements taken out of context which reads as “trade flows across frontiers: the life of the intellect ignores frontiers; and

with the progress of learning, wealth and industry, the prejudices and superstitions and fears which engender frontiers would decline” (Gellner Thought 147). This too has remained unfulfilled.

This article describes the protest feelings of two writers, Rabindranath Tagore and Frantz Fanon—who were fierce critics of nationalism even as they wished fervently for the success of national liberation movements. This ambiguous attitude towards nationalism was reinforced by compound four-dimensional imaginaries of threat, in which the freedom of the political communities with which they identified was perceived to be threatened both from outside and within. As anti-imperialists, they made the case for subaltern nationalism; but an anxiety about the oppressions inherent in nationalist mobilization also led them to a critique of nationalism. Tagore, Fanon and Edward Said identified nationalism as a transitory stage through which the subaltern resistance passes to recover its identity and sense of self that the imperialism has trampled under the foot.

Rabindranath Tagore came up with his contradicting idea of nation and nation state to share his deep anxiety that he has undergone within himself during the 1910s-1930s. The three novels—*Gora* (1910), *Char Adhyay* (1934) and *Ghare Baire* (1916)—where he ripped apart the extortions of exaggerated male stereotypical behaviors such as emphasis on aggression, sexuality and physical strength, reflect his ‘dis-ease’ with nationalism. Tagore, in his ‘*Essays on Nationalism*’ (1917), confronts that Indians replicate the concept of nationalism from the west and he also quotes that it has been an “organizing selfishness of nationalism”. Tagore perceived that, “India never had a real sense of nationalism” and that India’s reverence for ‘God’ and the ideal of ‘humanity’ need not be replaced by the European concept of a limited ‘national identity’. Rabindranath Tagore’s writing always had an affinity with the non-sectarian humanist/modernist position.

Tagore’s idea of post-nationalism or anti-nationalism has taken a slight diversion from Gandhi and created ripples between the two in spite of the philosophical affinity they shared. Freedom was the ultimate goal for both the critics. Tagore believed that Gandhi’s political reflex of ‘swaraj’ and ‘satyagraha’ will result in “violent and dark forces” (Kaustav Chakraborty 2017). So, he always thought that such a kind of struggle would not lead to “liberation of the souls” (Kaustav Chakraborty 2017). On the contrary, Tagore’s understanding of nationalism appears a “passion without compassion”. The unsympathetic negative bond between the self and other made him an easy target to criticism in parts of the world like Russia, Germany, Spain, USA, Yugoslavia, Poland, Turkey and Japan along with a long section of the west.

There was a sense of ambiguity in Tagore’s approach towards evaluation of nationalism. The nationalist claimed that “nation is greater than people”, but Tagore found it to be a dehumanizing and a demoralizing act to showcase self-sacrifice for the sake of a nation. However, he considered the “power of self-sacrifice” and the “moral faculty of sympathy and co-operation” structure as “the guiding spirit of social vitality”.

In the essay 'Nationalism in India', Tagore unconditionally indicates that his "opposition is not to any one particular nation or the other, but his opposition is to the general idea to all nations". 'Nation' according to Tagore is an "organized power structure" that the nation acquires for itself and not "a community" or a "fellow being" as described stereotypically. It is only by trapping of the political power that a nation can get together. To be precise, for Tagore nation is always a 'nation-state'.

Nation is not just any union of people but a political or economic union. The organized mass is designed for a mechanical purpose that has a specific drive. For him the nation is fine tuned for a specific purpose of creating maximum economic profit. The political unit of nation-state is inherently connected with the capitalist mode of economy and its profit making imperatives. This perspective of his cannot be entirely rejected because it's the practice of the west as well. According to Tagore, this idea of nation-state in organizing the human community for the purpose of material production and profit-making transforms an individual into one-dimensional man whose only reason for existence would turn out to be accumulation of wealth.

This concept of Tagore is where the problem arises; humans seem materialized losing the nature of altruism and self-sacrifice. This creates an imbalance within the nature of human being, Tagore in his 'Essay on Nationalism' quotes, "In all our physical appetites, we recognize a limit. But in the economic world, our appetites follow no other restrictions, but those of supply and demand, which can be artificially fostered, affording individuals opportunities for indulgence, in an endless feast of grossness" (Tagore, 2018, p. 50). So, when this economic appetite is fostered, it takes away all the sense of moral limit and makes him incomplete. However, the idea of capitalism is never spelt out clearly, but it always remained subtle.

Frantz Fanon, on the other side of the square, writing about economic criticism of middle class-led nationalism is more visible. Fanon being a French citizen supported the Algerian movement towards anti-colonialism against the French colonial rule. He authored two very influential books, *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, both being canonical to the post-colonial realm of study.

Nationalism, according to Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*, is said to be failing in achieving liberation across the boundaries of class as its aim is primarily of the colonized bourgeoisie "a privileged middle class who perhaps seeks to defeat the prevailing colonial rule only to usurp its place of dominance and surveillance over the working-class, the lumpenproletariat" (A McClintock - Social text, 1992). The middle class plays an active role in anti-colonial struggle, the moment the nation becomes independent they cease to become the revolutionary class. The process of European colonialism of Africa was guided by the instruction of the industrial revolution that took place there. The African colonies were used as procurers of raw materials to feed the industries in the colonial mother country. Within this scheme a colonial periphery, be it Africa or India, remained industrially deficient compared to the metropolitans. The periphery was both the market and procurers, but the motherland or the metropolitan remained the

producer as it grew higher and higher economically. Fanon consistently argued that the middle class after independence failed to reorganize the production of the products that was depending on the mother country, rather the middle class having fought off the European colonizers come to occupy the very position of the departed colonizers which brought in a picture practicing the colonizers' rule without the colonizer as they did not dismantle the colonial mode of economic mode of exploitation. It continues to remain suppliers to the mother country even after independence.

This economic relationship between periphery and mother county is called neocolonialism. The economic exploitation continues even after colonization because of improper organization of the middle class in the name of nationalism.

Fanon is in opposition of this idea of nationalism. Fanon blames the intellectual middle class and their laziness as the notable and main reason for the failure of nationalism in India. "The native bourgeoisie rises to power only insofar as it seeks to replicate the bourgeoisie of the "mother country" that sustains colonial rule" (Fanon 1963).

Rabindranath Tagore and Frantz Fanon through their discourse on nationalism bring out a unique perspective on Nationalism and how it is being misinterpreted most of the times. They critiqued nationalism because of their anxiety in the mobilization of nationalism, which was intact with oppression, making a case for subaltern nationalism. The very nature and purpose as an institution is the prime objection to nationalism for Tagore. Nationalism being a social construction, or a mechanical organization is modeled with certain utilitarian objective in mind, makes it even more palpable for Tagore: "Construction is for a purpose, it expresses our wants; but creation is for itself, it expresses our very beings". As a construction, grounded on needs and wants rather than truth and love, it could not, Tagore advocates, contribute much to the moral/spiritual fulfillment of mankind. According to Tagore, race was more of a natural entity, and therefore an acceptable, social unit than the nation itself. He envisioned a world like a "rainbow" in which all the races would live together in amity and harmony, keeping their "distinct characteristics but all attached to the stem of humanity by the bond of love."

