

Women identity in the novel a house for Mr. Biswas by V.S.Naipaul

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Abstract

For as long as few decades, the anecdotal journalists have started portraying the presence of females' experience which was previously anonymous and unimagined. Different basic attempts have been propelled, centering the eyes of the users, merging upon the universe of women. The authors began to investigate females' battle for freedom in their works.

The present article tackles the women characters and their identity. Further, this paper will try to answer the question wither V.S. Naipaul was a feminist or antifeminist? It highlights the position of female characters in the novel A House for Mr.Biswas by V.S. Naipaul.

Keywords: Female identity, Feminist, Antifeminist, Exploitation of women, Postcolonial.

1. Introduction

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born on 17 August 1932 in Trinidad. He is a British writer descended from India, he graduated from Oxford University. He has many literary works such as essays, short stories and novels. Over a period of fifty years Naipaul has published around thirty literary books, in both fiction and nonfiction work. He won noble prize for literature in 2001. He has written eight novels and A House for Mr. Biswas is the fourth novel (1961). It deals with the theme of 'search for identity ' and it is also considered as a picaresque novel.

In his works Naipaul deals with culture, alienation, rootlessness, society, and the scathing of the persons (diaspora). He lives in England and he was writing for the English audience, but that did not prevent him to write about his Indian people in the West India. However, the geographical distance was the only obstacle between him and his people. Identity is the main theme of his works. He weaves a web of identity in different situation through different characters. Most of his works were directly or indirectly related to Indian identity.

V.S. Naipaul is unique in the history of English literature. He contributed many works which, more or less, are related to Indian Identity. A House for Mr. Biswas, India: A Wounded Civilization, A Bend in the River, The Enigma of Arrival, Half a Life, The Mimic Men, In a Free State, A Way in the World, Magic Seeds etc. Works are related to one or the

other type of identity. Naipaul is a very meticulous artist, aware of the importance of past into the artistic whole. (Singh, 453)

The characters in his novel are crafted in a very professional way that will let the reader to explore their journeys and the method in which they portrayed. Although in his novels the central protagonists are generally male. Even the title of this novel carrying a male name his protagonist Mr. Biswas. As Rohlehr points out "Naipaul has been able to present a hero in all his littleness, and still preserves a sense of man's inner dignity" (Ironic 190). But Naipaul gave females chances to appear in the novel 'A House for Mr. Biswas' to expose the inequality of sex.

If one focuses down on the portrait of females in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas one would find the important position and role of females. Most of female characters in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas struggled against exploitation of women to prove their self-identity. "His works, more or less, are nothing but a struggle for self, a fight for right and a voice against suppression and exploitation." (Singh, 455)

The study will shed the light on the Indian female quest for identity with in the work of Naipaul A house for Mr. Biswas. The study will rise a question wither Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was a feminist or wither he was antifeminist?

Thus, concluding that Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul without any doubt goes someway to dispelling such negative way of female representations and gave important position to female character in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas.

"In this novel, women hold dominant personal space where men have no interference."(saradhambal,15)

2. Review of Literature

The interest of the scholars has been increased last few years in the works of Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul not only his recent works, but all his recent and pervious works. The scholar Bijender Singh in his Article "Representation of postcolonial identity in Naipaul's works (2013)" Tried to explore postcolonial identity in the three novels of Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul (An Enigma of Arrival, A House for Mr. Biswas and A Bend in the River). He also tried to explain how these three novels are linked with identity theme as the protagonists in the three novels tried to find a place in the world to prove their identity. In 2012 Mariana Bolfarine has published an article titled "Literacy, imagination and autonomy in A House for Mr. Biswas" in which the researcher tackled three concepts of identity literacy, imagination and autonomy in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas which revealed that the spread of English language and Englishness became clear during British imperialism. She also explained the role of

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missionary school education that engendered the imagination as driving force which Mr. Biswas relies on to achieve his dream of autonomy.

In 2014 an article was written by V.S. Sankara Rao chinnam titled "Postcolonial socio-cultural aspects in V.S. Naipaul's A House for Mr. Biswas. In this article the researcher explained the attitude of the author towards Indian joint family system. In the Hanuman house which run by Mrs. Tulsi. The social and religious life was observed by the protagonist Mr. Biswas. He expressed the differences between Roman Catholic Christian culture and Hindu culture and explored the variations and traditional values of western and eastern culture.

