



THE SUPPRESSION OF IDENTITY IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S WIFE

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Abstract

The present paper analyses the self- Identity of the central female character in Bharati Mukherjee's Wife. This novel depicts a feminist perspective, creating an image of the oppressed woman Dimple, the protagonist of the novel, struggles with her identity. She is subject to the desires and caprices of others and has been socialized to be unaware of her own desire for an independent identity. She believes that she must be a wife as per our culture and tradition, but she is longing for freedom which she does not have. And also she is unaware that such a role will not grant her that kind of desires.

Keywords: Sufferings, Oppressed, Identity.

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the most famous immigrant Indo-American novelist and short story writer of 21st century. In her novels, she has told the sufferings of women especially through her own personal experiences in crossing the cultural boundaries. She was the second of three daughters of Sudhir Lal and Bina Mukherjee, born on 27th july of 1940 to a wealthy upper-middle class Bengali Hindu – Brahmin family in Kolkota, India. In Bharati Mukherjee's novels, one can see the sufferings of the South Asian protagonists who is torn between the culture and tradition of the foreign countries and also longs for self identity. Mukherjee published her first two novels when she was in Canada; *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972) and *Wife* (1975). Her difficult experiences as an immigrant in Canada can also be seen in the themes of her 1985 short-fiction collection, *Darkness*. The present paper analyses the female sufferings and suppression of identity in Mukherjee's novel *Wife*.

Mukherjee's Second novel, *Wife*, opens in Calcutta with Dimple Dasgupta's father looking for her a suitable mate of proper caste, an engineer, with the aid of scouring matrimonial advertisements. After we first meet Dimple she is fantasizing about marriage, to not an engineer, but



to a neurosurgeon. She imagines it is going to convey her freedom, love, and an extra desirable existence. Existence has previously been easily a rehearsal for actual lifestyles, the sort of precise life that includes marriage; for marriage brings opportunities that single women are denied in Indian tradition, and Dimple longs for these freedoms higher than anything.

Dimple worries that she is just not fair or bosomy enough for marriage. From the start Dimple seeks to control her identity through whatever approach as a way to become extra desirable. Dimple studied at Calcutta institution however is unable to take her exams, over which she despairs since and not utilizing a B.A. She will likely be viewed much less marketable. She is provided as unformed and malleable; she with ease adapts and adjusts in line with others. Mukherjee offers a feminist point of view, developing a picture of the oppressed woman who struggles along with her identification but does now not know it. Dimple is subject to the wants and whims of others and has been socialized to be unaware of her possess desire for an independent identification. She believes that she wishes to be a wife, however her longing is confused along with her want for freedom. She can be unaware that such a function won't provide her these desires.

Dimple's Calcutta neighbor Parameta Ray, is colorfully drawn and represents all that Dimple would like to be. Pixie is a gregarious go-getter who eventually achieves the popularity and fanfare for which Dimple longs. Dimple will measure herself in opposition to Pixie for the period of as Pixie becomes within the commencing a working girl and ultimately the wife of a movie celebrity. However Pixie, too, is confined in her skills, as she is content material being "Mrs. P Bagchi of Calcutta and Bombay" (W 65). Dimple seeks guide and confirmation for her lifestyles by means of quite a lot of media channels. She writes omit concern-Walla c/o Eve's Beauty-Basket in Bombay for guidance, now not of the beauty style, however as if she perhaps some type of guru ready to support in emotional matters as good. Dimple is compelled with the aid of the authority of print, however her letters go either unanswered or pushed aside, further highlighting her isolation in society.

Dimple's husband, Amit Kumar Basu, is ultimately discovered in the papers; Dimple is not, however, the Basu family's first option. Even as the wedding is superb, it is clear that the wedding may not be. The first of Dimple's sequence of disappointments comes in learning that Basu is a brief Prince Charming instead than a tall one. Now her marriage does not prove her hope and dream.



Instead than blossoming with the aid of gaining a less attackable identity as a married lady, she finds that with each day she turns into much less enthused. First her mother-in-law takes away her identify, preferring as an alternative Nandini. Then the newlyweds transfer into Dimple's mother-in-law's, where they reside a long way-less-than-glamorous lifestyles. And Amit wants Dimple to behave robotically, knowing simply what to do and say to thrill him.

Dimple finds herself further removed, now in an even more unfamiliar society when they immigrate to America. She sees in those Indians who surround her further reflections of what she will have to and must no longer be. Meena Sen represents the superb Indian woman, perpetually convinced along with her role and her identity as a wife and mom. Ina Mullick represents the reverse severe, an emboldened pants -carrying woman who is set to reside freely and to also free Dimple. Dimple sees in herself neither.