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Untouchability, Casteism and Disrespect of Woman in the Poetical Works of Meena Kandasamy

S. Suma, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. Scholar (PT)
Department of English & Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai-21

Abstract

This paper proves Meena Kandasamy, magically touched upon such disputable issues as untouchability and casteism, disrespect of woman and apostasy the woman's face in the Indian society and sums up how her poems reveal the effects of patriarchal ascendancy and social conditioning on women. As a new woman she raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian women. 'New Woman' can sustain in this society by exhibiting an insight into the way of women in India.

Key words: Meena Kandasamy, untouchability, casteism, society, marginality, subjugation, inequality

Meena Kandasamy opens stage to defend themselves and act as a liberate women from their subservient position with the potency of cognizance to give them a transformative action against patriarchal rules, political structures and caste system of society, through her women characters pictured in her poetical works. Meena Kandasamy's major concern is to women especially the marginalised Dalit women to get vista and knowledge about their pathetic condition. As a new woman she raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian women. Her poetry provides a visual impact; it is eminent for present generation to leads their lives with overfilling awareness for the readers. She breaks the long silence that has circumvented Indian traditional women, their feminine experience and their female world. The term 'New woman' tending to imply something to suggest that women have their vista over on life based on the experience, this transformed every individual's attitudes in their lifespan. This is the concept were undertaken by new budding women writers based on the marginalisation of women and try to establish the women's empowerment. The new powerful woman who comes more with self-confidence, adept competitive, and self-guiding and she reclaims her individual identity and redefined in the brightness of her feminine sensibility and awareness. The sparkling idea of 'New woman' is beyond everything, as a new icon and re-established and transformation taking place in the virtues of old-fashion, which concerns individual woman in everywhere from the world and encourage them to fight against the prevalent strong patriarchal system in which caste, class, gender, sex, race, violence, molestation and psychological torture are the factors of oppression. New Woman has reached the society for maintaining human connection between communities of people and enable women and men to be pro-convivial with better understanding and interpersonal relationship. In Meena Kandasamy's poem 'If everything comes crashing down' she explicates how the man engenders new women.

...But in billboards planted
 Across my fervent heart,
 I will celebrate you as the man
 Who made me woman. (Touch, 30)

Meena Kandasamy reflects pain, agony, violence and restrictions of being Dalit women in a subordinated status are in search for self-identity or individuality in the world where they exist to prove them. She handles her poems with all its precision of the emergence of new woman who has transcended the boundaries of the female gender. Meena Kandasamy is the polemical writer who utilizes her pen as a sword to fight the monster that is Caste. In her poem *Mohan Das Karamchand*, very rigorously she criticises him and caste as a militant feminist.

You knew, you bloody well knew
 Caste won't go; they wouldn't let it go (Touch, 54)

Meena Kandasamy redefined their identity in the light of feminist theories. *Apologises for living on* is one of the best poems of Meena Kandasamy which reflects the helplessness of women who want to be free like a bird but remained prevaricated to restrictions. In her lines:

I was a helpless girl
 Against the brutal world of
 Bottom patting and breast-pinching
 I was craving for security
 The kind had only known while
 Aimlessly-a float and speculating in the womb (Touch, 122)

The ultimate responsibility of 'New Woman' is to give voice to a voiceless woman in the society and making a deeper commitment to the overall well-being of the humanity. 'New Woman' is concerned about emotional, spiritual, political, biological and ecological perspectives of women community in the entire society. She draws the tormented picture of Indian marginalised woman and protest apart from her familial emotion and duties to which women were subjected and subjugated by the society. In a poem entitled *A Cunning Stunt*, Meena Kandasamy writes:

Cunt now becomes seat,
 Abode, home, lair, nest, stable,
 And he opens my legs wider
 And shoves more and shoves
 Harder and I am torn apart
 To contain the meanings of
 Family, race, stock, and caste
 And form of existence
 And station fixed by birth
 And I can take it no more (Ms Militancy, 11)

Meena Kandasamy celebrated her womanhood by singing women's dreams and her writings arouse consciousness in women's mind, shift from a marginal position and become the mouthpiece for every woman to protest against the society which conceives the obstruction to the development of their own personality.

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Caste in Popular Culture: Exploring Animal Symbolism with Special Reference to *Fandry* and *Chauranga*

Merin John
M.A. English

Abstract

Caste has been a persistent evil of social discrimination for a long time in India. It doesn't have an end, rather it tangles within human identities and manifests in one form or another. However, the new media has given a voice to the mute and a mandatory ear to the audience. Directors and film makers employ extensive use of animal symbolism with implicit hint of 'casting caste' with certain specific animal symbols. Parallels can be drawn between the lower species in the animal and human world. The Marathi film, *Fandry* and the Hindi film, *Chauranga* deals with the issues of caste explicitly. Both the films foreground the issue and invite the thus ignored marginal narratives to the forefront of discussion of visual media. Dalit literature thus has carved a niche in the new media to give an agency to the subalterns. Such films boldly declare the need to overhaul Indian cinema, and also to sensitize the audience towards social issues. It also serves the dual function of sensitising people about caste and gender in particular.

Keywords: *Fandry*, *Chauranga*, Animal symbolism, Speciesism, Dalit literature, Films

Deconstructing the notion of anthropocentrism, many movements have emerged initiating animal welfare and liberation from cruel hands of human beings. However, there have been very fewer studies on the relationship between animals and human beings, though history, religion and human civilisation share a greater bond with animals. The plight of animals seems unchanged even in the present times. While earlier, animals were offered as sacrifice to appease gods, today, human beings are 'sacrificing' them in the laboratories. This concern for animals has stemmed up with the realization that animals can experience suffering in a way similar to that of human beings. However, this paper does not attempt to take side with respect to the utility of animals rather the primary concern is to extend the idea of animals to their representation in films in the light of caste in India.

The use of symbolism in literature gives it wholesomeness. Animal symbolism in particular has a long history and the best manifestation of it can be seen in the *Panchatantra* that has stories that are allegorical and didactic. In addition to it, animals also figured in the religious text such as in the Old and New Testaments. In Indian culture, stories of animals were used to unveil the mysteries of life and the universe. The theory of Charles Darwin *On the Origin of Species* (1859) propounded that human beings had not been created separately from animals in order to master the rest of the world but had instead evolved from animals and were thus just a link in the chain. Extending the hierarchy among human species to animal kingdom, takes us to the term

‘speciesism’. It was coined by Richard D. Ryder in 1970 and was popularised in 1975 by the philosopher Peter Singer. Speciesism is a form of discrimination that involves treating members of one species as morally more important than members of other species. Primarily, it came up to argue and grant equal rights between animals and human without prejudice. However, the paper attempts to include the domain of caste within speciesism and to draw a parallel between the lower species in the animal and human world. Taking the Marathi film *Fandry* and Hindi film *Chauranga* as reference, the study establishes the abundant use of animal symbolism in films.

