

Debility the Woman in Bharathi Mukherjee's Wife

J.Brindha Devi¹ Assistant Professor, Nehru Institute of Technology, Coimbatore

T.Saranya², Assistant Professor, Nehru Institute of Technology, Coimbatore

Abstract:

Women in post-colonial settings writers engaged on the outskirts of indigenous culture and feminism face a fair greater challenge, as they have to touch upon the dual concerns of feminine discourse's legitimacy in a very patriarchal society and also the ambiguous cultural and social "space." They take up space within their attempts to position their texts in the perspective of feminism. Mukherjee's book reaffirms women's marginalization by delving into and deconstructing the way within which culture and beliefs shape feminine identity. Dimple's misunderstanding of Indians' social circle as "cultural experience" hinders her from seeing life outside of the Indian community, which might change her vision of Yankee society. Dimple, on the opposite hand, examines her first interaction with American society through the lens of her own cultural moorings.

Keywords: Identity, Marginalization, Gender Discrimination

1. INTRODUCTION

Bharathi Mukherjee's prolific writings have garnered worldwide notice among the immigrant women novelists of the 1990s in America. She outperformed her contemporary's illustrating the hardships of immigrant women from India by employing a social realism method. *Wife* stands out among her novels as a one-of-a-kind fictional work thanks to its profound probe into the psychology of its heroine and undeniable technical perfection. *Wife* could be a simple narrative of Amit and his wife Dimple, who is newly, married Bengali immigrants to us. The violence-ridden and individualistic American society eventually precipitates Dimple's ill-concealed Sado-masochistic compulsions, culminating in her murdering her husband.

2. SUFFERINGS OF LIFE

Dimple Das Gupta is that the docile, obedient, and submissive daughter of a middle-class Bengali family: "She thought of pre-marital life as a dry run for actual living" (2) and Dimple initially thought that marriage "would bring her freedom, cocktail parties on carpet lawns, and fund-raising dinners for noble charities." "She'd plummet if she married" (3). She is that the naive daughter of a well-to-do Indian professional within the upper social class. She alternates between dread and fantasy, fretting about her "Sitar-shaped figure and primitive breasts" all of the time (4). Her ideas about marriage are hazy, influenced by exaggerated art in Indian films, cinema magazines, and advice columns in "Ladies Magazines." The tensions between her actual powerlessness and sorts of freedom suggested to her by the changing Indian culture have made her sick. She reads "The Doctrine of Passive Resistance" for her university exams and expects to use domestic nonviolence without holding affection, must gain the guts of an unknown husband, who is her only hope for adult liberty. Finally, she meets Amit Basu, a consultant engineer, who is that the perfect match for her emigration. "Discreet and Virgin, she waited for world to begin" Her horoscope matches, and she or he arranges marriage through widespread matrimonial adverts in ethnic newspapers and magazines, insistently symbolizing the subjugated, passive attitude of a daughter said.

Dimple's psychic flaw is hinted at by her name. The author has presented the definition of the word "dimple" derived from the Oxford English Dictionary: "dimple" is defined as "any tiny surface depression." Due to this psychological weakness, she reacts to everything around her in a peevish manner. Dimple, in classic Indian tradition, moves home with her mother-in-law, whom she despises, and becomes pregnant soon after. Pregnancy is a hindrance to her fresh beginning for her: "she started to think of the baby as unfinished business." It slowed down the process of preparing for a trip overseas. She didn't want to bring any artifacts from her previous life with her. She dislikes her new moniker as well: "The name just doesn't suit me" (18). She despises her current residence.

Dimple's psychic flaw is hinted at by her name. The author has presented the definition of the word "dimple" derived from the Oxford English Dictionary: "dimple" is defined as "any tiny surface depression." because of this psychological weakness, she reacts to everything round her in an exceedingly peevish manner. Dimple, in classic Indian tradition, moves home along with her mother-in-law, whom she despises, and becomes pregnant soon after. Pregnancy may be a hindrance to her fresh beginning for her: "she began to consider the baby as work." It caught up the method of preparing for a visit overseas. She didn't want to bring any artifacts from her previous life along with her. She dislikes her new moniker as well: "The name just doesn't suit me" (18). She despises her current residence. She wishes she may be back in her own flat on Rash Behari Avenue," she explains, "because lace doilies are so humiliating to her" (30). When Amit, Dimple's husband, takes her to quality, Dimple doesn't like him. "He should have brought her to Trinca's," she believes (21).

