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Representation Of Marginalised Voices In Feminist Theatre: A Study Of Manjula Padmanabhan's *Ladies'night* And *The Rape Arist* And Anupama Chandrasekhar's *When The Crows Visit*

NAME: ANITA PAL

DESIGNATION: RESEARCH SCHOLAR

DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH

INSTITUTION: MAHATMA JYOTIBA PHULE ROHILKHAND UNIVERSITY, BAREILLY, UP, INDIA

For some reasons the idea of feminism is controversial in some developing countries and even in India. The traditionalists in one hand argue that the concept of feminism disassociates women from their responsibilities and alienates them from their culture and religion while on the other hand some consider it as a digression from the class struggle or most importantly the struggle against economic imperialism and western culture. From both the views we can draw an underlying conclusion that these views support an assumption that is described by Chandra Mohanty (1988) as the 'ethnocentric focus of the Western feminist discourse'. While Mohanty criticises the act of lumping together the various concepts of western feminism Ania Loomba focuses on the over simplification of western feminism in India and this tendency ignores "the critiques of black or other women of colour or indeed the work of a great many women of all colours that has articulated the relationship between gender, sexuality, class, nation, race and culture" (Loomba, 1993, P.274). Loomba does not agree with Mohanty's view that ethnocentrism is responsible for pervading the discourse of western feminism but she refuses to negate the influence of western feminism in the ideology of feminism in India. Loomba asserts,

It is easy to imagine why entrenched patriarchal traditions would seek to marginalize women's movements by calling them un-Indian. In fact, such a rhetoric seeks to disguise the indigenous roots of women's protest in India. This is not to argue that Western women's thinking or organizations have not influenced Indian feminists. Cross-fertilisation have been crucial to feminist struggles everywhere. But given the history of colonial rule, the burden of authenticity has been especially heavy for women activists in India. (Loomba, P. 271-2).

The resistance towards feminism in India has a history back to the nineteenth century when the issue of reform was less important than the 'women question' in centre. British writers like James Mill portrayed the condition of women in India and condemned the culture, society and religions of Indians due to the customs and rules regarding women in India while they were in a mission of civilising Indians. According to the Christian Missionaries the barbaric treatment of women and the poor status of women were used as a tool to prove the moral inferiority of the subject. Thus the British justifies their rule for the protection of women and demands the intervention of the colonial state. For gender practices there was no uniform reform movement but different campaigns happened regarding specific issues like Sati, child marriage, infanticide, restrictions on female education, purdah etc. in various parts of India. For modernizing Indian Society and reforming gender relations indigenous groups like Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, National Social Conference took part from the mid of nineteenth century. According to Nivedita Menon, [b]y and large, these movements as well as the resistance to such reform were decisively shaped by the colonial encounter. Prominent sections of the bourgeoisie were intent on reforming what colonial

discourse presented as primitive and barbaric aspects of Hindu society, while resistance came from revivalist nationalists who challenged the colonial interventions into Indian tradition (Memon,"Gender and Politics in India", p.4).

Partha Chatterjee in his essay "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" demonstrates how the nationalist movement of India resolves the 'women question' through the process. "In the main, this resolution was built around a separation of the domain of culture into two spheres—the material and the spiritual" (Chatterjee, P.237). While talking about the material sphere Britain is in higher position than India in science, technology, statecraft, economic organization and many other things " But it had failed to colonize the inner, essential identity of the East which lay in its distinctive, and superior, spiritual culture" (Chatterjee, P.239). Thus women took the responsibility of preserving the spiritual core at home and in the world men learned to organize techniques for material life. So while going with the ideology the new women must balance both the sides the home and the world.

In his book *Mapping South Asia through Contemporary Theatre* Ashis Sengupta observes, "theatre in its creative constructiveness" engages "with social reality at different levels of affirmation and interrogation, intervention and transgression, imagination and re-inscription. Thus representation of drama and theatre does not always indicate a fixed referent or a determinate position of the object represented. Instead, it can be strategic exploring, interpretative, creative and redefining. It creates a live, organized, alternative version of a chaotic but dormant reality, past or present, and attributes contemporary relevant meaning/s to it rather than merely seeking to discover it for the audience" (Sengupta, P.13).