Film being the medium for expression and representation of reality has a due place for subjectivity. *Fandry*, a Marathi film is set in Akolner, a village near Ahmednagar. It is written and directed by Nagraj Manjule. It depicts the romance of a thirteen year old boy, Jambhuvant Kachru Mane (Jabya). He lives in the outskirts of a village and belongs to the oppressed caste community, Kaikadi. His family earns its living by doing menial jobs and are often forced to hunt pigs to protect the village from diseases and impurity. He has fallen in a one sided love with an upper caste girl named Shalini (Shalu), his classmate, to whom he has never talked but frantically tries to get her attention.

The title of the film *Fandry* not only hints at the literal meaning but also has a metaphorical meaning to it. Metaphorically, Manjule has used the term to depict 'impurity' being associated with a Dalit body and his labour. So, when a 'fandry' strays around and accidentally brushes against an upper caste being, that person has to be purified. He is critical of the use of the cow urine to purify the pollution caused by the brush of a pig.

The snorting of pigs and hooting of Jabya's family becomes the significant background score in the film. The theme of untouchability has been shot in the frame where Shalu and her classmates are playing in the ground during the PT hour. The scene gets tense when a girl with whom Shalu was playing gets touched by a pig. A sudden silence and a loud laughter ensue after this. Shalutells others that since her friend was touched by a pig, she shall not be touched until she cleanses herself of the pollution. Though the practise of *varna* system is not so dominant in the classroom setting in the film *Fandry*, it can still be noticed in how Jabya always occupies the last of the seats. Keeping distance from the upper caste is further deemed mandatory and custodial. This can be seen when Jabya's father Kachru goes to the doctor and doesn't even sit but stands away from him with his hands bowed. Also, in a democratic space like a Panchayat office, Jabya's father had to stay outside until the upper caste talk and discuss about the ongoing of the fair in the village. The movement of Kachru outside the Panchayat office juxtaposes with that of the pigs in the film. He is only needed there to serve tea for them and hence becomes an instrument of cheap labour, not having a say in the affairs affecting his day-to-day life also.

Cow being treated as a holy animal by a large section of Hindus is believed to have every product of it to be holy. This myth has led to people sprinkling cow urine on the girl who got

polluted by the touch of a pig. The girl had to bathe her body from top to toe after which cow urine will be sprinkled on her. Shalu having brought her friend to her home to get her cleansed, asks her mother to sprinkle some urine on her also so that she also remains fresh and 'pure'. Yamini Narayanan in *South Asian Journal* writes about caste speciesism which operates behind cow protection. She says how there is a division within cows itself. Only native cows are deemed pure whereas the cross bred cows and buffaloes falls out of the hegemonic structure similar to the state of Dalits and subalterns.

The psychological form of strain occurs when one is publicly humiliated on caste grounds. Jabya who doesn't like to hunt pigs is forced to hunt along with his family. As the school gets over, Jabya hides behind the rock wall so that he can escape from the bullying of his friends and also Shalu's disgrace if seen chasing the pigs. But Kachru finds Jabya hiding and throws stones at him and thus juxtaposing Jabya against the pigs at whom stones are thrown. The village comes to watch the pig chase and the elite even upload videos of this family hunting pigs as "fandry match" inviting more people to come and embarrass them. Jabya is also beaten and scolded badly in front of the whole class and village by Kachru which mars his identity. The elite calls the females of the family of Kachru to be the "cheerleaders" of the match. Jabya is called a Kaikadi boy, blacky or kaalya, dirty pig which questions the caste, colour and dignity of the boy from a young age itself which advances in most of the cases to internalize the fact that they are servile.

A common imagery in caste based films is also made use of in the film by Manjule through the depiction of the portraits of the social reformers. The film has portraits of Ambedkar on the walls in offices and also on the walls of the school as in *Fandry* like a graffiti. The school has been presented as a rigid space where Tilak and Gandhi are only accepted as agents of change. It is the director's deliberate attempt to build a juxtaposition between the school and Dalit huts with the images of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Savtribai Phule, Jyotiba Phule, Shahu Maharaj, Anna Bhau Sathe and Sant Gadge Baba. Further, when the pig is caught by Jabya and his family, it is tied and carried in front of the portraits. This further intensifies the thought of how we have restricted our reformers into mere pictures on screen.

Finally, the theme of resistance also features in the film through the character of Jabya. When Jabya understands that he has nothing to lose, neither the girl, whom he loved dearly but who also came to see his pig hunt and laughed at his plight, nor his dignity, he throws stones at the upper caste men who talked vulgar against his sister Dhurpa and his family. This resistance was unexpected and scared many including Shalu and her fellow friends. However, when the upper caste men come to attack against his retaliation, he picks up a large stone and throws at him which in fact zoom out on to the screen thus can be implied as a mark of resistance against not only on those few people who attacked and bullied him, but also at the audience who watches them and sees the discrimination. This shot thus presents a reversal of the role of a pig to all those who stay insolent and gaze complacently at all these discriminations still present in the society.

In the film, *Fandry*, much like the pigs, Jabya's family had to stay in the outskirts of the village and is only allowed to do menial jobs such as catching and killing pigs which are infested with rabids. Much alike the pigs with whom the higher caste people avoid contacts, they are also kept at a distance.

The question of how pigs are symbolised to extend the meaning of it merely from a filthy animal into the domain of caste can be answered by the words of the director ManjuleNagraj. He says in one of the interviews that he wanted to raise the question as to how do one not know about *Fandry* and he says, "It is the life of people around you. It is about their happiness and sorrow. It is my story. It is the story of my friends. It is the story of my family. It is the story of many people like me."

The term "Fandry" has been used by Manjule to juxtapose the impurity associated with the Dalit body and the menial labour he has to undertake. If a pig accidentally brushes into an upper caste, they have to purify themselves with cow urine, an illogical practise, an animal waste as a process of purification made mandatory for the touch of another animal. The question of why impure is further associated with pig's stay on garbage and the consumption of the meat by the lower caste people. Manjule in an interview says, "Pig eater's dignity isn't rated too highly". The upper castes have always tried to separate themselves from the downtrodden with their power.

A Dalit household becomes a rooster coop to get oneself trapped in it as well as to bear the brunt of caste and get oneself hidden inside the four walls of it. A close juxtaposition can be seen in the case of the pig which ran into a cave from where stones were pelted to bring it outside and finally get it tied to a rope and killed. The space of occupation of the lower caste is not a site of love and care, rather, gets layered with power and inequality. Jabya also hides like the pigs behind the stone walls so that he doesn't need to come in front of the school crowd where their pig chase becomes a source of mere amusement and entertainment.

Another film *Chauranga*, is set in an impoverished village in North India headed by zamindars. The film is a debut production of the director Bikas Ranjan Mishra. The title means 'chaar rang' or shades/colours of four. It being a strong tale of caste-based discrimination might have adopted the title to indicate caste based on colours. The film is drawn from his own life and living in the village of Bihar where caste and politics define social life.

The film progresses through the eyes of a Dalit boy Santu and his love for the daughter of the zamindar. His elder brother Bajrangi goes to a school in town with the aid of the zamindar. Dhaval, the village zamindar funds Bajrangi's education in exchange of using Dhaniya, their mother. She also plays an important role in the film exposing the heinous sexual exploitation of the zamindars like Dhaval upon women like Dhaniya. Apart from the Dalit woman, three other women characters belong to the family of the zamindar – one, the neglected wife, second, the

comely daughter of zamindar, Mona and third, the mute grandmother. The story takes its birth with Mishra's attention on a report about a young Dalit boy in Bihar, who was pushed under a train because he had written a love letter to an upper caste girl.

