

DENIAL OF FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY IN K.R. MEERA'S MEERAYUDE NOVELLAKAL

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Abstract

The collection of novellas portrays that how women are not safe in their home, and in their society. They are denied any freedom in their life and therefore no real life. This project focuses on the sufferings and denials faced by women in society and even in their own homes.

The title 'Denial of female subjectivity' itself portrays that the women were consider as the mere objects for men's pleasure and for their needs. Women denied their own ownerships and they were ruled over by the men in this patriarchal society. The feelings and the experience of the women is not accounted by men. Each and every women in these stories failed to take decision freely and the men in this stories denied the subjectivity of women. Women should find their subjectivity and live freely according to their own wish.

Keyword: feminism, Sexuality, female subjectivity.

1.INTRODUCTION

The most productive and at the same time most revolutionary movement of the younger theories of literary criticism in general and the contextual are the approaches in particular is feminist literary theory. Feminist movement mainly focuses on the problems faced by women. Feminist theory is one of the major contemporary sociological theories which analyse the status of women and men in society with the purpose of using that knowledge to better women's lives. Feminists theorists have also started to question the difference between men and women, including how race, class, ethnicity and age intersect with gender. Feminist theory is more concerned with giving a voice to women and high-lighting the various ways women have contributed to society. Feminism is the idea that women should have

social, intellectual, sexual and economic rights equal to those of men. It involves various movements, theories and philosophies, which concerns with issues of gender difference that advocate equality for women, campaign for women's right.

2.DENIAL OF FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY IN K.R.MEERA'S MEERAYUDE NOVELLAKAL

First wave feminist fought for civil rights and political rights. And second wave of feminism which fought for increased freedom of women's expression first wave feminism focused mainly on overturning legal obstacles to equality, and second wave feminism addressed a wide range of issues, including unofficial inequalities, official legal inequalities, family, sexuality, the work place and the reproductive rights. With the priceless help of women's studies which later developed into gender studies, feminist scholars have developed all kinds of effectual concepts in a effort of trying to explain and fight the subordination of women. Society expected a certain kind of behaviour from men and women and from childhood onwards they treat children discriminately. Characteristics like power and aggressiveness have been connected with men, while at the same time women are expected to be sweet and in some cases passive.

K.R Meera is a versatile writer, she wrote several stories based on the issues faced by womens. One of her collection of novellas that is *Aa Maratheyum Marannu Marannu Njan, Meera Sadhu, Malakhayude Marukukal* was also a feminist touch story.

Aa Maratheyum Marannu Marannu Njan is a heart – wrenching tale, the author describes the abuse faced by the protagonist, Radhika over a period of several years.

The author captures the intricacies of human emotions, hope, despair, helplessness.

On the way to town, Achan left Radhika on the way side. He forgot her. She was ten year old then. He left her in a small shed where a signboard saying 'Urinating here is strictly prohibited'. Then, he went to a nearby bar. When he had downed some hard stuff, Achan remembered the local prostitute very famous in those places. That day there was a raid in the prostitute's house. Her father was arrested. Radhika was dead tired by waiting and waiting for her father. Darkness fell. An old man went up to her and told her that he will take her to her father. He took her to his hut and fed her rice gruel and tapioca. When she was half asleep, he raped her. The old man was a woodcutter. A piercing scent filled the room. "And thus the drama unfolds in the shade of the eponymous tree of Radhika's innerscape. It is telling that as a ten-year-old left waiting for her father, she is raped by a woodcutter 'like a hacksaw tearing into wood'" (Devika 69).

That is a memory which drives Radhika crazy, hitting her like a thunderbolt and hurling her to the floor. It pierces right through her brain cells, smashes them up, and makes her quite unlike herself for some time. Many years later Christy, her ex-lover re- entered her life, bringing it all back. That was a strange day. His re-entry was completely accidental. He came to her home to give a petition to her, because she is an advocate. While seeing his appearance with a large black umbrella, remembered her father and the miserable memories which she had faced in her childhood.

