

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE WORKS OF SALMAN RUSHDIE

Dr. Vaidya Madan Bansi

Asst. Professor
MSS'S Arts, Commerce &
Science College Ankushnagar, India

Abstract

The aim of this research paper is to study of Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses* and *Midnight Children*. Female Image is very important in two domains, politics and religion and society. The major role of women in the postcolonial society. The religion and nationalism are the foundation that oppose the Western colonialism. The nationalism presents female as a major bearers of traditions economics progress permits theme to make the improvements in their situations. Women are allowed to access the educational system and another. According to the Hindu customs, females are the only caretakers of the house. This research paper only study the psychological and emotional perspective of these female to understand their behaviour and character.

Keywords: Feminist, introspection, modernism, experience and traditionalism.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE WORKS OF SALMAN RUSHDIE

- Dr. Vaidya Madan Bansi

Introduction of Novelist

Salman Rushdie is born in 19th June 1947. He is a British Indian novelist. He is perfect master in de-familiarization. His novel *Midnight Children* won the prestigious award Booker prize in 1981. His much more novels are set on Indian subcontinent. He present magical realism in his novels. Salman Rushdie's fictions are present western civilization. His fictions are the productions of valuable imagination.

Salman Rushdie discusses the role of women in the context of the society, nation, and politics. However it is very hard to determine that the role of women play in the novel is not very cool. Saleem Sinai, the chief character and the all-knowing narrator of the novel, claim that

Evelyn Lilith Burns didn't want much to do with me after that day; but, strangely enough, I was cured of her. (Women have always been the ones to change my life: Mary Pereira, Evie Burns, Jamila Singer, Parvati-the-witch must answer for who I am; and the Widow, who I'm keeping for the end; and after the end, Padma, my goddess of dung

(MC, 266).

The above statement of Saleem gave a chance to critics how novelist presents his debate on gender. There is no doubt that Salman Rushdie has used feministic approach in his work and goes on to judge the tough treatment meted out to females in the society, political and economic fields. According to few critics that novelist presented a women is

very problematic. Salman Rushdie presents novel *Midnight's Children* is hybridity which is innerly based on gender construction. Its appears, that some critics consider, that all the negativity of this discourse has been discussed through feminine characters as the manly characters are found to be in positive modes. The feministic critics who assert that the works of Salman Rushdie are misogynistic.

Aijaz Ahmad reprimands Salman Rushdie for creating a Gallery of women who are either frigid and desexualized . . . or demented and moronic . . . or dulled into nullity . . . or driven to despair, suicide, and sheer surreal.

Salman Rushdie never presents a bright image of women in his works. The novelist shows at least one female who is attractive and whose beauty attracts men towards her, for instance Pia Aziz in *Midnight's Children*. She is a colourful actress. She has been showed as aunt of Saleem and wife of Hanif on one hand while on the other she is a woman who belongs to Homi Catrack. She is, however, a drama queen. According to Saleem Sinai, who states:

My mumani-my aunty-the divine Pia Aziz: to live with her was to exist in the hot sticky heart of a Bombay talkie. In those days, my uncle's career in the cinema had entered a dizzy decline, and, for such is the way of the world, Pia's star had gone into decline along with his. In her presence, however, thoughts of failure were impossible. Deprived of film roles, Pia had turned her life into a feature picture, in which I was cast in an increasing number of bit-parts. (MC 335).

As Pia Aziz was incapable to act, she converts her life into a film. The novelist Salman Rushdie through her character tries to break the dominance of male bigotry by making her husband Hanif frightened of melodrama while Pia is clever to create the melodramatic atmosphere as much as possible. Pia notwithstanding the fact that she is a female, she is capable to create that magic which is more striking than the description of *Midnight's Children*. She has attractive charms that fascinate even Saleem who is a type of a horny man. It will correct to mention that she has the supremacy to seizure the attention of anyone who comes across her. Her fascination is spellbinding indeed. In a way it seems that Pia Azia has been presented as an empowered woman in the *Midnight's Children*. In the same way next female character Arjumand Harappa in *Shame* has been

presented as an empowered female having unique prettiness. She has been displayed on the character of empowered political leader of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto. In the *Shame*, she is the daughter of Iskander, who is a very strongest politician as well as a playboy. She also gets a widespread nickname “the Virgin Ironpants”.

