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MANTO : AN ALTER EGO OF THE SUBALTERN

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Abstract

The Subaltern is able to talk. 1 - this statement calls into question the voicelessness of the disadvantaged groups who have been pushed to the outside of society. Since the beginning of time, the subaltern segment has been silenced, and the mainstream has gone deep within themselves and reduced their level of self-assurance. Hegemonic authority has been withdrawn from the whole sect. The situation is far more challenging for women since colonialism and patriarchy work to keep them silenced and prohibit them from speaking, respectively. Manto is a well-known author of stories. He writes in a new genre. The diasporic element of the new milieu's literature, which deals with racial relations and a strong need for re-identification, is one of its shared specialties. Millions of people in India and its subcontinent will be displaced as a result of this, which is an awful reflection of the reality and authenticity of the new environment. Manto was independent, disobedient, and strangely interested in tearing away the mask that the phallogentric society wore. He approached this with no malice. He wasn't afraid to speak the obvious truth about those who hang around on the periphery of the marginalized circle at the time of the partition, including day laborers, hookers, wagers, pimps, bullies, and inebriated souls. He has, rather than honoring these ladies, shown the abhorrent and horrible aspect of the abuse given to them.

Keywords: colonialism, phallogentricity, suppression, separation, and marginalization.

Introduction

For these women who had been beaten both mentally and physically during partition, Manto has emerged as the campaigner to support them. In order to ensure that the voices of those who had previously been ignored were heard around the world, he led a ferocious campaign to expose the truth. There is a gap between the reader and the subaltern, according to Spivak, but Manto completely disapproves of this and removes the shroud of mystery cast over it, identifying every detail in truth so that the gap can be examined and the misconception of misrepresentation avoided. It was enough to put women on the sidelines of mainstream society, suffocating them and making their voices unheard, because of the suffering they endured. His pleas for the battered and beaten women characters reach the deepest recesses of the audience's hearts like the voice of a true feminist. One of India's most prominent literary figures, Somdev Banik², argued that subalterns should not be restricted to the postcolonial era. In order to categorize them, it was impossible to identify them as belonging to a specific sect or language. In the Indian subcontinent's vernacular literature, there are numerous characters who are marginalized.

Aside from her physical injuries and scars, Manto finds it revolting that she is unable to speak because of her emotional wounds and



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scars. He appears to merge with the persona he creates. None other than his own voice emerges from the characters. Detailed descriptions of their suffering, trauma, and torture are recounted by him. Many of his stories are about people on the outside, whether they're underrepresented in terms of racial, gender, or class, or any other way that signifies the duality of power between the tyrant and his subordinate. To be sure, he never made a point to draw attention to the sufferings of those on the periphery, but he felt a strong connection to those characters and wanted them to rise above their circumstances to inspire a greater sense of empathy among the rest of the world.

Manto's "Mummy" exposes the sexist attitude toward women in our society, as well as their lust for human self-worth and decency. Throughout the story, Manto refers to himself as "Manto" in the first person. Manto and his wife were vacationing in Poona in the story. There he ran across his old pal Chadda. Manto was introduced by Chadda to Stella Jackson, a widow who was known as Mummy and who was very kind and welcoming to visitors. Everyone that gathers there every evening is an Indian, hailing from all across India, both north and south, with a wide range of ethnicities. Actors, writers, directors, and composers in Poona all have some connection to the city's burgeoning film industry. They all lived in the same quarters because she cared so much about them and they cared so much about each other. Despite his initial dissatisfaction with her wilting appearance and garish make-up, Manto quickly learned that she was not like other women and was an actual and liberal lady who, despite her role as a mediator, would not allow any male to take advantage of her daughters in any way. Her favorite son was not allowed to use Phyllis as a prey since she was her favorite.

When Phyllis was stolen, she was a baby. When she and Chadda got into a fight, she forced him to leave the premises. However, when Chadda became ill, she carried him back to her home and nursed him back to health. She acted as a mother figure, saving the life of a fifteen-year-old girl from early degradation. She was able to show off her humanitarian side in this way.