Dimple includes a violent streak that runs deep beneath the surface. She is torn far from her family and familiar surroundings and thrust into a social vacuum within which the media is a substitute community, a worldwide village. It's unusual for a traditional girl to "like" the feeling of vomiting and fantasies about getting eliminated "Whatever it absolutely was that had clogged her tubes and pipes" (31). "As if to drive a foul monster out of hiding," Dimple "gave violent squeezes to her stomach" (30). Her oddity reaches its pinnacle as she jumps rope on her approach to an abortion: "She had skipped rope till her legs were long enough. "Number and her stomach burned; then she had poured water from the heavy bucket over her head, shoulders, over the tight little curve of her stomach. She had poured until the last of the blood washed off her legs; then she had collapsed. (42). Jyothi Sen receives Dimple and Amit at Kennedy Airport. Dimple learns doing shopping in America. Dimple's sense of her identity and marginality frames all of her responses to her new environment, which consists generally Indians, mostly Bengalis. That the ethnography of Indians, including „Americanized“ Bengalis, constitutes "the experience of being abroad" is one among the numerous reversals of ideological positioning Mukherjee's employs in *Wife*. When Jyothi and Amit discuss "guns and licenses" over dinner, Dimple "thought she had never really seen friends with anyone before this, never stayed with someone for weeks and discussed important things like love and death. That's what America meant to her" (84-85). They visited a celebration near Manhattan near Columbia University. Vinod Khanna comments Dimple that she looked fresh and Un-Americanized. He offers employment as a sales girl to Dimple. Amit rejects this offer. For Dimple Mullick is more American than Americans. He's a series smoker. She meets Milt Glassery. Her sense of guilt is alleviated by the pervasive atmosphere of criminality. "This pervasive culture of crime dulls the sting of her own guilt," M.Siva Rama Krishna argues. She was glad that an elderly couple had been fatally shot on a fishing trip so she failed to must feel guilty about Amit. Dimple's mistaking the social circle of Indians for "Cultural experience" prevent her from experiencing life on the skin that will shape her view of yank society.

However, Dimple's analysis of her earliest encounter with American society is from the angle of her own cultural mornings. Dimple thinks, "In Calcutta she'd by from Muslims, Biharis, Christians, and Nepalis. She was accustomed many races; she'd never been a communalist. She was caught within the cross-fire of an American communalism she couldn't understand. She felt she do come very near getting killed in her third morning in America" (60). Her failed attempt at negotiating the cultural divide reiterates Dimple's inability to seek out her "space" within the confines of an alien culture. That is, she will neither negotiate the cultural barrier nor find a voice that answers to her needs, that speaks for her, that discloses meaning for her within the chaos of her experience.

At the time of Interview Dimple ties the knot. It absolutely was her final maidenly accomplishment. He didn't get job. Dimple thought a person without job wasn't a person in the least. She thought of committing suicide in queens. Lack of communication stipples and chokes her voice and disintegrates her sensibility. It robs her of her mental sanity. She suffers violent, suicidal, and death nightmares. In her flat, she even had the feeling of being raped and murdered. Her thoughts alternate between the fantasy of suicide and therefore the reality of killing her spouse. Her latent tendencies are highlighted by her frightening visions and dreams: "She had a brand new dream that night; she was wandering on the beach." She heard people mention a whale, a porpoise, and a shark as she fought her way through a mob that abruptly vanished. Ina Mullick, wearing Dimple's sari, lay at her feet, a little line of water running from her mouth" (103). Amit, Dimple believed, was irresponsible towards her. She was uninterested. She wishes to fantasies, but Amit doesn't allow her to try and do so. He was only a source of minor pleasures. Amit is isolated from her since he fails to nourish her fantasies, turns aloof from her world of dreams and delusions, her neurotic pinnings and her eccentricities. Amit simply doesn't fit into her own world: "She thought marriage was a chancy business; it could easily be Jyoti rather than Amit that she had married since both were of the identical caste and both were engineers" (85). Her dislike of Amit's ways of life makes her dislike the globe round her and appearance at its cadaverously and neurotically: "She thought of sleeping bodies as Corpses" (97). Despair sets in. She begins to detest even the sanctity of her marital ties since "marriage had betrayed her, had not provided her all the glittery things she had imagined" (102). She even wanted to offer up old friendships: "Because there was nothing to explain and zilch to preserve (120).