Santu becomes a hero of resistance as he refuses to touch the feet of the zamindar, Dhaval to achieve his dream of going to school unlike his brother Bajrangi. Furthermore, Bikas Mishra has tried to weave in the plot with his own personal experience as he comments in an interview.

It's traditional for us to touch the elders' feet when we go to someone's house, but I was warned that I should not do that when I go to his house. Even if I tried, his father would never allow me to. If I touched his feet by mistake, he would touch my feet back. I felt these differences personally and wanted to show that in my film. Sitting in Mumbai, it can look like a story from a different time, but these differences are lived experiences. (Upadhyay,2015)

Santu is least conscious of caste and its intricacies as he blindly falls in love with the daughter of zamindar and watches her, sitting upon a jamun tree, pass on her scooty to school. However, his ignorance to caste does not receive proper attention in the film, as it is shaded with the age, him being a very young boy and hence immature.

The use of animals in the film makes it different from other plots. Mishra has carefully studied his own characters according to which he used certain specific animals. Dhaval being a zamindar is supposed to have a stock of cattle and a shelter. Most of the exploitation against Dhaniya by other petty assistants of Dhaval and the latter himself happens under the cow shelter. This can be contrasted with the mansion that the zamindar lives and thus can be juxtaposed with the humble life of Dhaniya and the extravagancy of Dhaval. Cow being a very holy animal is respected and worshipped. However, it is only lower caste like Dhaniya who is condemned to clean the dung, the shelter and cows.

Chauranga also has extensive use of the animal pig alike *Fandry*. Unlike the latter, Dhaniya's family accepts them to be 'pig people' and follows their roots. They consider pig herding as a means of income. The contrast with respect to casteist speciesism can be seen as one notices how the priests are gifted only with goats and cows. Moreover, there is a scene in the film where the blind priests get angry at the sound of a pig snorting in his front yard. He beats the pig left and right almost kills it with his stick.

Another significant symbol is that of the goat tied in the house of the priest. The sexual connotation to the goat also underlines man's lust for sex and a female body. The priest reaching out for the goat's udder secretly in his house reveals the masked side of the religious and powerful people. Before the crowd, both Dhaval and the priest are gentle and noble men. However, behind their gentleness they hide their evil part. The goat when touched by the priest night becomes

Dhaniya and during daytime, he keeps himself apart from the goat spending more time on religious activities.

The shifting scenes of the snake slithering on ground becomes yet another symbol in the film again indicating the evilness displayed by the upper caste on the lower caste people. The snake with the eggs signified the birth of new crimes committed by people like priest and Dhaval. The sex scene where Dhaval forcefully copulates with Dhaniya and her death is shown along with the snake slithering away. Thus, alike *Fandry*, there is a pure association of symbols employed by filmmakers to depict both the upper caste and lower caste distinctly.

Conclusion

Films, thus, have marked the coming of age of Dalit movement with varied themes touching the society. The makers certainly deserve much applause for their commendable contribution to sensitize the masses. Such realistic portrayals also ensure the enlarging of the scope of subjects. The cinematography, music, camera angles and the silences provoke the audience to think and to act compared to other literatures. Films such as *Pariyerum Perumal* and *Manjhi: The Mountain Man* have also employed animal symbolism to establish the nexus between animals and human beings. Film being a new media can also attract and grab the youth to the societal problems and hence becomes the appropriate medium for addressing them and evoking them to actions.

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Women and Marginalisation of Indian People in Alien Lands with Reference to George Ryga's *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*

S. Janani, II M.A. English

**Department of English and Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University
Madurai**

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to highlight the literary ability of George Ryga presenting the views of Ryga through Rita Joe. He achieved National exposure with *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* in 1967. This drama employs the literary technique the *stream of consciousness*. This paper brings out the sense of marginality that Indians face in Canada. Thus, this paper analyses the ratio of marginalization that Indian people, particularly Indian Women like Rita, face in an alien land.

Keywords: George Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, Marginality, Accusation, Native, Subjugation, Patriarchal Society.

Literature shows the worldly image with many different views. *Literature* is a Latin term. Literature is the life of creative art which reflects the society with multi-colour. It contains various genres in many forms. Canadian Literature mostly focuses on the origin of Canada people. Canadian region is wealthy because of their plantation of geographical structure, language, community, culture and tradition. To explore their suppression, they began to write many novels, drama and poetry. Overcoming many obstacles, these writers marked themselves as writers. As a Canadian writer George Ryga exposes the idea of social and political history of Canada. George Ryga was born in Athabasca, Alberta to poor immigrant parents. He was not able to do his schooling past grade six. He worked in various jobs such as radio copy writer and so on. Ryga continued his education towards winning a scholarship to the Banff School of Fine Arts. While living in Edmonton, he published his first book, *Song of My Hands* (1956), a collection of poems. George Ryga was catapulted to fame with *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe and Other Plays* (1970), a depiction of the plight of Indians as they struggle with Marginalization. Most of the common themes he used in his works are to explore the problems such as self-doubt, isolation and personal unfulfillment.

He lived between July 27, 1932 - November 18, 1987. Since 2004, the George Ryga award for social awareness in literature is established. *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* opened at the Queen Elizabeth playhouse in Vancouver, British Columbia, on November 23, 1967. The setting of the play was Brachiating staging technique of circular ramp. No curtain was used during the play. For isolating scenes from the past and present, they used the idea of highlight lighting to suggest gloom and confusion. He explored the realistic mind of Canadian White. The protagonist is Rita Joe. As

a woman she was victimized and marginalised because she belonged to native people community. She leaves the reservation for the city. White people accused innocent Rita Joe with the criminal case of vagrancy, theft, prostitution, alcoholism, drugs, etc. American Magistrate commands Rita "Let her speak for herself!". Rita recounts her acquisition along with Jamie Paul who supports her as a native person. They both are unsuccessful achieving their goals dreamt by them. Marginality corners their journey of life to death. "The cement made her feet hard." -- once said by Rita, these words reveal not only her voice but also her whole community who got exploited by many people. George Ryga views "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe" as revealing overwhelming emotion of the protagonist. She leaves the reserved area of native Indians to Canadian Whites to fulfil her freedom with job. Police arrested her for various cases which she was not even aware of. Rita Joe was subjugated by patriarchal society. She experienced her journey bittersweet with unfamiliar environment, unacquainted social norms which compelled her to face psychological problems. Ryga presents the internal conflict of Joe in every situation.

"Magistrate: No-body is a prisoner here." (page number: 4)

This line from Ryga's "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe" clearly shows that he should follow the law of government with actions to truthful, but in contrast he makes this only by his words. Joe's dream was totally unsuccessful because she got arrested due to a false statement of five dollars. The horrible situation shows the true face of patriarchal society. Even the witness for Rita Joe is difficult to hear; they all protest against her for past vengeance. While she made her opinion towards the society as a woman, no one gave a hand to get success. By their cruel thoughts, each and every person in court room wanted her to be ideal without any voice over the law of government. Magistrate's charge against Rita is vagrancy. She replies with an innocent answer

"Rita: I didn't know when morning came... there was no windows... The Jail stinks! People in Jail Stink." (page number: 10)

She has undergone immense suffering. Canadian Whites' perspective is to marginalize her through gender as a woman. Rita desired in her thought to go home where she would be able to get full freedom without any accusation. Women are affected through the view of society both physically mentally. To overcome this situation, women have to face a great struggle. It was shown in Ryga's play by his protagonist Rita Joe.