In the 1960s the intellectual movements and the socio political movements of the 1940s gave birth to the feminist movement in the West and it is considered as the second wave feminist movement in the feministic discourse. During the first wave feministic movement in the 1880s to 1920s women earned the right to actively participate in the systems of the political world. The social revolution of the 1960s aimed at the production of counter culture in the opposition of the conformist cultural which is traditional by nature. This process champions the socio cultural liberation and sexual freedom of women and it results in the abolition of censorship of the theatres. In response to the new feminist movements theatre engages with the political struggle of the time. By the impact of this an attempt is made to bring theatre out of the bourgeois closet in 1968. Instead of the theatre buildings or traditional stages theatres are performed between the common people and amid common place of the mass. Theatres are performed about the people and amid their lives. During the time feminist theatre receives the paraphernalia of the groups of the socialist movements and it gathers a style of self narration and a natural representation like 'telling it like it is'. So

as a profession, theatre became a microcosm of the discrimination and inequalities operating in society at large. In 1981, feminist playwright and critic Michelene Wandor, published an analysis of theatre and sexual politics which made explicit women's second class, 'understudy' status in a male dominated theatre industry...The lived professional experience of being consigned to the role of 'understudy' is what in turn, encouraged women practitioners to form 'their own feminist-theatre groups. (Aston, *Feminist Theatre*).

Indian Feminist theatre deals with the plays that are associated to the issues of women like 'eve teasing', 'dowry', 'violence against women', 'rape', 'economic dependency', 'death', 'compulsory heterosexuality' and many more. The other side of the Indian Feminist theatre is the critical representation of it as the essentialist theatre. This idea reduces women's image to bodies and produces a stereotype for women but the aim behind this kind of representation is foregrounding women as the subject. In the 1970s and after that the women directors and playwrights came out not only with the objective of political reasons but they were also concerned with the gender relations. They bring out the various experiences of women talk about their issues in order to raise consciousness among them and the evolution of society through the socio political change. The Western Feminist Theatre has influenced the Indian Feminist theatre a lot but it has gradually matured into a conscious way and has transformed into a confident feminist stage from female stage. In the words of Anita Singh, in India Feminist Theatre was "an upshot of an interface between postcolonial debates about language, interpellation, subject formation and forms of resistance and the Feminist movements in the 1960's" (Singh, "Performing Resistance, Re-dressing the Canon: The Emergence of Indian Feminist Theatre" P.1).

Charkravorty Spivak in her book *Can the Subaltern speak?* Says "What must the elite do to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern? The question of 'woman' seems most problematic in this context. Clearly if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways, if however, this formulation is moved from the first-world context into the postcolonial (which is not identical with the third world) context, the description 'black' or ' of color' loses persuasive significance... The cautions I

have just expressed are valid only if we are speaking of the subaltern woman's consciousness – or more acceptably subject" (Spivak, P.91).

Manjula Padmanabhan, an artist, a playwright, journalist, illustrator, novelist, cartoonist and children book's author holds a prominent place in the Feminist theatre. She draws the marginalised voices of women through her plays. She talks about women's predicament in the patriarchal society and the brutal treatment of her in a realistic way. Her play *Lights Out* (1984) portrays the cruelty of a gang rape of a woman from the slum and the reception of the incident as voyeuristic pleasure by the upper middle class society. People has become so inhuman that they even don't try to stop the incident rather they start a discussion on tea-table based on that. The play doesn't use the word 'rape' directly but uses hints like some bizarre sounds like rasping, screaming, hysterical, horrid and gurgly, high-pitched etc. The playwright creates an ambience of real threat and violence on women that tries to express the marginalised voice of women.