Dimple is perilously estranged from her own self. She is alien to that. it's herself alienation that breeds a terrible anguish in her and prompts her to murder her husband: "Her own body seemed curiously alien to her, crammed with hate, malice, and are in same desire to harm, yet weightless, almost airborne" (117). Even the apartment she lives in symbolizes the laceration of her psyche, its decay and degeneration. The T.V. becomes a diabolical trap, a torment without hope of either relief or release. It becomes an object of incarceration, a menagerie to her. She is immured in it, parting for release, an escape T.V. Watching. Even the appointment objectifies this psychic decay and degeneration: "There were too many images of corrosion within the apartment" (127). Dimple turns towards Ina, Leni and Milk Glasses in her moments of crises. Ina and Leni fail her as friends. Thus, when Dimple is seduced by Milk Glasses, her isolation and despair become even more acute. Dimple has committed the last word sacrilege, the betrayal of her gendered Indian culture: "She was worse off than ever, lonelier, more discontinued from Amit, from the Indians, left only with borrowed disguises ...like a shadow without feelings" (200). Isolated from the planet outside and disappointed in Amit who, unable to search out an expert position, had taken to washing dishes, Dimple amuses: "Life should have treated her better, should have added and subtracted in numerous proportions so she wasn't left with a Chimera" (156).

Dimple cogitates upon the nine ways of dying. Set fire to sari product of synthetic fiber; head in oven: nick wrist with broken enclose a sink filled with scalding dish water; starve; fall on knife while thinking of Japanese Samurai revivals. While waiting on the

platform for the train to arrive, she thinks of containers for husband's ashes, "Should he die a sudden death"? And wonders "What happened to the bits of bone and organs that were scanned but not totally consumed"? (168). She sneaked upon him and chose a spot, her favorite spot slightly below the hairline, where the mole was getting larger and browner. She brought her right up and with the knife stabbed the magical circle once, twice, seven times (213). Having thus killed Amit, Dimple has ultimately succeeded in achieving a medium of satisfaction for masochistic drives. She has turned the full society into a punishing agent. Her descent into madness, within the end is to be seen as both an affirmation and a denial of her identity as a victim of cultural displacement and patriarchal discourse. Bharathi Mukherjee's, „The clear eyed but affectionate immigrant in American society“ (77), has become a celeb for her distinctive approach to expatriate hood as a metaphysical experience of exile and as an agent of attitudinal change, both within the minority and majority cultures.

Diasporal dream figures prominently all told her fiction, but its treatment after her settling in America seems to be more assured and more comprehensive in its coverage of the numerous moods of expatriation - nostalgia, frustration and hope than within the Canadian phase of her life where uncertainty and despondency prevailed. Dimple the protagonist in *Wife* is an especially immature girl who constantly dreams of marriage as she hopes that it'd bring freedom and love. After her excruciatingly painful and desperately waiting she is finally married to Amit Kumar Basu. Bharathi Mukherjee's presents the globe of Dimple, a world of day - dreams and nightmares and her morbid psyche through a series of grotesque images. F.A. Inamdar in his article "Immigrant Lives: Protagonists in Bharathi Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter & Wife*" says that if the jacket of the novel claims its theme to be docility and submissiveness in Dimple, it's a thematic failure. Dimple has been portrayed free and rebelling throughout the novel. She has no inhibition in expressing whatever she feels. On the contrary, it's Amit Basu who may be a victim in India as also in big apple. His character signifies how an innocent, duty-conscious husband falls a prey to the neurotic madness of his wife. He says that, Dimple may be a troubled spirit, belonging nowhere within the end. It may be said that Mukherjee's novels are truly English and not Indian alone. Brahma Dutta Sharma and Susheel Kumar Sharma within their combined article: "The Contribution of girls to the event of the Indian English Novel" says: "contemporary Indian English Novel has observed Mukherjee's *Wife* has focused on the matter of adjustment that Indians living in the West need to face.