Rita: What's so special about a girl. (page number 28)

Magistrate: I would wish... well, I'd be concerned about her choices, her choice of living, school... friends... These things don't come as lightly for a girl. For boys it's different... But I would worry if I had a daughter...Don't" (page number 29)

The above lines say women need not take any decision by themselves. Sentences reveal that women are used as objects in the society. From Magistrate's words it is evident that not only

his daughter should follow the rules and norms but also every woman around world make their voice numb as idol. Each scenario reveals make chauvinistic idealism in Canadian society.

Rita: I was hungry. I had no money.

Experience of marginality is faced in their life in every blood shed situation of natives. Not only by race they are dominated, but also through their tradition, and geographical background. To lead a life in another country they should change even the name. “There is no peace in being extraordinary.”

Jamie: I’m scared of in... in the city. They don’t care for one another here... You got to be smart or have a good job to live like that. (page number: 83)

Rita involving an experience of mystic self-transcendence. Jamie Paul is the only supporter of Joe. Ryga reflects the life of native Canadian. He begun with a pessimistic thought and end up by destruction. Not only their thoughts got destructed due to marginality but also their life which aches to deserve a peace in it. Only after the death, many people realize originally that they are in the state of dilemma. As a women Rita was not able to answer for many questions which magistrate arise.

Magistrate: Answer me! Drunkenness! Shoplifting! Assault! Prostitution, Prostitution, Prostitution! (page number 63)

Life of Rita is shown as a showcase object. We can feel it how much she suffered through double marginalization. Her acceptance of life as a native Indian is optimistic but ends up in destruction. Through the example of Ryga’s play, women’s marginality is viewed clearly.

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Projection of Social Realism and Humanism in the Fictional World of Mulk Raj Anand

Dr. S. Radhamani
 Guest Lecturer in English
 MKU Constituent College
 Aundipatti

Abstract

This article sheds light on the books of Mulk Raj Anand in social realism and humanism. Humanism and socialism are the governing principles of his writings

Keywords: Mulk Raj Anand, Social Realism, Intellectual Realism, Romantic Realism, Psychological Realism, Folk Realism, Moral Realism, Downtrodden, Exploiter, Exploited.

Mulk Raj Anand was the first Indo-English novelist to comment on the tragic plight of underdogs in Indian society. He realistically wrote in his fiction about the devastating lives of the oppressed and oppressed. All his novels highlight the universal philosophy of life, which is nothing but natural and humanistic philosophy. All of his characters belong to the low caste and downtrodden society. M.R Anand in his article "The Source of Protest in My Novels" states:

“I wish to create the folk whom I know
 Intimately from the lower depths the lumpens
 And the suppressed, oppressed, repressed, those
 Who have seldom appeared in our literature” (p. 20)

All his characters have a certain vision of reality. They are all simple, easy-to-read human beings and know their social status. In **Two Leaves and a Bud** Anand says, "All these heroes and other men and women... were the reflection of real people I had known during my childhood and youth ... they are the flesh of my flesh and the blood of my blood". His first Novel *Untouchable* is the voice he used against the exploitation of a stripper boy by the character of Bakha. According to Pramila Paul, Bakha serves as a mirror for the pathetic condition of the untouchables.

E.M. Forster rightly observes: “.... The slave may change his master and his duties and may even become free, but the sweeper is brown forever born into a state from which he cannot escape, and he is excluded from social intercourse” (P10).

Mulk Raj Anand is a service tool for humanity. No one can read his novels without being inspired by his involvement with the subject and the community. For example, *Coolie* is a novel

in which he describes the tragic accident of the Indian people aimed at bringing about a change of heart. “*Untouchable* shows the evils of caste system along with the panacea for the social malaise” (Abidi 45). Prof. P.P. Metha says:

“Dr. Anand in all his novels emphasizes the fact that nobility and dignity are not the monopoly of the rich. The poor have their greatness honour as well as the richness. ... Cromwells are not uncommon in the ranks of the poor” (P 39).

Anand’s is realism is social realism. Yes, the transcript of life is reproduced with photo accuracy and minute details. *Untouchable* is a realistic description of the evil of untouchability practiced by caste Hindus. *Coolie* is a piece of life without any change in the facts of life. “Realism in *Untouchable* and *The Big Heart* is naturalistic realism, in *Coolie* intellectualism, in *Two Leaves and a Bud* epic realism, in *The Village Trilogy* romantic realism, in *Seven Summer* psychological realism, in *Private Life of an Indian Prince* folk religion, in *The Old Woman and the Cow* moral realism in *The Road and the Death of a Hero*” (Herrex145).

To conclude, his works beautifully illustrate the Realism and humanism. These two factors form the major two traits in his fiction.

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Social Injustice and Subaltern Awareness in the Poetic Realm of Meena Kandasamy

Dr. K. Mohan

Guest Lecturer

Department of English & Comparative Literature

Madurai Kamaraj University

MADURAI - 21 (T.N) India

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This research article at the outset, explores the sufferings of injustice and inequality on subalterns from “cradle to grave” done to them. Among all Dalit woman writers, Meena Kandasamy expels unique in her poetic realm she is the fiercely representative, who vigorously voiced her thoughts regarding observations and experiences of the subalterns on the caste – based dystopian Indian land. Her poetry deals with the antithetical narratives about the past, present and future problems faced by the subalterns. This paper neatly epitomizes the success of Meena Kandasamy for contextualising the original picture of picture of growth, decline, culture and liveliness of the subalterns in her poems. And finally, this research article ends up with the statement that Meena Kandasamy skilfully traces the painful sufferings of the subalterns’ right from their infancy, who rebelliously aroused and spoke her thought about the subalterns.

Keywords: Meena Kandasamy, subalterns, injustice, inequalities, caste, dystopian, antithetical, narratives, sufferings, rebellious, infancy.

“Justice consists not in being neutral
Between right and wrong but in finding
out the right and upholding it, wherever
found against the wrong”

Theodore Roosevelt.

From the origin of the world’s creation, the word ‘justice’ inhabits the special position like a ‘pearl’, which never changes it in its standard quality even when it is thrown into the pit of stagnant water. Justice as a ‘pearl’ remains constant right from first born ancient inhabitants “Adam and Eve” to present post-modern mechanical figures of the world. As Aristotle comments:

“The only stable state is the one
which all men are equal before
the law of man-made and creator”.

“Justice” is a pure state of thing, where people converts its pureness to be faded by their inconstant state of unethical mind and heart. In the saying of Confucius:

“Justice is like a Northstar, which
is fixed and all the rest revolve about

it”

The act of being justice in one’s life is considered to be the divine state of living. It is occupied in every human’s deep heart, that one must bring it out and make use of it in a correct absolute path for good yearnings and happenings. By days gone, the growth and development of the world has caused society to become more secularized. Man with his egotistical attitude and behaviour made people to move away from traditional belief and custom of justice and equality. They have developed a sense of owning and belongingness which blocked the act and sense of justice and equality.