Christy was not in a hurry. His steps were weary. He crossed the field cautiously and climbed onto the bank of the canal. Fixing his gaze for a moment on the canal in which the sky-eyed fish swam. He pushed the wooden-barred gate open, twirled his umbrella and appeared before her in no hurry at all. He asked him whether she recognised him and he introduced himself. The recognition of her that, this was Christy sent waves of shock through her. Her brain cells splintered. She was thrown back into her childhood and to the dreadful memory her age ten. Radhika was over-run by that memory. Christy told about his need. Radhika came back into the present. Now she was not a skinny child, but a

housewife but thirty-six years old, eyes with dark shadows.

Christy wanted to give petition about a priest in his church. That's why he came to visit Radhika. After enquiring the details, Radhika took the case and sent a complaint to that priest. By hearing these news, Christy's brothers came to visit Radhika and they told that Christy was a mental patient. And that day he went to Painkulam for shock treatment. He is angry with the priest because he wanted a certificate of marriage which happened in that church. It was his and Radhika's secret marriage. By learning Christy's condition, Radhika became upset and sad. She remembered their lovely days and telling him about her past miserable experience during her childhood. Christy became sad after hearing her miserable experience.

Radhika's and Christy's first meeting is in a dramatic way. Radhika's father became a mental patient, their family were run by the help of her uncle. When uncle died, there is no way to sustain their life. So a man called 'Lonachen' and his wife 'Thankomma' took Radhika's mother to another place for a job. But after her mother's death, she realised about her mother's job. Lonachen and Thankomma forced Radhika to do her mother's job that is, prostitution. She accepted their wish and went with them. When she was in a hotel room, a tall man and sharp looks came near to her. He forced her to become naked but she refused. She was brutally raped by him. That person is Christy. After that incident, she went to Law College. There she saw him as her senior. He came near to the juniors, then he saw her and came near to her just to introduce. He made fun of her by asking some questions. She took a decision to stop her studies. After many days, Christy visited her home and told her to come to college and said that he will pay her academic fees. After that incident, they become very close and fell in love with each other.

They went to a temple which was in a mountain. They spent a whole day there. They both fell blindly in love. Christy had a lodge in town. They both spend their free time in the terrace of that building. After few days Radhika realised that she was pregnant. She became very happy to learn that. When she told that news to Christy, he became so mad and irritated. He told her that he didn't want a child. He always want to live freely and

love Radhika. He considered himself as Lord Krishna because he wants to only love girls and didn't want to become a family man. But when they were together, she had warned her that he will become a father. At that time he accepted that and made a name for his child 'Aristotle Christy'. But when it happened he told to her to kill the life which was growing in her womb. But that life wasn't born. In between these incidents they went to Painkulam church. There they get married illegally, without anyone's presence.

But after these incidents they broke up. They both lead a life of their wish. After completing her graduation and post-graduation, she was doing her M.A and experiencing in court as an advocate. At that time, Ajith's proposal was came to her. At first, she rejected the marriage proposal of him by saying that she was once married. After few days Ajith came to the court and proposed once again, at that time she accepted it. And their marriage happened with a small function. When she was with Ajith also the days of her childhood and days with Christy haunted her badly. She meet Christy regularly and she became so disturbed and failed in every case that she took. At last she went to see Christy at his lodge. He was there. His room was on the top floor, it was dirty. When he saw Radhika, he became so happy and they both went to the terrace and meet sexually. When she got up in the morning she realised that she was full naked and Christy was not with her. He took all her dress. When she searched for Christy, she heard the sound of washing from the ground. Christy took all her dress to wash and after washing clothes he went to Painkulam to take shock treatment. He didn't even bother about the pathetic condition of Radhika. She felt very sad about her present condition in the day light.

From the childhood itself Radhika went through so much of hardships and queries. She got sexually abused in her childhood. Radhika is a prey of patriarchal society. So many women's like Radhika are still in our society.