The play *Ladies' Night* depicts the predicament of women in present society. It describes How women are assaulted for their dressing sense, disrespected for their behaviour and even teased and raped for being out at night. They feel as if no freedom is left for them in this patriarchal society. The play has reversed the position of the man and women to reflect the situation of women and to understand the unheard the voices of them. The play starts with the scene where a young man is standing in a bus stop waiting for the bus to come at some night. He hears a sound "Watch Out, watch out! They're coming—save yourself, you fool—you moron—you incredible—It's Ladies' night" (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.177). He can't understand what's ladies' Night is all about. All he does think about is his home and his mother who will not have dinner until he reaches home. He gets tensed as the bus doesn't stop for him to pick him up. He is totally exhausted after the whole day's work and minimal food. He notices a girl who sits in a long distance from him suddenly. He thinks he should not look at the girl as she may feel uncomfortable for that. Immediately after the moment when he realizes that another girl has joined her he wants to tell them "they must not be out at late night. It is not safe" (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.179). Even he addresses them as girls not ladies because they are roaming with their hair open. We can see he is making an invisible standard for giving proper respect to women. As they have not appeared according to his imagined qualities, he thinks they don't deserve the same respect. Even he thinks being out at night is not good for them as there are many bad people around the city and girls should be treated with respect as some day they will become mothers. Indian culture has taught us to treat girls as sisters. In one hand he thinks women are not safe because of the existence of some evil men and on the other he admits,

"Modern girls these days do not know how to behave. They are learning some Very Bad Habits. From the films and from the TV and from the Western Foreigners. Look at how they dress? tch-tch! It makes me very sad to see them with their little little skirts and their tight-tight jeans... very sad. And the sari – blouse-uh! Tight like anything...It makes me sick to see girls from good families walking around and exposed (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.181).

This statement represents how woman are judged on the basis of their choice of dressing. They are criticised by men based on his likings and on the size and length of their dress. It is clearly seen how women are treated as objects not as independent individuals. He again asserts how his friends mistreat women if they can't follow certain standards regarding their behaviour. According to their thought women don't deserve respect rather they should earn it by behaving according to the wish of men. As if women don't have their own will who are slaves to dance on the whims of the master. Even it is so pathetic that he compares women to dogs,

Like pet dogs, when you have a pet dog in the house, it is clean and well fed, nicely behaved, that is one thing. We respect that doggie. But the bitch on the street? Anyone can kick or beat her, it doesn't matter. She is for all to use and Abuse (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P. 181).

In Hindu Mythology,

the story of the mythic Sati reversing every narrative of the rite performs a similar function : the living husband avenges the wife's death, a transaction between great male goods fulfils the destruction of the female body and thus inscribes the earth as sacred geography...There is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak. (Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, P.103).

Women's condition is like a Sati in society. She is not in a state to speak for herself. People from the society will decide she will live or not. Like the young man compares her to a bitch in the street who is forced to accept and tolerate everyone's abuse and open for everyone's use.

The play portrays how the situation would be if a man has to be in the place of women. The boy then notices a group of girls and remembers about the ladies night. He thinks about talking to them about that but describes them to be defiant as he thinks girls don't want to listen to anyone nowadays. The

group of girls surround the boy gradually and he feels uneasy as they are more in numbers and he tries to defend himself saying that he is not a bad person as he has always respected them and can't think of hurting them even in dream. He even tries to save himself further by saying that he has never touched a girl unlawfully in the bus against her wishes or never seen a naked picture of a girl. He doesn't fall under those men or his friends who "think it's ah! –what girls want–no!–a way of showing appreciation, because–ah!–otherwise, otherwise–ee!–why do girls bother to wear pretty clothes? And paint their faces? or–ooh!–or" (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.181). But the girls hold the man in their grip. They push him forward and pull him back. He make unsuccessful attempt to struggle with them. They wrap him like a corpse with a red cloth. He looks like a mummy as his entire head is covered up and only his face is left. The boy doesn't understand what is happening to him or why they have chosen only him. Similarly like a girl who can't understand why she is teased or raped in the street despite of being an ideal girl from the perspective of patriarchal society. He prays to them,

"I'm begging you now–please! Just tell me what you're doing! I'm a good boy–my mother's going to be so worried–don't you care about what another woman feels? She'll be crying and praying, if I don't come home–I could be your brother–your father–your uncle" (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.182).

Anyone can easily relate to a situation what a girl feels and what a traumatic situation she faces while it happens to a girl but the representatives of patriarchy don't bother about her future or her family and only uses her as an object of entertainment. In the same way the young man in the play faces the gang of girls and the Goddess appears with no name–"Goddess of RAPE AND SHAME". The Goddess's speech makes the boy realize that it's not the fault of the girls that they are teased or raped. Men show a foolish reason for their own action. They blame the girls for their savage behaviour. She accuses him for being out at night unprotected and for his dressing sense.