Justice and act of equality in a person will not see through his physical appearance, educated mind, his occupation and as well as his position in the society. It is definitely seen only through the man’s attitude and behaviour towards life and its circumstances with the flavours of unbiased, moralised empirical mind. From ancient period onwards, certain group of people begin to burn and bury the morals of justice and universal equality and started sowing the seeds of malignant prejudice philosophy, which dangerously grew a tree with fruits of injustice, inequality, self-centredness, jealousy, inhuman behaviour. The man reaped these fruits of evilness and began to fill their heart and mind with the malignant behaviour, where he grew their heirs by making them follow these evil concepts from one generation to the next. As the result, it must be understood that every single man in the modern world breathe the air of injustice and inequality. The words of Thomas Jefferson’s say:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among this life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Experience demands that man is the only animal, which devours his own kind, for I can apply no milder term to the general prey of the rich on the poor.”

The words of Thomas Jefferson describes that all men are created by God equally and they all were bestowed with infinite natural resources and rights of justice, equality, peace, dharma, love, freedom and happiness, etc., but man with his egocentric self-serving deportments began to subjugate, suppress other man who is lower to his position, status, color, class, creed and caste. The self-centred philosophy of man followed all over the world still today making the world as a land of dystopia. When it is thought of Indian caste system and its followings from ancient period is definitely to agree that India is a dystopian land. The caste system believed to be unique in Indian society. This social divisions of caste system in India is accepted permanently tenanted in Indian land and this rule of social divisions on caste is framed by “Dharmashastras”, which is formulated by man not by God. Dharmashatras are basically law books composed by upper-class self-centred brahmins to insists caste rules on subalterns such as Dalits, Shudras in order to save their upper class higher status in the society.

The four categories of Varna system are based on their characters, behaviour and position in life, but egocentric persons to save their heirs and their generation, they permanently took over the higher status in the name of caste, Dharmashastras, Manusmriti, and also through Vedas. Subalterns in India are called as Dalits, Shudras, and suppressed, Untouchables and Harijans. They are marginalised, subjugated suppressed and bombarded every second in their life socially, economically, and politically. Even after caste discrimination has been declared offence under article 17 of Indian constitution, they still suffer in the hot tar of untouchability, who were socially weak, economically suffers and politically downtrodden. In the midst of these traumatic grieving, many writers raised like a fountain among the subalterns, who contextualized their subaltern environment, aestheticism, and their empowerment in social, economic and political status, They are called “other”.

At first, writers of subaltern literature wrote their experience of dangerous, heart touching painful torments, suppressions and hurting in their life. In between, their autobiographies evolved, which unmasked their own subaltern sensibility of their subjugated life. Later, they explosively explored their boldness and act revolution through their writings in their literature. They started raise their voice against the injustice and inequalities made by the upper class communities. They are Namdeo Dhasal, Om Prakash Valmikki, Anant Rao, Baburao Bagul, Jatin Bala, Ajay Naveria, Leeldhar Mandhol, Imayam, Kanwal Bharati, Manoranjan Byapari, Suraj Paul Chaudhan, Raja Dhale, Aravind Malagatti, and Devanur Mahadeva. These writers rose up with their own stories, pains and they all narrated the agony of a subaltern’s life.

And also, there arises subaltern Dalit woman writers, who are the modest set of low castes, who have been doubly marginalised as a woman in male chauvinistic India and as subaltern women in the low caste society. Women writers begin to show their resistance in the rebellious way through their writings. For these women writers, pen is the mighty sword to rebel against their torturous life in the bowl of hot soup. Many woman writers such as Baby Kamle, Shantabai Kamble. Urmila Pawar, P. Sivakami, Gogu Shyamala, Anita Bharati, Dr. C.S. Chandrika, Meena Kandasamy. Their writings mirror their humiliating pitiful torment experiences in their in their life. Among these women writers, Meena Kandasamy, a modern young woman, who hot headedly rebel at the damaged society through her poems, vilifying the abided social divisions of the subaltern groups made by the egocentric people. She came into light as the exponent of anti-caste or caste annihilation movement. Her literary involvement and as a socio-political activist bring forth the issues of marginalization of the subaltern group, with the revolving themes of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, casteism, racism. Being a rageful rebellious woman, Meena principally makes her poem revolve around the hot themes such as freedom of the rape victims, Dalit women, temple prostitutes (Devadhashis) and brown women. As a subaltern Dalit modern emerging writer, Meena authentically unearths the dehumanized state of Dalits and their harsh portrayals by the upper class communities. She sternly stood up as the protestant, revolutionist and as a rebel to discover the Dalit identity and to rewrite by contextualizing the subaltern environment with

antithetical narratives against the subaltern injustices and inequality which is inflicted on subaltern as delineated in her poems.

Meena Kandasamy, through the genre of poetry, used it as platform to voice the unheard voices of the subalterns. Through her poetry, she discloses the unrevealed desires and passions of the low caste people under the predomination of upper class privileged community. In an interview with “Sampsonia Way Magazine” Meena said:

“My Poetry is naked, my poetry is in tears,
My poetry screams in anger, My poetry writhes
In pain. My poetry smell of blood, my poetry
salutes sacrifices. My poetry speaks like my
people, my poetry speaks for my people”.

Meena is also called ‘Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy’ who was born on January 1, 1984 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. She is a poet, writer, activist and translator. Her works point out the humiliations of upper class community, linguistic identity and feminism. Meena is the youngest modern Indian poet of this twenty first century. In the year 2013, Meena has published two collections of poetry namely, “Touch” (2006) and “Ms. Militancy” (2010). Two of her poems have won the accolades in all Indian poetry competitions. Apart from her literary works, she voices about various contemporary political issues relating to caste, corruption, violence and women’s rights. Although, Meena writes in English, she also translated the works of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and Tamil Elam writers such as Kasi Anandhan, Cheran and VIS Jayapalan into English. This research article aims to analyse the poetry of Meena Kandasamy as an iconic protestant and dalit representative, who outrageously delineates the exasperation and disgruntlement towards social injustice and inequality forced on subalterns, whose poetry is the antithetical narratives towards these subaltern issues rose out from the voice of Meena Kandasamy as an angry young woman.

In the poem entitled *One-Eyed*, Meena, as an angry young woman floods out her counter narratives in behalf of the voiceless Dalit victim ‘Dhanam, who was brutally harassed by snatching her one eye-sight for drinking water in the glass that is only meant for the upper class. In the voice of Meena rightly says:

The poet sees just another noisy child
The glass sees an eager and clumsy hand
The water sees a parched throat slaking thirst
But the teacher sees a case of medical emergency
The school sees a potential embarrassment the press
Sees a headline and a photo feature. Dhanam sees a
World torn in half her left eye, lid open but light
slapped away, the price of taste of that touchable water.”

