



Portrayal of dreams and psyche of Pakistani women in the short stories of shaila abdullah's 'Beyond the cayenne wall'

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Abstract

The purpose of the following study is to examine the short stories of the celebrated Pakistani diaspora author Shaila Abdullah through the identification and conscious consideration of dreams and its effect on women psyche. The human relations fail not because of misfortune or misunderstanding of words but due to their dreams and silence in relation. Shaila Abdullah's protagonists' in 'Beyond the Cayenne Wall' highlights the dreams of women and its impact in their relationship with other people and society.

There are mainly two primary aim of this study, taken from the short stories of Shaila Abdulah. The first aim seeks to explain the importance of dreams as perceived by the female protagonists; secondly, the paper seeks to explain the women psyche as a result of women's dream and resistance against patriarchy. It is evident that one cannot deny or ignore the exploitation of patriarchy and that from a feminist's point of view, patriarchy as a system is essentially evil. To understand women's clash with patriarchy, to fulfill their dreams, it needs to be defined.

Carl Gustav Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist and founder of the school of analytical psychology. He proposed and developed the concepts of the extroverted and introverted personality, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. His work has been influential not only in psychology, but in religion, literature and education as well. The famous psychologist Carl Jung was interested in the collective unaware or the primitive images and ideas that reside in every human being's psyche. This often appears in the form of dreams, visions, and fantasies. These images provoke strong emotions that are beyond the explanation of reason. The association between dreams and reality mould multiculturalism by way of a protest for social justice.

Keywords: Carl Jung theory, post colonialism, hybridity, double consciousness, identity crisis

Introduction

Dreams have always offered the psychoanalytical study to the work of art. The psyche of the protagonist can be understood as we interpret the dream or the dreamer. The women of South East Asian countries have been traditionally portrayed in literature as gentle polite, submissive, warm and soft hearted. The scenario in which they are kept is that they were put into the subordination to the male members of the society. They were in many places, confined to the family, and were also divided the equal rights to men. Later on in the initial period of the twentieth century, there were changes observed in the condition of women.

The spread of women education gave way to the self-confidence, economic independence and respect for themselves. Women also tried to find out the reason that why were they marginalized, exploited and disrespected by the men till now. The spread of awareness about feminism through literature and other means made them strong and they started to take part in the development of society with full conviction. So many renowned authors presented the female characters with a change of attitude fighting against the patriarchal society and emerging out from the darkness. Women finally started to oppose the role they had been enforced to carry on without their consent, they refused to be subordinated.

As in the story "Moment of reckoning", Ayesha is accused for not giving grandson to the family and therefore her mother in law is getting her son marry again. This leads

Ayesha to revolt and take decision to run away and she could do so because she was confident and this confidence was due to her education, as she says – "Not if that fool is going to marry someone else. I'm not a goat that you can replace with another. I have some dignity. I am a graduate, for God's sake. A Chaudhry cannot walk all over me." (Beyond the Cayenne wall", p- 52). Remarriage of her husband Saeed is not acceptable to Ayesha and thus she decides to run away with her ex-lover.

The women characters of different stories from "Beyond the Cayenne Wall" don't possess same attitude and outlook towards life. In spite of their being so different one from another, portraying people from different geographical regions, different social groups, and different religions, they are surprisingly unanimous when it comes to depicting the position of women dreams and the expectations that are placed upon them.

Interestingly enough, it is not only men that are trying to remind women of what their traditional roles are, but also women—often even more rigorously than men do the same. While reading the short stories of Abdullah, the readers therefore get a more or less accurate idea of what is and what is not acceptable for a woman to do, to think, and to say.

Women now don't cry on her fate but know how to change it and want to live happy. Women dare to dream and have the capacity to set examples for others. Dreams may differ but what unites them is their great passion and similar suppression. Where Ayesha plans to elope when she could

no longer hold her relationship with her husband Saeed, Shiwali on the other hand although hates her husband Arbaz still decides not to opt for such an escape instead would concentrate on changing her circumstances by giving a second chance to her marriage. The female characters in the novels come from different geographical regions, have different social and caste background, and profess different religions, reflecting thus the diversity of culture, which would be difficult or rather impossible to generalize. Thus, in Abdullah's short story, we find different characters of women and their reaction is also different in similar situations too.

Ania Loomba in her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* argues that women postcolonial writers have (usually) even more specific "mission" in their literature such as "claiming their own place within the national polity".

I don't agree that this is the case of Shaila Abdullah, if we consider her to be a postcolonial writer. It is more complicated in her case, as she is originally from Pakistan and now residing at Texas. However, her roots are from Pakistan and writes about people and their life in Pakistan and Pakistani Muslims residing in other parts of the world, but it doesn't mean that she is writing on behalf of Pakistan. In fact she is neither trying to say on behalf of any nation nor trying to claim her place within national polity. She is simply describing – as postcolonialism is said to be descriptive rather than evaluative. Abdullah can't be just counted as a Pakistani author but she shares the dreams of women identity and traumas that unites women from all over the globe. Shaila Abdullah's short stories employ various styles and forms usually within a story. The author of second generation faced with the conflicts and troubles concerning their identities. Her stories move from place to place, different nations, from one culture to another, with no clear sense of belonging to home or abroad. This is most obvious in the works of Shaila Abdullah. We can say that she differs in various aspects even though her intent is the same as many other postcolonial women authors– to put light on the postcolonial situation and show the vices of contemporary multicultural society by following the dreams that confirms her personality.

By applying Carl Jung's personality analysis through the dreams of the protagonists of the short stories, it can be concluded that the characters created by Abdullah becomes feminist because of the dreams they chase. Where in some stories, we find submissive and meek women dare to

Dream on the other hand smart, educated women are adjusting in order to create harmony. Abdullah has very beautifully created women from all walks of life in her short story collection

'*Beyond the Cayenne Wall*' and it is difficult to understand a woman psyche as well as her strength, dreams, and to what extent they may go if they decide. The dreams and their fulfilment have psychological effect on women. Abdullah has created optimistic women and through her protagonist gave a lesson to everyone. Women from any country of the world can connect with one or the other story of Abdullah and even can find solution or a way to tackle her situation. Abdullah created a new woman who laughs, cries, fights, cares and dares to dream breaking the stereotype women of the earlier periods.

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