In 2017 K.S.Saradhambal in his paper which its title was "Evolution of feminine space in V.S. Naipaul's selected Novels" in which the scholar attempted to analyse the space of feminine in the works of V.S. Naipaul from the beginning of his writing till his last work. He pointed out that noticeable change that corresponds with the progression of time is clear.

In August 2017 a thesis submitted by Zannati Zumara to the Department of English and Humanities in BRAC University, titled as "An Exploration of" Home" in postcolonial context: A close study of V.S. Naipaul's A House for Mr. Biswas and Salman Rushdie's Midnight's children". In this thesis the writer discussed the symbolic a metaphoric meaning of the word 'home'.

The connotations and representation of home changes in these literatures and the present phenomena of homelessness feelings among the refugees, immigrants, ethnic etc. the work is an enquiry of 'home' in the two postcolonial novels A House for Mr. Biswas and Midnight's Children to illustrate the idea of 'home'. The writer inspected the reasons and the triggering factors behind the process of changing 'home' and desire to own a house in one novel and becomes unhomely in the other novel. The writer reflected the Female experience of this change in both works.

Rajkumar Halder in his paper which entitled "The Daughters in A House for Mr. Biswas: As Vulnerable As the protagonist" tries to highlight the nature and treatment to the daughters of Mr. Biswas and to show that they are not less oppressed than Mr.Biswas.

Another important work in this regard an article Written by C. Ganga Lakshmi, Ph.D. and G. Baskaran,Ph.D. titled 'Feminist to Female-Emergence of women in V.S. Naipaul's A House for Mr. Biswas" in this article they tackled the female characters as representative of culture and political scenario and the changes that they faced in different field of the political, cultural, philosophical and economic contexts.

3. Discussion

A House for Mr. Biswas is a great satirical novel written by Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul in 1961. It is fourth of his eight novels it is a

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picaresque novel dealing with the theme of search for identity.it also deals with the problems of isolation, frustration and negation of an individual. "V.S. Naipaul's magnum opus, A House for Mr. Biswas, can rightly be called a work of art that deals with the problems of isolation, frustration and negation of an individual."(Parag, 135)

Female characters and their quest for identity play a crucial role in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas. Thus, to illustrate female identity we have to highlight the feminist theory.

According to feminist theory women should be equal to men in their rights. Some people thought that feminist theory concentrate exclusively on females and that aim to promote or give superiority of females over males. In fact, the theory aims to promote the equality and justice between the two genders.

"Liberal feminists argue that women have the same capacity as men for moral reasoning and agency, but that patriarchy, particularly the sexist division of labor, has historically denied women the opportunity to express and practice this reasoning."(Feminist Theory in Sociology)

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul in his novel A House for Mr. Biswas as well as in most of his works gives an important role to females and that shown the influence of feminist theory on Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul. The analysis of the following female characters in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas will prove the fact.

3.1 Mrs. Tulsi

She was the most important female character in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas and the clan-owner of Hanuman House- an orthodox Hindu widow and a mother in low of the protagonist Mr.Biswas.

Her husband was Mr. Tulsi, was a very rich man of the village named Arwacas. After his death by a motor-car accident his wife Mrs. Tulsi became the head of the family in Hanuman House the brother of her husband his name Seth was her assistant both of them have a tremendous authority over the household.

Mrs. Tulsi is a very cunning and clever woman she used to call her black maid 'Blackie'. Mrs. Tulsi makes Mr. Biswas work hard in different jobs she also made her daughters work hard like a servants and she use to give them only little money, food and shelter. As Rohlehr pointed out, "Hanuman House revels itself, not as a coherent reconstruction of the clan, but as a slave-society, erected by Mr.Tulsi and Seth who need workers to rebuild their empire."(Rohlehr, 87) Even in the marriage of her daughters she doesn't spend money. She was smart enough that she succeeded in her plan to force Mr. Biswas to marry her Daughter Shama. She is a shrewd and cunning woman that made Mr.Biswas call her 'a she fox'.

"She makes pungent and derogatory remarks at Mr.Biswas many times. She threatens Mr.Biswas with the love-note he gave to Shama."(Lakshmi and Baskaran, 45)

Mrs. Tulsi often deliberately pretend to be fainted to enjoy the pleasure of the family gathering around her they takes her to the 'Rose Room' under the supervision of Padma, some of her daughter take care of her other massage her legs. Her trouble proved to be false and not true but her artificial illness added much comic to the novel.