Meena touches upon Hindu mythology in the poem *Ekalaivan*, where she uprooted the issue of caste discrimination in the great epic *Mahabharatha*. She points out the injustice meted out to Ekalaivan on the basis of casteism. Guru Dhronacharya rebuffed to train archery to Ekalaivan as he belongs to low caste rather than upper caste. Her explosive counter narrative reflects in her poem as:

“You can do a lot of things
With your left hand. Besides ,
Fascist Dronocharyas warrant
Left-handed treatment, also You
Don’t need right thumb to pull
A trigger or hurl a bomb.”

In the poem *Mohandas Karamchand*, Meena raise rebellious question against Gandhi for naming low caste people as “Harijans”. She severely condemns Gandhi, as he is the follower of brahmanic standard, he never understands the ideals of low caste. This poem is a stinging criticism on Gandhi and never accepts him as a father figure, as he has done a great injustice to subalterns by naming them as ‘Harijans’.

“ Who? Who? Who?
Mahatma, sorry no
Truth, Non-violence
Stop it, enough taboo
Gone half cuckoo, you
You called as names,
You dubbed as Paiahs – ‘Harijans’
Ram, Ram, Ram... boo
Don’t ever act like a Saint”.

The poetic lines of Meena erupt the hot lava of words from the Valvano towards Gandhiji for naming the dalits as Harijans.

Meena Kandasamy forces out her oppositions through her antithetical narrative in her poetries to shower light and empower the privilege of the subalterns. She provides the hard-hearted kick and punch to the upper caste man made dharma shastras and also emerged as the propagandist of the voiceless women, whose anger not only burning in the heart Meena but also in the other women. She ferociously ought against the injustice and inequality meted out to the subalterns. She contextualised the disgrace, pity, humiliation, subaltern environment, language through her poetry creating awareness through the counter narratives to become a daring and courageous subaltern not as a victim of suppression.

To conclude, the struggle of the subalterns and their existence in the caste stricken land from ancient time to present is existing in the land of India. Meena Is not just protesting against the caste oppression but also contextualising her subaltern identity. Her writing uproots and articulates the wholesome emotions, pains deprivation, captivity, humiliation, anger and their agonizing survival with oppressed taboos. Meena through her poetry challenges both the caste-politics and Dalit patriarchy, and makes her listeners and emphasizes them her rebellious thoughts, which explore the vulnerable condition of an oppressive social structure which made subaltern as scapegoats without considering their dignity and self-respect.

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Paradigms of Marginality in Literature
Marginalization Interwoven with Slavery
A Critical Analysis of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*

Chithra P.

II M.A. English

E. M. G. Yadava College of Arts and Science for Women
Madurai-14

Abstract

Marginalization is mistreatment by the society against an individual or group of people who belong to the same community, which is inhumane. 'Identity crisis' and ignorance due to 'forced illiteracy' are the consequences of slavery and it is the cruelest act against humanity. Lives of the slaves were exploited by the 'dominating race' as they were restricted from gaining knowledge through education. The slave holders also 'enslaved' the minds, controlled and suppressed the voices raised against them and treated less than human as they were tortured economically, socially, physically and mentally. The subject of identification was totally ignored which resulted in questioning their own identity. Slaves were purchased in markets just because they are 'black' and this is the plight of each individual who were slaved. Marginalization is enigmatic. Booker T. Washington's autobiography *Up From Slavery* demonstrates the hardships faced by the African Americans owing to slavery and racial discrimination.

Keywords

Identity crisis, Forced illiteracy, Slavery, Racial discrimination, Dual identity, Child labor.

Marginalization means disregarding or subjecting a community under of race, gender, class, culture, caste or social status. Here subjecting means bringing one under mastery by coercion and preeminence. Merriam Webster's online dictionary defines the term marginalization as To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group. Marginalized people are restricted from their basic rights.

Marginalization arise when a sole or a rabble are cloistered and constrained from securing civil liberties. Unalienable rights are right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of work and right to education. These privileges vest to each person and everyone is legitimized to these basic rights without chauvinism. Marginalization occurs, when people are bounded not only from these rights, but also from every other right too. Slavery established in early seventh century in United States of America held many black people in bondage.

Slaving a community, under race can be witnessed the writings of African American writers. African Americans are the community, who are descendants of enslaved blacks. African American literature is the literary work written by the descendants of the Africans who live in United States of America. As the conditions of African American changed over the time, (after 'Emancipation proclamation') so was the African American literature. It deals mainly with the theme of slavery, racial discrimination and their experience as slaves during the phase of enslavement. There is also "Slave narrative". Slave narrative is a literary genre, which is an autobiographical account of enslaved. More slaves are whipped for oversleeping than for any other fault. Neither age nor sex finds any favor. The overseer stands at the quarter door, armed with stick and cowskin, ready to whip any who may be a few minutes behind time. When the horn is blown, there is a rush for the door, and the hindermost one is sure to get a blow from the overseer. Young mothers who worked in the field, were allowed an hour, about ten o' clock in the morning, to go home to nurse their children. Sometimes they were compelled to take their children with them, and to leave them in the corner of the fences, to prevent loss of time in nursing them. The overseer generally rides about the field on horseback. A cowskin and a hickory stick are his constant companions... A blow with it, on the hardest back, will gash the flesh, and make the blood start" manifests Fredrick Douglass in his autobiography "My Bondage and My Freedom" (102-103). The slave narrative speaks of the hardships faced by the slave men and slave women during their period of enslavement.

Freedom plays vital role in everyone's life. Not only humans, but all beings on earth has a strong desire for freedom. No one wants to be enslaved. Despite, a group of people of a particular community was enslaved in the name of race and their rights were grabbed from them. Africans Americans were displaced from their native land in the proposition of enslaving. Racial discrimination is ill-treatment of individual or group of people under their race and it is the fiendish act against humankind. 'Displacement' is removing the native people by force, from their land for various causes. 'Slavery' is one among them and this gave rise to major problems such as identity crisis, child-labor, forced illiteracy, dual identity and so on. Slavery is inhumane and it is against humanity. Slavery comes off, when a person is forced to work for another, without getting paid. Their freedom was seized from them mercilessly and they were treated cruelly. Booker T. Washington's autobiography, *Up From Slavery* depicts us the perspective of the author, regarding enslavement and his bitter childhood experience under 'the system of slavery'. We could come across the situation were, the children under slavery were marginalized, in Washington's work.

The children of the slaves were restricted from their right to education, where it is a basic right of a human, which resulted in 'forced illiteracy'. Education can metamorphose an individual's life. But education was plucked from their innocent minds. Restricting the education based on the skin color, is obnoxious. I had no schooling whatever while I went as far the schoolhouse door with one of my young mistresses to carry her books. The pictures of several dozen boys and girls in a schoolroom engaged in study made a deep impression upon me and I had

the feeling that to get into a schoolhouse and study in this way would be about the same as getting into paradise (9). The chosen words of the author shows us the longing for education and he is also representation of other children in the plantation who were enslaved like Washington and they would have also had the same dream about education as that of authors' dream. Washington compared the 'classroom' with 'getting into paradise'. The children were used up to "carry books" for their young mistresses. So, they not only faced the problem of forced illiteracy but also the issue of 'child labor'. Child labor kills the innocence of the child; it gives them stress and serious mental and physical injuries. The children under slavery were made to work in the plantation which belong to 'white men' and assigned them with difficult jobs. The children were ordered to 'clean the yard', 'carry water to men in the field' and they went to mill to ground corn once a week, which is three miles away from the plantation. Washington loathed this (grounding corn) job particularly, but he was made to do it anyway and this was the dreadful life of every other children in the plantation. They couldn't stand against this wantonness, as they are the 'submissive', they were framed to accept the reality of their lives. The children under slavery were bound to live in this vicious circle of enslavement.