"So! Youth. Foolish, stupid boy. Who told you to come out on the street on Ladies' Night? Who told you to stand alone and unprotected in a deserted place? Who told you to wear black pants and white shirt? For all these foolish, thoughtless errors, you are being PUNISHED. Today you have been CHOSEN. To represent ALL THOSE MEN who harm GIRLS and WOMEN and CHILDREN for NO REASON AT ALL." (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.184).

She explains that all the authority figures of the society fail to protect women. The police is helpless, the politicians are unbothered so women have created their Goddess for protecting themselves "Goddess of Rape and Shame...Those who See Me Will Regret...Their Crimes of Lust and Gendered Pain..." (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.184). The Goddess asks the youth how he should be treated for committing crime against women and children. She assures him that she would not torture him like girls are treated inhumanly while they are raped and are attacked by acid. She says,

"I'll tell you what won't do: we won't shove rods in your anus; we won't pour acid on your balls; We won't pluck out your eyes...we won't set you on fire. We won't tear out your entails" (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' Night*, P.186).

She is not here to harm the man as women are treated otherwise. They will let him go but only after making him realize how a girl feels after getting raped, being tortured, attacked by acid or facing violence on her. She remembers the day all her life. Gets traumatised and loses sanity. The society doesn't accept her as a bride and she gets rejected from the family. She turns into a living stone itself only for asking the same question again again why she has chosen by men for being punished. So the Goddess says,

"We'll let you go on. We'll let you live the rest of your life, remembering this night. Because you will, won't you? Ladies' Night. Every full moon night. You'll remember being powerless and helpless and frightened. You'll remember being tied up like a corpse. You'll remember shitting your pants...You'll never get married. You'll never have children. Your penis will shrivel up and fall off. You will die with the sound of my voice in your ears (Padmanabhan, *Ladies' night*, P.186).

The Play *The Rape Artist* is a dramatic dialogue and portrays how women are the victim of this society and their opinion doesn't matter as they are raped only by the wish of a rapist. Even the mother of a rape accused will defend him as it is the fate of the women to be raped. The play starts with the scene of a TV interview where Nimmi is the host of the show and she is interviewing Mr. Rape Artist named Bunty. While introducing Bunty to the audience Nimmi expresses his job to be extremely unusual profession and in reply Bunty says he thinks he is the first one to invent this kind of art. Even he clarifies Rape as an art form not the crime. When he depicts the difference between the two forms he says, "Well, the crime of rape is what anyone can do– that is, for instance, a man can force a woman to...but that's not what I am talking about. That's just rape. Not the art of rape. When something is an Art, it means it's not the thing that's being (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.190). He compares the art to the art of painting that is only the representation of the real object but not the object itself. The Rape Artist describes that while performing the art there is no physical action involved but the person still will feel violated on

whom it is performed. Through the performance The Rape Artist asks Nimmi “May I rape You?” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.189–90) and in reply she answer “No” for a several time but he doesn’t get convinced by her answer because he says it the psychology of the rapist to take the answer as Yes “Except that, for a rapist actually means Yes” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.192). He further explains how Rape is defined by a rapist. It is a kind of act that is obviously not wanted by anyone. When a man sexually advances towards a woman and she denies it, the man must withdraw himself but a rapist moves forward completely in a forcible way as he enjoys the resistance. “This is all very well except...except for a man who wants to commit rape. That is someone who enjoys forcing himself on women someone who adores the resistance, the chase, the conquest. Granted, not all men are like that” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.192). According to him by saying no to a rapist women can enable a rapist to be a rapist. Thus Bunty has forced a thought into Nimmi’s brain. Even though she doesn’t want to think about that he is there with his wrigglers in her ‘submissive brain’ and she’ll not be able to erase him from her memories. As it is a game of mind no law can punish him. But this society is actually not against rape and the hypocrite people loves rape secretly though they condemn it openly in the TV panels. It’s not only the matter of being a virtuous woman. Virtue is not a kind of quality that can be looted.