The people has given the name because she has been rejected proposals of marriage suitors. She affections her father Iskander very deeply though he is a cruel and corrupt person. She remains unconscious to this dark aspect of her father and admires him and makes him a saintly martyr after his loss. Her feminine fascination is such that male and female- all feel attracted towards her. In this way, Arjumand Harappa character has been presented as an empowered woman in the *Shame*. The woman character, Ayesha in *The Satanic Verses*, has been treated as a prophetess of dream arrangements of Gibreel. The novelist presents Ayesha as the mover of messages from the angel Gibreel to the village people. It means she has been allocated a very significant role. When she brings the message to the people that Mishal, wife of Mirza Saeed Akhtar, has been suffering from disease cancer and that all the villagers must pay a visit the Mecca as a pilgrimage if they wish to remedy her of this illness. At the same time Ayesha promises the people that the Arabian Sea will give them the way by dividing its water into two amazingly. People believe her become her followers and finally start their pilgrimage. That is a different difficulty that these people of village are drowned in the sea, however its find her delightful way of encouragement people is incredible and this makes Ayesha an empowered woman in to the novel.

In the novel *Midnight's Children*, women characters like Parvati holds bewitching beauty; Jamila Singer, Emerald Zulfikar and Lila Sabarmati – all female characters are accessible as extraordinarily fascinating. In the novel some women play a minor role but they are also depicted as striking in their sexuality. The women character Sundari is a depicted as a beggar girl with charming face who is protected from blinding people. Then next women have a portrayal of twin sisters who are nameless in the novel:

In the town of Baud, on the Mahanadi river in Orissa, there was a pair of twin sisters who were already a legend in the region, because despite their impressive plainness they both possessed the ability of making every man who saw them fall

hopelessly and often suicidally in love with them, so that their bemused parents were endlessly pestered by a stream of men offering their hands in marriage to either or even both of the bewildering children; (MC 272)

The novelist presents women sexuality as a powerful device to finish male supremacy in this way novelist loss of masculine identity. In *Midnight's Children* women Parvati who protects Saleem from hiding him in the basket and taking him out of the Bangladesh, and this picture or role of Pravati makes her an empowered woman. Another female character Amina protects Nadir Khan by expenditure a long time in the care of him. Jamila Singer denotes her empowered women character when she exiles her brother missing from the Pakistani army because he valued illegal feelings for her. By offering attractive powerful female character, novelist Salman Rushdie gives value to them. In the *Midnight's Children* women are empowered lot of that they adopt a plentiful active role in the novel.

In this way, the novelist Salman Rushdie does not depict all the female characters in *Midnight's Children* in a destructive way. Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame* which is has focussed on history of Pakistan and denotes its political circumstances. This literary piece of work has been taken as a feminist novel. The novelist indicates his purpose by declaring that he is going to present women life in place of male life i.e. author means to write about the women empowerment. When study of the novel from the feminist perspective, researcher find that there is a work on the part of the novelist to challenge the man authority. There are female characters which are highlighted female's success and become symbolic sign of Pakistan whereas the men characters such as General Ziaul Haq and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto have been offered in satiric vein as they represent the rulers of history in Pakistan. In the novel, Mr. Shakil is representative of masculine behaviour gaols his three daughters in a mansion and dispossess them of their fundamental rights, therefore he becomes the object of satire on the part of the novelist. The female characters become a prey to authoritarianism on the part of the patriarchal world:

, to see my 'male' plot refracted, so to speak, through the prisms of its reverse and 'female' side. It occurs to me that the women knew precisely what they were up to — that their stories explain, and even subsume, the men's. Repression is a seamless

garment; a society which is authoritarian in its social and sexual codes, which crushes its women beneath the intolerable burdens of honour and propriety, breeds repressions of other kinds as well. Contrari-wise: dictators are always — or at least in public, on other people's behalf— puritanical. So it turns out that my 'male' and 'female'(Shame 181)