During the period that I spent in slavery I was not large enough to be of much service , still I was occupied most of the time in cleaning the yards, carrying water to the men in the fields, or going to the mill, to which I used to take the corn, once a week, to be ground. The mill was about three miles from the plantation. This work I always dreaded. The heavy bag of corn thrown across the back of the horse, and the corn divided about evenly on each side ; but in same way, almost without exception, on these trips, the corn would so shift as to become unbalanced and would fall off the horse , and often I would fall with it. As I was not strong enough to reload the corn upon the horse, I would have to wait, sometimes for many hours, till a chance passer-by came along who would help me out of my trouble. The hours while waiting for someone were usually spent in crying. The time consumed in this way made me late in reaching the mill, and by the time I got my corn ground reached home it would be far into the night. The road was a lonely one, and often led through dense forests. I was always frightened" (8-9).

This shows us the clear picture, of how the child was confined with the work and the stress it accorded. Besides, the job was too much for his age, but nothing was taken into deliberation. Washington during his period of enslavement, was made to wear wooden shoes which made scary noises. He hearkened back to the memory of wearing 'flax shirt' for the first time which was gruesome experience, which was like 'trying ordeal'.

The first pair of shoes that I recall wearing were wooden ones. They had rough leather on the top, but the bottoms, which were about an inch thick, were of wood. When I walked, they made a fearful noise, and besides this they were very inconvenient since there was no yielding to the natural pressure of the foot... The most trying ordeal that I was forced to endure as a slave boy, however, was the wearing of a flax shirt. In the portion of Virginia where I lived it was common

to use flax as part of the clothing for the slaves. The part of the flax from which our clothing was made was largely the refuse, which of course was the cheapest and roughest part. I can scarcely imagine any torture, except, perhaps, the pulling of a tooth, that is equal to that caused by putting on a new flax shirt for the first time. It is almost equal to the feeling that one would experience if he had a dozen or more chestnut burrs, or a hundred small pin- points, in contact with his flesh. Even to this day I can recall accurately the tortures that I underwent when putting on one of these garments. The fact that my flesh was soft, and tender added to the pain. But I had no choice. I had to wear the flax shirt or none; and had it been left to me to choose, I should have chosen to wear no covering...Until I had grown to be quite a youth this single garment was all that I wore (10).

As a slave boy, Washington was forced to wear 'flax shirt' which he considered a great torture and he assimilated it with dental extraction (when he wore for first time). It was like hundreds of pins, were prickling his skin, when it made direct contact, even to present day Washington was able to remember the pain thrust in him, as his skin was so tender. As far as, the slave children are concerned the only material provided for them to wear was 'flax', no other clothing was taken into consideration and it was author's choice to choose in between wearing the flax shirt or none. He wore it until he was grown up to be a youth. Even, the type of clothing was a torment to the children, who grew in the plantation. Those under slavery, were bound by the circumscription laid by the white men. Enslaved were suppressed and heavy-handed by the predominant.

Of my ancestry I know almost nothing. In the slave quarters, and even later, I heard whispered conversation among the coloured people of the tortures which the slaves, including, no doubt, my ancestors on my mother's side, suffered in the middle passage of the slave ship while being conveyed from Africa to America. I have been unsuccessful in securing any information that would throw any accurate light upon the history of my family beyond my mother. She, I remember, had a half- brother and a half-sister. In the days of slavery not very much attention was given to family history and family records- that is, black family records (7).

It cast light on how black men and women were displaced from their land through 'slave ships' abruptly. Even worse their identity was not considered to be substantial. There is 'psychological identity' or 'personal identity' and 'social identity'. The author is representation of the whole community of blacks who also faced 'Socio- psychological identity crisis'. Slaved mass didn't have right to earn, right to vote, right to voice out their opinion and so on. Psychological identity is 'Who we are?'. Enslaved black people were uncertain of where they belong to (whether to their native or America) and they didn't have personal identity of their own.

They are just 'enslaved blacks' who were displaced from their native land for the purpose of slaving them to work in the plantation of white men. 'Family records' of the enslaved was just chronicled as 'black family records'. The people under slavery was under dilemma when the

"Emancipation Proclamation" enunciated because all their life they were made to depend on the white men for food, and shelter as they were unaware of the outer world apart from plantation. Questions ran through their mind about their nationality, personal identity and what are they going to do for their living once they were freed.

The distinct thing that I now recall in connection with the scene was that some man who seemed to be a stranger (a United States officer, I presume) made a little speech and then read a rather long paper - the Emancipation Proclamation, I think. After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go when and where we pleased... The great responsibility of being free, of having charge of themselves, of having to think and plan for themselves, of having to think and plan for themselves and their children, seemed to take possession of them. It was very much like suddenly turning a youth of ten or twelve years out into the world to provide for himself... These were the question of a home, a living, the rearing of children, education, citizenship, and the establishment and support of churches. Was it any wonder that within a few hours the wild rejoicing ceased and a feeling of deep gloom seemed to pervade the slave quarters? To some it seemed that, now that they were in actual possession of it, freedom was a more serious thing than they had expected to find it. Some of the slaves were seventy or eighty years old; their best days were gone. They had no strength with which to earn a living in a strange place and among strange people, even if they had been sure where to find new place to abode. To this class the problem seemed especially hard (13).

Slaved people were so dependent (unfortunately) that, the feel of freedom felt like a great responsibility. Old people as their good young days have passed, felt like they are abandoned all of a sudden. Enslaved blacks later gained their rights and came to be known as African American.

"Dual identity" is African Americans living in United States with two conflicting identities which cannot be brought together. They were known as African Americans because of the remnants of slavery in the past. "Identity Crisis" is the primary consequence of slavery.

In a nutshell, the 'school of slavery' is one of the greatest tragedies of world history. Emancipation Proclamation just stayed as words, where it was not followed by the fellow citizens (white people) of America. Slavery marginalised community of 'blacks' even after they are freed. The impact of slavery could be felt to till date and still they are despised in some corner of the world. No 'social stigma' (class, gender, religion, race, culture) could separate one other. Every man is equal under the sun. This should occur in every individual's heart only then discrimination and marginalization can be truly eradicated. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, cannot long retain it (376). Abraham Lincoln, a great personality, who fought for the African Americans (the blacks), abolished slavery and freed them from the agonies of enslavement. Eradication of discrimination could be attained through numerous ways. One such powerful approach is 'edification'. Enlightenment should betide by

heart, not by mind alone. Malala Yousafzai in her uplifting autobiography "I Am Malala" stated I told him (Barak Obama) that instead of focusing on eradicating terrorism through war, he should focus on eradicating it through education. Correspondingly, marginalization can also be annihilated through education, as Yousafzai suggested. In "Long walk to freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela", Mandela declared Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor... that a child of farm workers can become the presidents of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separate one person from another.

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