

Chap Prevailing Ancestors in Dina Mehta's Brides Are Not for Burning

M.kokila¹, V. Sheela²

¹M.A., M.Phil., Nadar Saraswathi College of arts and science, Theni

²M.A English, Nadar Saraswathi College of arts and science, Theni

Abstract- Patriarchy is the most relentless and extensive theory. It takes many different forms but the ideas behind it called male domination which exists not just as a product of capitalism but as something quite separate from the capitalist mode of production. Patriarchy contains little understanding of how women's oppression and the nature of the family have changed historically. Patriarchy is a set of social relationships which provide for the collective domination of men over women. It has manifested itself in social, legal, political, and economic organization of different cultures. Dina Mehta's plays deal with violence against women. It also tries to define women's theatre against male-dominated ideologies and to represent the under-represented aspect of sexual abuse in women's lives. *Brides Are Not for Burning* won the first prize in a worldwide competition sponsored by the BBC in 1979. The play deals with social problems of dowry and the harassment of brides who don't bring enough dowries.

Index Terms- Patriarchy, Dowry, subjugation.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of patriarchy is pendulous. It changes from occasion to occasion and position to position. Patriarchy in literature is essentially concerned with the representation of men in society. Woman is considered more as a product of cultural norms and restrains rather than as a creation of nature. Most of feministic critiques inferred that 'gender'. It was designed basically to facilitate the smooth functioning of society for validating the advantage of men. Whatever the power or status is accorded to women in the society or culture only rates them down inferior and women are dominated by their male counterparts. In this context, Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* rightly stated: "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. It is evolution as a whole that produce this mortal." Patriarchy has been always

a tool in exploring the gender relations and sexual differences. The word 'Patriarchy' needs to be deconstructed in order to understand the position of women in society. As time changed woman became economically independent but the tendency of subordination in a male dominated society always continued without clear changes. The subjugation of women in a patriarchic society depends largely upon class, caste and race. So far as social hierarchy and female subordination are concerned with patriarchy. Class, caste and race are important factors to explore gender relationships. In the oppressed classes and races female subordination appears as the most regressive element where the woman desperately desires for love, dependency, material and emotional comforts of a fixed class identity. Hence the psychology of women belonging to a particular class or race has to take into consideration regarding social constraints. Woman is an icon of archetypal motherhood having within her the natural instincts of giving birth, nurturing. Family is the centre to women's subordination and exploitation in the patriarchic society. A major role of women in the family is motherhood, and women's role in caring for children is central to their subordination. Motherhood as an institution is controlled by men under patriarchy. Women have to challenge men and recover the power of the mother, which patriarchal history has suppressed. To analyze the origin of patriarchy, there are three different perspectives, i.e. firstly, Engel's explanation who believed that women's subordination began with the development of private property. Secondly, the views of the radical feminist who believed that patriarchy preceded private property and they believed that the original and basic contradiction is between the sexes and not between economic classes. Lastly an amalgamation of both these views, patriarchy is related to the

economic system, to the relations of production, but it is not causally related. Not for Burning pointed out the fact that the women in country are still burning in the flames of patriarchal system. The plot of the play is structured in the form of the compulsive suicide of Laxmi, which is presented as an accident by her in laws. The investigating agency proves the same. Malini, sister of Laxmi, tries to dig out the truth behind her sister's suicide but she doesn't get help from her family members, especially her brother, Anil and from Laxmi's friend Tarla, Malini's boyfriend Sanjay. Laxmi from the beginning of her life is tormented. She has to drop her studies in order to look after her younger brother and sister. She is married off by her father who gives her dowry exceeding his capacity but her in-laws always torture her. She is married for five years but fails to conceive. Her husband is impotent, but the blame of not bearing a child also falls on Laxmi. The tragic and pathetic tale of Laxmi is not only her own suffering, but it is the story of countless Indian women whose sufferings strike the playwright's sensitivity and she feels compelled to look at the domestic violence. Male they are dominating for women's like the name of that male dominate person is Vinod and his family and another person is sanjay. In this work exposed to the feminism. Sanjay and Malini are not married; the relationship between them is not cordial. Malini is against violence. Female are suffered by the male including female are against female. Like the dowry problem.

Thus Brides Are Not for Burning is a direct attack not only on crimes perpetrated against the woman in a patriarchal society like dowry deaths but also on a series of issues privileged in Indian society. Malini is presented as an incarnation of protest. Her brother, Anil is also made to voice the playwright's concern for society. The portrayal of the three women characters is also a pointer to differing attitudes: While Laxmi and Tarla passively accept the patriarchy and the subordinate status of the female. Malini exposes the hypocrisy and inhumanity behind it. Mehta strikes a note of optimism when she stresses the support or involvement of male characters. To conclude, the play focuses on the atrocities committed against women, dowry deaths and witch-hunting along with various other problems faced by women in India. Domestic violence and bride burning are common atrocities committed on Indian

housewives. Dina Mehta has used novel dramatic technique. Through this technique, Mehta explained the tragedy of Laxmi by different characters in different situations. Thus Brides Are Not for Burning is a direct attack not only on crimes perpetrated against the woman in a patriarchal society like dowry deaths but also on a series of issues privileged in Indian society.

WORK SITED

[1] <http://www.oijrj.org/oijrj/may-june2016/19.pdf>