This statement of novelist Salman Rushdie denotes that this an unfairness which becomes the source of female suppression by patriarchal system. The world has become as a cage just as the mansion in which the three woman characters, Bunny, Chhuni, and Munnee had been captive. The author Salman Rushdie wants to carry home the point that this social inequality must be removed which has been continuing from of centuries. The novelist means to highlight the fact that the suppression of female will result in the partition of Indian community. These women characters symbolically represent the three splits as India rule, Pakistan rule and English rule. Salman Rushdie's presentation of Mr. Shakil's three daughters highpoints that three countries India, Pakistan and Britain, female are always at receiving ends at the hands of male controlled cultures. The feeling and emotions of female have been exploited. This thing has been offered by novelist in the way that one of the three sisters becomes pregnant. And then two sisters try to hide the sexual matter the shame. Illegal sexual matter denotes that the sexuality of female is still not esteemed therefore women fear in the society. In the novel *Shame* the novelist Salman Rushdie questions male authority which kills the female's desire for selfhood which loses its identity. Sufiya is born in national leader Raza Hyder rich family but she is deprived of any liberty and pleasure only because her father and mother had hoped to beget a male child. The novelist tries to launch the point that this treatment has become the greatest limitation in the empowerment of women. The life of Sufiya begins as an autistic female child who is utterly unconscious of her own self. She is treated in novel as an object of shame. This treatment shows that a female character is slave in the society. Regarding the suppression of female character in *Shame* novel, Samir Dayal remark:

Men and women in the Third world invariably seem condemned to a stereotypically feudal, patriarchal, or neocolonialist social structure in which women are subordinated. (48)

Sufiya Zinobia, being a defeated female character, becomes passive in unkindness of the fact. She is the protagonist character in the novel. She indeed, has been depicted as a marginal character. The point Salman Rushdie wants to bring home is that female should be empowered. They must be historicized as influential identities in the society. The character Sufiya becomes the personification of *Shame* forced by the society.

In this way, Salman Rushdie historicizes female character by presenting the dark side of her life making it a significant core perspective of this novel. The novelist highlight the few point that power must also be devoted in female therefore they may remain no more banished. The author wishes to awake the community integrity regarding the marginal potions of women; it should be rejected and women should be empowered.

Conclusion

Thus, the novelist Salman Rushdie raises his voice against the patriarchal as well as the matriarchal construct in *Shame* novel. The novelist looks to suggest that a female's search for own-identity should not finish up in an epiphany of numerous selves. This deprives of women identity which is required for the true personality of a woman. Salman Rushdie finish *Shame* novel on the note of bravery on the part of its major character Sufia who is slays of husband. She was an icon of shame. Husband dominates her and deprives her of her fundamental right and freedom of enjoying life. Novelist becomes success in showing that women as powerful players, not as charmed bodies. Salman Rushdie wants to stays woman with her husband not as a slave somewhat she has the power of enduring all trials for the sake of her family pride. This can be only happen when she is an empowered women.

Works Cited :

- 1) Ahmad, Aijaz. ***Salman Rushdie's Shame: Postmodernism, Migrancy and Representation of Women***. Economic and Political Weekly 1991;26(24):1461-1471.
2. Dayal, Samir. ***The Liminalities of Nation and Gender: Salman Rushdie's Shame***. The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association 1998; 31(2):39-62.
3. Grewal, Inderpal. ***Marginality, Women and Shame***. Reading Rushdie: Perspectives on the Fiction of Salman Rushdie. Ed. D.M. Fletcher. Editions Rodopi 1994,123- 144.
4. Rushdie, Salman. ***Midnight's Children***. Random House 2006.
5. Rushdie, Salman. ***Shame***. Vintage 1995.
6. Pathak, R.S. ***History and the Individual in the Novels of Rushdie***. Eds G.R. Taneja and R.K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Indian Society for Commonwealth studies, 1988. Print.
7. Wolpert, Stanley. ***A New History of India***. 1977. New York: Oxford UP, 1989. Print.
8. Cundy, Catherine. ***Rushdie's women***." Wasafiri 9.18 (1993): 13-17. Print.
9. Natarajan, Nalini. ***Woman, Nation, and Narration in Midnight's Children***. Feminist Theory and the Body. Ed. Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick. New York: Routledge, 1999. 399-409. Print.
10. Upstone, Sarah. ***Domesticity in Magical-Realist Postcolonial Fiction: Reversals of Representation in Salman Rushdie's Midnight Children***. Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies 28.12 (2007): 260-284. Print