Meera Sadhu is a powerful novella by K.R Meera. Thulasi is the protagonist in this story. She is a brilliant IIT student. Vinayan, her colleague introduced her to Madhavan, who came to their institute to take class and to write an article. Thulasi and Madhavan get very close. They both phone each other every day. One day,

Thulasi's mother get serious with cancer in her womb, at that time her mother wished to see the marriage of her three daughters – Thulasi, Thamara, Mallika. By hearing the news of Thulasi's marriage, Madhavan came near to her with a terrible mind. Thulasi told him that her fiancé is Vinayan and she is ready to marry him and love him. At that time Madhavan gets angry and told about his love towards her. But she got shocked by hearing the news. Madhavan had twenty-seven ex-lovers. He told her, all his affairs. He didn't want to reject any proposals from women. His concept was that, while accepting the proposals, the women gets happy. And he loved to make them happy. He didn't go for searching any lady love. All his lovers came to him. For the first time, in his life he searched for a lady and wished to have a lady, that is Thulasi. But Thulasi told that whenever she thought about Madhavan, an image of twenty-seven girls and Madhavan in a room is seen in her mind. By hearing this Madhavan gets shamed and upset.

Thulasi was eagerly waiting to tell everything to Vinayan. But when she called him, his response was unexpected and he didn't show interest to talk to her at that time. He only talks to her in a formal way, he is not at all romantic. At that time she realises the romantic love and behaviour of Madhavan. She decided to go with Madhavan and they got married and flew to Delhi. They lead a very lovable life there. Madhavan took care Thulasi like a small child. They get more attached to each other. After two months of marriage, when they both were cleaning their house, a women named Lilly came to their home and ran to Madhavan and hugged him tightly and cried emotionally. Lilly was Madhavan's twenty sixth lover. By seeing that Thulasi, gets a shock. And Madhavan saw the anger in Thulasi's face. After that Lilly went to the hotel room, Thulasi becomes so scared and gets a by headache. Madhavan took her to the bed and she goes to sleep. At that time he went to the hotel were Lilly is accomadated. He spent the whole night with Lilly. By his sweet words, he adored Thulasi. She blindly put faith in him. But after three years, Thulasi get orphaned in their house. A wall of mirror developed between them. Madhavan started to get attached to other girls. They got a child in their life. She can't live without him. After having their second child, Madhavan is totally changed. He started love other girls. He started to accept the proposals from other girls. At that time Thulasi really missed Vinayan. She dreamed about a life

with Vinayan. But it won't happen anymore. Her career and prosperous life as a scientist is only a dream to him. She really regrets about her decision to marry Madhavan. She heard about the new affair of Madhavan. She took her children and came to her own home, just to live for two three days. But she didn't want to go back to Madhavan. After few days Madhavan wrote a letter to her that a girl named bhama want to marry him. That he want divorce from Thulasi, she thought about her life and her children's life. She took a decision to give divorce to him. She told to him to meet him in a particular place. Before going to see Madhavan, Thulasi killed both her sons with love. She didn't want her children to grow up without father. He came to that place with his new lover. He introduced her to Thulasi. Thulasi also get introduced. She signed the divorced notice, and asked him to drop her. He accepted that and dropped her home. Then she told that, she want his love last time. They both meet sexually. Their small babies were totally cold like snow on the other room and their body were filled with ants. Thulasi decided to become a Meerasadhu in Brindhavan as a lover of Lord Krishna. There one day she saw Madhavan on Brindhavan. He came in search for Thulasi. But she didn't want him in her life again. Her life experience with him was that much painful. She tried to adjust, but his actions and reactions were so much hurtful. She totally avoided him, when he came to Brindhavan. She shaves her head and become a maai in Brindhavan to serve Lord Krishna.