Although she enjoys sole authority in Hanuman House she was a kind-hearted woman that she does not stop helping any one of her sons- in law. When Mr. Biswas says sarcastic comments on her and the Hanuman House, she acted angrily to him but she does not expel him out of Hanuman House." Naipaul considers her to be the colonizer who colonizes others of the community with justification of goodness. But she is generous enough to help Mr. Biswas when the necessity arises for him. She rescues him at the time of Mr. Biswas's unemployment and illness."(Ibid, 46)

Mrs. Tulsi is a blended of Orthodoxical and modern views she performed various rituals by Pandit Jairam and Hari. She followed various conventions and traditions and she wanted other to follow them. She became angry with Mr. Biswas when he broke the rules of the family. But she did not prevent her sons to marry Christian women. On the contrary, she became happy to know it. She also did not prevent her son Owad, to travel abroad for his study. Mrs. Tulsi Changed in to a mixture of old and modern ideas.

Thus, during the course of the time in the novel Mrs. Tulsi succeeded to prove her identity and to prove herself as independent individual.

3.2 Shama

Shama is another important female character in A House for Mr. Biswas. She is the wife of the protagonist in the novel Mr. Biswas. He was working in the shop of the Tulsi family Shama is attracted to Mr. Biswas.Mrs. Tulsi is her mother, she was cunning she planned their marriage and she forced Mr. Biswas to marry her daughter Shama. Then Mr. Biswas comes to live with Shama's family.Shama and her Husband Mr. Biswas were not happy with each other they use to quarrel all the time.

Shama is a brave woman, when Mr. Biswas makes sarcastic comment on Hanuman house and her mother. Shama blames him too, and his family. "She humiliates Mr.Biswas, when he ridicules the orthodox Hindu community. She calls him" a barking puppy dog", when he calls her mother the 'old queen'."(Ibid)

When Mr. Biswas decided to leave the Tulsi family, Shama disagreed with him and she was loyal to her family. When Mr. Biswas gives A Doll's house to Savi, Shama throws it a way because Biswas did not follow the

conventions of the family he has to give gifts for all children not only his daughter. So her action makes her emerge in the female Role." The most important incident which makes her emerge in the "female" role is the shattering of the doll's house given by Mr.Biswas to his child."(Ibid, 47)

Shama is confident, free personality and self-self-assured lady. She generally has a prepared answer at whatever point Mr. Biswas makes her any inquiry. She is an efficient and hard-working woman, she takes care of her kids properly she loves them and she punishes them some times to correct them when they commit mistakes. Shama many times opposes her husband." Shama arranges a house warming ceremony and she invites each and every individual of the Tulsidom. She does this against the will of Mr.Biswas.in this aspect her rebellious nature emerges and she manages to take the post of the feminine"(Lakshmi and Baskaran ,46)

But she never over-rules him on the contrary, she helps him in his work of accounting and collecting rents from her mother's tenants.

She is clever lady that Mr.Biswas misfortune in the shop since he has not counseled her. She has the capacity of taking choices and dislikes to burn through cash on paltry things. Shama is clever enough to acknowledge the inescapable things. For example, Shama isn't satisfied with Biswas' exchange with the specialist's agent for the house in Sikkim road. She calls Mr. Biswas 'mad' she helps him to remember the portions of advance he has been transmitting up until now. She always cautions him that his work isn't permanent. But Biswas does not hear her out and purchases the house. Thus, whatever her behaviors were one thing is true that through the course of the novel Shama tried her best to find and prove her identity.

3.3 Tara

Tara is the sister of Bipti- aunt of the protagonist Mr. Biswas. She is exceptionally solid lady, where she rules the main period of the novel. Tara possesses a prominent part in the advancement of the account space of the novel." Mrs. Tulsi and Tara are two very strong women, where Tara dominates the first phase of the novel while Mrs.Tulsi the later half. These two women occupy a prominent place in the development of the narrative space of the novel."(Saradhambal, 15)

After Mr.Biswas' father passed away, the family of Biswas scattered. His siblings leave to take a shot at a sugar place and his sister goes to his auntie's home Mrs.Tara. Mr.Biswas and his mother Bipti too move to the place of Tara.Dehuti fills in as a cleaning specialist to Mrs.Tara. However, Biswas goes to the place of Tara just to go to religious ceremonies and to peruse daily paper to the spouse of Tara.

Tara removes Biswas from school and puts him under the charge of A Hindu priest, Pundeit Jairam, to end up noticeably a pundet. Biswas performs 'Puja' in the place of Tara.Jairam Also takes Biswas with him on

proficient visits. However, Biswas takes two bananas of Jairam and after that experiences constipation.

