

“Feminist Perspectives Views as Delineated in Rabindranath Tagore’s Novel’s”

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ABSTRACT

In Tagore’s age great importance was given to novels and short stories. The reason was there was more compass for presenting the man woman relationship in novels and stories. In the present paper an attempt has been made to focus on Tagore’s feminist outlook on women’s evolution in his own times. A patriarchal society is not conceding its women segment any right and so women’s dignity is a famous exclusion in a conservative patriarchal set-up.

INTRODUCTION

Several endeavors at giving equal rights to women shake the society to its foundation. Tagore’s period making short story Stree Patra (The wife’s letter) invited protest from the conventional segment of the public. This progressive and feminist position of Tagore representing women’s discharge was not only the result of his personal thinking, but also the progressive thinking of the west. It cannot be said that the women had no value as daughter, as wife and mother. The woman claimed a romantic outlook and hence the love and respect, but outside the family she had no value as a woman, not only in our country but also in other countries of the world. The significance of the woman is a recent discovery, as a result of the socio-economic evolution. This discovery made its impact in the third and fourth decades of that century. Stree Patra was the first indication of the impact of those waves on our calm composed shores.

Even since the beginning of the 20th century in Bengal, especially in the middle east of Bengal, distinctiveness has become a strong force in life. In an instructive discourse on an evolutionary process of this society Dr. Niharajan says that in the narrow space of conjugacy is at the micro level of husband – wife relationship as against the total level of larger family, modern husband and wife wish for the survival and secure personal relationship.

“In a mother-in-law conquered family the identity of the woman does not lie in attaining the position of a daughter in law, more important identity lies in the recognition of a close independent family – exclusive conjugal relationship. This sense of individualism expresses itself in a longing for an independent subsistence for the woman as a woman quite distinct from her husband in the Bengali society. The inevitable result of this sense of individuality is the sense of sexual freedom of the woman.” The personality and sexual reliance of Binodini in Tagore’s Choker Bali are the inevitable results of this twentieth century concept of Individualism.

In the Indian society the occurrence of child widow became inevitable in middle – class homes because of the custom of disparate marriage between tender aged girls and old men. Then on the one hand their harsh life-style bring them untold miseries and on the other hand their natural youthful growth and withdrawn sexual urges helped develop a socially objectionable prohibited sex relationship with the younger male members of the family. The sex feelings that arise in the mind of Binodhini very naturally make her desirous of the Mahendra – Asha conjugality. Again the jealousy that has been created in her seeing the excess of fondness in Bihari for Asha is another of repressed sexual feelings. Tagore writes : “Bihari could not see Binodhini’s face in the dark, envy flashed on her face.”

Binodhini's desire for establishing a covert illicit relationship with Mahendra seems to have a Freudian outlook. Rabindranath Tagore has portrayed two different personas of Binodhini. In fact she embodies two opposite personality of a woman – she is the source of familial and societal good, well-being and she is unhelpful. Tagore has made extensive experiments on women's liberation and sexual freedom in a number of novels in order to express his views on the gender issue. But the trend of his feminist ideas is not uniform in all his works. In Choker Bali his feminism beats recoil ultimately, but in the short story entitled Nashtanir, which was composed in the same span when Chokerbali was written, he is progressive in portraying the triangular love. In Chaturanga, he required to strike a hard blow on the citadel of conservative by bringing about widow remarriage.

Damini of Chaturanga is a rebel. She has been a rebel since the death of her husband. In the thin thread of her conjugal life there was no love, only her life had become subjected to untold misery by the 'tyranny of devotion. So the insatiate desire of her body and mind has taken the form of a revolt after the death of her husband. In Lilanandaswamy's ashram the women devotee would be struck dumb by seeing Damini's tricks. Her dress was not like that of a widow's. A short while after the arrival of Sachish in the ashram, she undergoes a change which is nothing but her infatuation for love. The hard shell of her rising burnt suddenly.

Though conscious of her individual freedom, Damini cannot deny the truth of her love for Sachish. Sachish's cruel refusal-symbolized by the kick which has shorted of her slowly towards death-is the only positive feature towards her life. Her confession to Sibilas before her death : This pain is my secret wealth, my touchstone. This is the dowry which helps me to come to you, or am I fit for you? Added to her femininity.

However even if in the literal sense it means the drawback of the progressivism services Rabindranath Tagore has created in the twilight years of his life the true modern woman in fact the indian edition of new woman. His heroines are independent minded women believe in woman empowerment and are not disinclined to sexual plurality by asset of her sexual freedom.

WORKS CITED

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