It was as if she had adopted all of the people she saw on a regular basis: Chadda, Ranjeet Kumar, Gharib Nawaz, and Venkutrey. Despite the fact that they were inebriated, she kept a tight grip on her drinking companions and forbade them from taking charge of her small daughters. In the case of her fifteen-year-old daughter Phyllis, she didn't hesitate to slap her favorite son, Chadda, in the face. With his arms around her, Chadda gave her a passionate B-grade movie embrace. Keep your distance from her, Chadda. Screaming, Mummy begged him to let her go but he ignored her pleas. Now it's all over. She gave him a hard slap in the face. Get out of here! She let out a yell.³ After Chadda realized the error of his ways, he thanked Mummy for preventing him from committing the barbaric act that he was about to commit. We learn later that mummy had to leave Poona and found a pimp who ran an informal brothel. The story's Manto's wife was a symbol of the society's voice, and she put Mummy in the position of an Anglo-Indian prostitute for operating an illegal brothel in such a revered, refined, and cultured community. Toward the end of the story, Manto made Chadda pander to highlight the humane ideas Mummy propagated through her actions.

Mummy, like a cocotte, is a stranger to society and does not belong in a refined and cultured environment. She was a kind and liberal woman, but society could never give her the sash of gallantry and loyalty. Despite this, He



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was a symbol for the story's sexist attitudes toward women. It is Manto's decision to look at the person within that makes the story so compelling. As far as he is concerned, Mummy may or may not have been a procuress, and it is no longer an imperative that she was or was not. Finally, the story comes to a dramatic conclusion with Mummy leaving Poona after police asked her to serve as their procuress, which she flatly refused to do. In the event that they were unable to persuade her, they filed an illegal moral depravity case against her for running a brothel.

Manto has always been a supporter of the underdogs. In his stories, he used his fallen women characters to show that no one can take them for granted. He empowered them. As a result, they are demonized by society and categorized according to patriarchal norms. Disenfranchised persons Women's muteness makes them easy prey for oppression and exploitation, making them the social outcasts they are destined to be. The moral obligations of society require enormous daring and effort on the part of women. Since morality and goodness are measurable normative principles, she has become accustomed to adhering to them. An aberrant woman is someone who tries to defy the norms of her culture. So, when she is in danger of starving to death, she decides to sell her body for a few dollars. She becomes a prostitute and feeds herself and those who are attracted to her in return. There is no place for morality or ethics in this exchange of flesh and the subsequent nourishment of life. The Female Face in Patriarchy: Oppression as Culture by Frances B. O'Connor states that a good woman according to patriarchal standards must "Avoid questioning male authority or pronouncements, and be grateful for any minor ministry. That is to say, by not taking up any real estate, women actively participate in their own erasure." 4

Women are either marginalized or erased in a patriarchal society. Both of them will be demoted regardless. With their subordinated voices, prostitutes are just one of many marginalized people. Sumanta Banerjee's observation about the social status of prostitutes is correct: "... just like other wage workers, prostitutes are also confined to a small area.... As a sexual entertainer, she is relegated to a one-man show. With her emotions and intellect gone, she is reduced to nothing more than a female body, an input necessary in the production process of a capitalist society. When a woman's body is reduced to nothing more than a means to meet her own desires, she represents the pinnacle of alienation. 5 Ten Rupees, a short story by Manto, tells the story of a young, unblemished girl who is thrown into the dark dungeons of human trafficking. An Indian "chawl" (a large building with many floors and small rooms) is the setting for this story, which takes place in Bombay in India. A little girl living in a chawl, Sarita enjoys playing with her friends' dolls. She plays the role of a mother who forces her daughter into prostitution and then pretends that her daughter isn't guilty:

No one ever questioned Sarita's mother when she said she was lying about how innocent her daughter was. "Almost everyone in the building knew that Sarita's mother was forcing her little daughter to be a prostitute."