Madness erupted in me again in the night when I was alone. Madhavan's face took form whenever I looked. Why did he accept me without love for me? Who was I to him? A used and thrown mud pot cracked into pieces. Scattered in different directions. Never will it acquire its original form. It will never know its capacity. (My translation 116)

After so many days she saw Vinayan in Brindhavan. By seeing her and her appearance, Vinayan gets shocked and talks to her. She tells that her marriage life was a tragedy. But Vinayan said that she should go with Madhavan. She refuses that and leads a life of monk in that temple by serving Lord Krishna and the old women. At that time also, she didn't hate Madhavan. But defeated him with love. Madhavan realises the value of Thulasi in his life, and he called her back, but she

rejected it and lead a life in Govindhdeva temple in Brindhavan. She lived in the third floor of that temple and end her life within her room. Her life got tragic because of the selfishness of Madhavan. He is also the representative of the patriarchal society. Thulasi's life, education, knowledge, ambition all were only a dream. K.R Meera's novellas had a theme of feminism. All her lady characters gets abused physically and mentally. In *Malakhayude Marukukal* also she told about a woman who had a troubled life because of a man. Each and every women had some sort of disturbance in their life. All that happened because of some men.

The story '*Malakhayude Marukukal*' centered on a lady named Angelina and her two daughters, Ann and Irene. Angelina had unconditional love towards her daughters. Children also have much care and love with each other. Their life was very happy and charming. But Angelina had a sad past about her husband, Alexander- who is a prisoner. Before marriage she was a typical lady like all other women with lots of expectations and dreams about marriage life. Her husband sold her body to his friend. This incident was a terrible shock to Angelina. She hated her husband. "After four years of love, they got married without the permission of their family and when he(Alex) got troubled in his life he sells the body of his wife(Angela) to his friend for money"(my translation 87).

Her elder daughter Ann was born to Alexander, but Ann was also afraid of him. Angelina faced lots of problems to run her family financially. So she began to search for a private company for a job. She made illegal relationship with all company owners where she had worked. One day while searching for new job, she met Narendhran, an ordinary man and a company owner. He was also a husband but completely unsatisfied with his wife Sunitha. Angelina and Narendhran become very close in both mentally and physically. He had a mole on his face that was liked by Angelina. She always told him that she wanted his mole.

Irene was born to Narendhran but Angelina never told this matter to Irene. She also had the same mole in her face. Narendhran was ready to take his paternity. But Angelina disagrees because he already had a family. She doesn't want to break his family life. She only requested for his presence on Irene's birthdays.

The things changed upside down on Irene's birthday night. Angelina bought cakes to celebrate the special day. They also invited Narendhran. The only guest for that function is Narendhran. But at that time her husband Alex came to their home. He was released from the jail that week. "Ann and Irene came to the room at that time. When Ann saw him, she embraced Irene. She remembered her pappu. To her, pappu was a mysterious fear. Irene looked at her mom's and sister's face and bent her lips" (my translation 92). Alex wanted to kill his family. On that special day, Angelina was murdered by him in front of her daughters.

He approaches her without any reply. Her nice home. Good children. Then, her smile. His blood boiled. He seized the knife. Angela trying to say something with her smiling lips. But he gets angry at her. Knife pierces her fleshy abdomen without any defence. (my translation 92)

In the absence of their mother, the daughters seem extremely sad and alone. Ann tries to save her younger sister. But the sisters get separated from each other. Ann was taken by Alexander's family, and they abandoned Irene. These scenes are really heart breaking. Everybody wants to settle Irene in a poor home. Narendhran had extreme pain on this situation. Irene requested him to come for her birthdays and spent time with her. He shows a smile towards her with an aching heart.

3. CONCLUSION

Because of two men (Narendhran and Alexander) in this novella, four women get affected. They are Angelina, Ann, Irene, Sunitha. The actions of these male characters destroyed the whole life of these women. K.R Meera deals with the issues faced by women in this society through her novellas. Men always consider women as a mere object for sexuality. They want women only to fulfill their desires.

Power and domination are central to the construction of male sexuality. Men assert their power to women to liberate themselves from their guilty feelings through their words and actions. In these novellas, Meera portrays about the hardships of women in this particular society. From childhood itself women feel inferior because they

were grown up in a patriarchal society. Women are getting harassed by men in the society.

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