Dimple's sense of her own identity and marginality frames all of her responses to her new environment, which consists generally of Indian's mostly Bengalis. That the ethnography of Indians including "Americanized" Bengalis constitutes "the experience of being abroad" is one in all the numerous reversals of ideological positioning Mukherjee's employs in *Wife*. Dimple has never had a positive vision of any kind. Even her parents remain flat characters. Her world is dominated not by the numerous sounds and hues of nature but by the colorful romance that's projected within the advertisements and therefore the stories of magazines. The sole thing that excited her is that the news from Calcutta about the romantic escapades of her friend PRIXIE. Christine Gomez in his article "The on-going quest of Bharathi Mukherjee's from expatriation to Immigration" opines that Dimple shares the expatriate characteristic of being ill relaxed both within the native culture and within the alien one. In it, not only is expatriation a serious theme, but also it becomes a metaphor for deeper levels of alienation like existential alienation and self-estrangement. Expatriation is really an entire state of mind and emotion which incorporates a wistful probing for the past, often symbolized by the ancestral home, the pain of exile and homelessness, the struggle to take care of the difference between oneself and therefore the new, unfriendly surroundings, an assumption of ethical or cultural superiority over the host country and a refusal to just accept the identity forced on one by the environment. The expatriate builds a cocoon around herself/himself as refuse from cultural dilemmas and from the experienced hostility or unfriendliness within the new country. This can be revealed in some significant images employed in the novel. In *Wife*, the cage is a vital symbol. It stands for a snug but

restricted existence, for isolation and a denial of freedom. It's significant that Dimple kills her husband after watching a T.V. Programme during which a birdcage figured prominently.

Dimple's vision of Sita's docility, sacrifice and responsibility could be a flag with many messages. She wants to interrupt through the standard taboos of a wife. She aspires for freedom and love in marriage. This aim brings her indignation, grief, resentment, peevishness, spite and sterile anger. Dimple is trapped between two cultures and aspires to a 3rd, imagined world. Living in her social vacuum, Dimple isn't unlike many American men and ladies who believe and are betrayed by the promise of fulfillment offered by the media, and who choose the answer suggested by a violent environment. Prasanna Sri Sathupati in her essay "Psychotic Violence of Dimple in wife" points out that Dimple isn't docile and submissive, she is free and rebelling throughout the novel. Rather, it's is Amit Basu who could be a victim in India as also in the big apple. His murder signifies how an innocent duty conscious husband falls a prey to the neurotic madness of his wife

3. CONCLUSION

Dimple's subservience reiterates a culture and best understood in light of Michael Foucault's analysis of madness in *Madness and Civilization* (1965). Foucault says that "we must try Dimple's subservience reiterates a culture and beliefs that denies her right to non-public feelings and desires that serve her interests, and which might allow her to forge her identity. Referred to defer along with her father/husbands final authority to look at and judge her every emotion and behavior, she cannot function an agent of change on her own behalf, because she cannot comprehend any reason to justify her feelings. Thus, when Dimple is reduced by Milt Glasser, her isolation and despair become even more acute. Dimple has committed the final word sacrilege, the betrayal of her gendered Indian culture. Gayatri Spivak notes that, "The will to clarify may be a symptom of the will to possess a self and a world . . . the chance of explanation carries the presupposition of an explainable universe and an explaining subject" (11). The dissolution of Dimple's mind, climaxing in her violent act, is also best understood in light of Michael Foucault's analysis of madness in *Madness and Civilization* (1965). Foucault says that "we must try and return, in history, to it numerical quantity within the course of madness at which madness is an undifferentiated experience; a note yet divided experience of division itself" (MC IX). Dimple's murder of Amit in *Wife* is also viewed as that moment of dissolution. In her distorted view of reality, her delirium, Dimple imagines Amit's head transposed onto the TV set, an image, that reiterates Foucault's concept of "the culmination of the void" (MC 107). Now of disjunction, both from cultural and feminist perspectives, is precisely what Bharathi Mukherjee's discloses in *Wife*. Dimple's madness stems from her resistance to male ideology and to her own and an alien culture, from which she forcibly disengages herself. Her violent act is also seen as an expression of her anguish and desire that lie outside the rule of reason.

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