The matter causes the finish of the preparation of Biswas under Jairam guidance. Tara sympathizes with Biswas and sends him to work in their rum-shop which is controlled by Bhandat, the sibling of Tara's husband. Biswas discovers Bhandat a cheat, a lush and a lecher. But one day he blamed Biswas for taking a dollar from his pocket and beats him. He additionally determined out of his home.

Thus, Tara is confident, free personality and self-self-assured lady. She offered shelter to her sister's family; she tried her best to help Mr. Biswas by putting him under the charge of a Hindu Priest. Not only this she also afforded him many different jobs.so it is right to say that Tara is independent woman and she could prove her identity as individual.

3.4 Savi

Savi is one of the female characters in the novel (A House for Mr. Biswas.) She was the daughter of the protagonist Mr.Biswas. She was clever girl her father liked her more than others in his family since her childhood. she could won her father's care.

On Christmas day. Biswas gives a doll's House as a gift to Savi. He does not offer anything to other children of the family and this is against the tradition of the family. So, everybody becomes angry with Biswas and they scolded him. Later on Shama reported to Mr. Biswas

You don't know what I had to put up with. Talking night and day. Puss-puss here. Puss-puss there. Chinta dropping remarks all the time. Everybody beating their children the moment they start talking to Savi. No body wanting to talk to me. Everybody behaving as though I killed their fathers. 'She stopped, and cried. 'So I had to satisfy them.t break up the doll-house and everybody was satisfied. (Rohlehr, 235)

As a result Biswas becomes upset and takes savi to the room at Green Vale. Shama one day brings her back as her school reopens. Biswas turns out to be desolate.

Savi is self-Assertive and industrious girl. However, one day she wins a scholarship to go abroad for her study. After finishing her study she comes back to India and she got a good job with a high salary then she could relieve her father Mr.Biswas. So, Savi is an efficient and witty girl she could improve herself and prove her identity. "Biswas realize the importance of female strength through his daughter Savi."(saradhambal, 15). Some other Minor female characters who play an important role in the course of the novel like Dehuti, Dorothy, Padma and Miss.Logic. For example Miss. Logic was a very intelligent and a hard worker young girl. She was the boss of Mr. Biswas when he got a job as a community Welfare Officer.

Thus, it is right to say that Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was Feminist Writer he gives an important role to women in his novel A House for Mr. Biswas to expose the inequality of sexes and to encourage females to improve themselves and to share their rights equally with men.

4. Conclusion

In a nut shell, this article deals with women identity. One might say that Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul's good fortune and his Writing aptitudes which make him a noticeable writer all over the world. It is worthwhile to pay attention to his position on postcolonial identity while perusing his works, more or less, are only a battle for self, fight for right and a voice against exploitation and suppression. In this novel A House for Mr. Biswas V.S.Naipaul gave important role to female character.

Mrs.Tulsi is the owner of Hanuman house all the family members has to follow her orders even the protagonist of the novel Mr.Biswas.

Shama is the wife of the protagonist plays important role in the novel. She helped Mr.Biswas and he depends on her in his work and he used to listen to her advices.

Tara is a solid lady. She helped Mr. Biswas and his family she offered them a shelter, she sends Biswas to Hindu Priest, and she helped him to find a work.

Savi is the daughter of the protagonist. However, Savi's return back home and taking responsibilities serves as triumph with respect to all the mistreated girls of Tulsi clan. It also serves as a poetic justice out beating the prevalent idea that Anand will bear the family duties, Savi takes up the position of the son while Anand and Owad unashamedly sidestep their obligations.

Thus, it is right to say that V.S. Naipaul is a feminist writer due to the great position that given to females in the novel A House for Mr. Biswas.

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الهوية النسائية في رواية نابول (بيت للسيد بزواز)

م.م عبد الله جاسم محمد

الخلاصة

قبل عقود قليلة، بدأ الباحثون يصورون تجربة الإناث التي كانت في السابق مجهولة الهوية. وقد جرت محاولات مختلفة في هذه المجال، وكان موضع اهتمام الكتاب في مجال عالم النساء. وقد بدأ الكتاب بالبحث في معركة الإناث من أجل الحصول على الحرية في أعمالهن. تتناول هذه المقالة الشخصيات النسائية وهويتها و تحاول الاجابة على التساؤل ما اذا كان الكاتب من مناصري الحركة النسوية ام لا؟ وكذلك سوف تسلط الضوء على مكانة الشخصيات النسوية في رواية الكاتب نابول.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية النسائية، النسوية، ضد الحركة النسوية، اضطهاد المرأة، ما بعد الاستعمار.