Dimple is solid into the world of the "one-of-a-kind," exiled, unassimilated, however furthermore unable to fully embody her role as Bengali housewife. As such she is depicted as a personality to whom things arise. Staying dwelling, she is remoted and grows more and more depressed. She is indifferent and starts to confuse her reality with television. She reacts to others passively, under no circumstances actively conducting socializing or house responsibilities. She sleeps virtually all day, cooks when important, and increasingly watches television and reads magazines at the same time her husband time and again inquires what she does all day. Amit begins to grow to be whatever of a sketch: at one time he is even imagined as a profile in a whiskey ad; he is in lots of approaches cast on account that the one-dimensional personality of the matrimonial ad. Dimple even has a quick affair with the American Milt Glasser, from which she is equally indifferent. It is as if the sexual act passed off in a surreal dream world like television. Dimple appears continually absent, however there may be violence underneath her passive exterior.

Earlier than they left Calcutta for America, Dimple had observed herself pregnant. Unable to face motherhood, she jumped rope unless she aborted her fetus. Foreshadowing the climax of the unconventional, Dimple had then exclaimed that it wasn't murder, that she might on no account commit murder. There may be little early proof that Dimple will act violently toward others, considering that the violence she fantasizes about is essentially self-imposed; she imagines her possess suicide most traditionally, compiling a report of various methods to be triumphant and even



utilizing it as a system of "counting sheep" to sleep. Being decided useless would furnish her some type of identification. But once, when Amit sneaks as much as embody her, she lashes at him with a knife, reflecting how impulsive her nature will also be when she responds instinctively to the uncontrollable fears she has of her environment.

Wife ends climactically, with Dimple committing murder in the end. She kills Amit by way of stabbing at the mole on his face, her realities so harassed that she shouldn't be thoroughly aware of her own moves. Again it is depicted like a dream. She is symbolically free of the vigour Amit and their marriage had over her through this violent act and seems to hope to include such freedom on the grounds that she believes ladies on television get away with homicide. It is ironic that with a name like Dimple, she chooses to kill Amit by way of stabbing at his mole. Her identity might effortlessly be described as the mild indentation for which she is named, and in vengeance she has sought Amit's rather more identifiable facial aspects because the goal for her frustrations.

Probably the killing of her husband can be seen as being Western, as Mukherjee has declared in an interview:

“Dimple Das Gupta of *Wife* rises to murder her domineering husband, something she never would have done in India. Here she would have killed herself. But in America transformation allows her to kill him. She is my dark-faced female Clint Eastwood”.

(Express Magazine, March 11, 1990)

Dimple's identification, in the direction of the novel, is continuously suppressed by means of specific commanding authorities. Like so many Bengali ladies she has been brought as much as consider that her romantic illusions will come what may be made a truth by means of marital bliss. Even in imagining her husband, she images a person from first-rate commercial, joining the great parts from every. She additionally expects marriage to guide her to a brand new dimension of self-expression. However ultimately her marriage leads her to more tricky bondage. Even the discussion regarding her physical features are very agonizing. When Amit's family involves investigate cross-check her, they don't take delivery of the actual identification of this woman. They superimpose their possess notions on her. They do not take delivery of her as she is. The most important trait of any man or woman's identification, the name, itself is rejected by means of them. They do not like the



name Dimple, hence change her title as Nandini. This is the first assault on her identity which consequently grows extra deeper.

The ultimate act of killing her husband is an outburst of her prolonged suppressed self-identity. It's an outward manifestation of her powerlessness and her lack of ability to out of the rut that she finds herself in. The homicide has liberated her from fitting a prisoner of ghetto unbearable to her free pondering mind as she descends into despair, madness and homicide. Though murder is a misdirected act of self-declaration of her identification, it's the influence of her lengthy standing suppression, subjugation, depression, negligence and rootlessness.

In *Wife*, Bharati Mukherjee had portrayed the enigma of existence, the hollowness of the Indian institutionalized marriage. Bharati Mukherjee had seen the stereotypical sample of conventional Indian marriage. Being the creator of modern-day time, she has depicted in her fiction the issues confronted by Indian and different other world immigrants who attempt to assimilate into North American existence styles. Mukherjee focuses upon sensitive protagonists who lack a steady experience of individual and cultural identification and are victimized by way of racism, chauvinism and different types of social oppression.

The novel is written in three sections, the primary taking place in Calcutta, the second in the America even as Amit and Dimple are living with Sens, and the third when they are subletting an condominium in New York. *Wife* develops among the themes for which Mukherjee's work is celebrated in her depiction of the existence of one girl exiled from her country and herself.

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