As shown by Manto, a period when people were stranded and had to trade their belongings for food, water, and other necessities,

It's not uncommon for young women to be used as prostitutes by men in exchange for money or favors. Child prostitutes are depicted in Manto's novel as having their pimp be their own mother, who is compelled to travel this way owing to



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financial hardship. Even when it comes to her kid, she treats her as if she were a professional and imparts her knowledge of the industry. Unaware of her current situation is teenage prostitution ringleader Sarita. As a child, she had little concept of the future and was content to enjoy the simple pleasures of life, such as going grocery shopping and taking road trips. They forced her into a career in which she was exploited by Kishori, who was also her mother's agent. According to Devender Issar, Manto is worthy of praise.

When it comes to concerns of life and the self, sin and depravity, nature and culture, Manto does not claim to be a philosopher. Preoccupations with social and cultural man, not with the fundamental culture of man, are constantly present in his writings. Consequently, he agrees that "sex is a fundamental and innate part of human life." ⁷ Sarita, like many other young girls, had aspirations of becoming a famous singer like Devika Rani. She often attempted to sing in front of her customers, but they were uninterested in her hidden gift. Ten rupees was all that they needed to satisfy their cravings in exchange for a naïve girl's wilting and delicate body. Being so well-liked by her clients broke down the guiltless spirit residing within her body every time. Throughout the novel, Manto examines the prostitutes' self-esteem. Shockingly, Sarita flies between the front and rear of the automobile like a fluttering bird. Her happiness had no boundaries. Even more astoundingly, she alleviated the males of their sexual deviance. They join her in song and dance, blissfully unaware of their symbiotic relationship's hidden bartering.. In a plot that might have been a cliched, dismal tale, this is by far the most interesting and engaging element.. She returned the ten rupees to her client since she believed it was wrong for her to accept

money from a customer without doing her job properly. Najma Manzoor, a well-known Urdu essayist, writes in Manto, Aurat Aur Waris Alvi: A prostitute's character was nurtured by him (Manto).

helps the reader understand that women are people, too, and makes them more relatable. Unlike other depictions of domesticated women and prostitutes, his emphasizes uncommon characteristics like as drive, will, and a refusal to be satisfied no matter what the circumstances. It is for this reason that his fans regard Manto to be a mature feminist: he depicted "genuine" guys who were unusual and sensitive. ⁸ As the tour concludes, Manto reveals a little girl's disdain for her mistreated in an astounding manner. The narrative depicts a prostitute's spiritual change in the course of a single day. Manto's heroines are defiant, rebellious, and refuse to adhere to the concept of womanly domesticity in their own right. As Taslima Nasreen argues in No Country For Woman, a book she co-wrote, "women can achieve everything men can." Because of the man's portrayal of women, she is concerned. She says in her essay:

A few additional Mahashwetas and Medhas would be welcome." It is possible for women to be Medhas. It is possible for a woman to be both a Mamata and a compassionate person. She have the potential to rise to the rank of Mahashweta. How can a woman be expected to fall behind and be a homemaker in this day and age? Why does she seem to be satisfied with her role as a mother? It's hard to understand why she's so dead, drool-inducingly sluggish, uninteresting, and unresponsive. There's no doubt in my mind that women are capable of igniting a blazing inferno. So, why doesn't she just light a fire? Discrimination in society may be extinguished by the flames! ⁹



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Instead of focusing on how to get readers attracted to his works, Manto believes in the sequential development of stories where the characters grow within the audience and they themselves are capable of opening their third eye in order to make logical and reasonable judgments about the same. Manto's concern is for subaltern characters. To put it simply, the subaltern here are not limited to only those who are non-westerners; the subaltern can refer to any limb of the society that is generally marginalized and thus distorted because they lack the power to stand for themselves, in comparison to the context of the writer on behalf of them and any dispensation that the writer may have over them in terms of race, class, or gender.

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