Nimmi turns the conversation in the other way. She asks what will happen when she says yes to the proposal of rape. She wants to find out what happens to the situation. Then The Rape Artist suggests she can’t get the answer until she truly means it. He defines the act as “so amazing! It’s like every woman is programmed to give rapist exactly what he wants!” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.198). But she the tone should be more of a demand than an order. It’s the most correct response to say yes to a rapist “Except that he’ll hear no either way” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.200). Nimmi moves forward the conversation saying upto now what she has understood is that a rapist will rape either he hears yes or No. On the other way Bunty suggest the demand of a rapist and a woman can’t be same. So Nimmi thinks being silent would be the most appropriate answer. But again it’s of no use. Bunty explains,

You don’t have to say a word! Even if you seal your mouth shut, a rapist can hear your thoughts! He’ll know you’re thinking, *Please DON’T RAPE ME! PLEASE PLEASE DON’T RAPE ME!* And that’s all he needs. In order to rape you (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.200).

So there is no way a woman can save herself from being raped. There is no argument left against it. The host asks if deterrence is the only way out for that Or not but it is really very unfortunate that a mother will always defend a rapist son’s crime and no lawyer has the capability to face such a furious mother who will even tear apart the bodies of the victim’s clan. So the rape victims are marginalised in both ways. There is no way to stop the crime and even there is no one to protest for the crime. In the book *Precarious Life* Judith Butler says,

If violence is done against those who are unreal, then from the perspective of violence, it fails to injure or negate those lives since those lives are already negated. But they have a strange way of remaining animated and so must be negated again (and again). They cannot be mourned because they are always already lost or, rather, never “were” and they must be killed, since they seem to live on stubbornly, in this state of deadness (Butler, P.33).

Women are already marginalised in the society and even their opinion doesn’t matter while they are violated against their will. They are living in the condition of a dead. The host accepts even she will be furious if anyone accuses him in the charge of rape and even for her girl she will find a right person to marry and everyone in the family would be happy in the wedding night when the husband will force himself onto her and make babies after that. And then the rape turns into a cultural thing. Though this play we definitely explore the psychology behind the rape and “it’s a great shame that rape causes agony to some women but unfortunately it is inevitable! Women can say ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘Humpty Dumpty’ and they will still get raped, because that’s our fate! There’s nothing we can do except avoid it or enjoy it” (Padmanabhan, *The Rape Artist*, P.201).

Anupama Chandrasekhar is a Chennai based playwright and born in India. She was a former attendee of the Royal Court International Residency. For most promising playwright she was shortlisted for the award ‘Charles Wintour’. For her play *FreeOutgoing* she has been shortlisted for John Whiting award and Susan Blacksmith Prize. Anupama Chandrasekhar’s play *Free Outgoing* showcases violence on women by exploiting her identity as Deepa, a 15 years old girl, daughter of a widowed mother Malini has been photographed on a cell phone having sexual activity with a boy at her school. The pictures are distributed on the internet throughout the country and almost overnight Malini, Deepa and her brother become target of general public and frenzied media. She along with her family become the victim of mob fury and her identity is shattered by the incident. Her Play *When The Crows Visit* displays the theme of toxic masculinity. Akshay, who loves computer games and works for his old friend David in a Mumbai company loses his job after a violent incident during which he attacks a woman in the street outside a bar.

Provoked partly by the comparative success of Uma, a female work colleague he returns to his mother and grandmother. The play also examines that Akshay's mother Hema turns a blind eye on the abusive nature of her son as his grandmother Jaya did on the deeds of his father and male violence is passed onto generations. This play reflects on the violence and marginalized experiences of women in the society.

The play is inspired by Ibsen's *Ghost* and the play begins with a scene where crows sit and caw in the windowsill of Jaya, Akshay's grandmother who thinks the souls of forefathers of this family visit them expresses their messages through the crows. The play explores the various issues of sexual violence through the mythical stories. When Jaya asks's Hema, Akshay's mother why the crows caw with a sound "Kaa Kaa"? She explains it to her through a story,

Many many years ago, when God Rama and Goddess Sita were in exile in the forest an evil rakshasan happened to pass by...rakshasan took the form of a crow and began to harass Sita. He pecked at her between her breasts...Rama turned livid. He snatched a blade of grass from the ground. The crow laughed in glee...The moment Rama's hand touched the grass, it became an arrow...well Rama shot the and the crow fled. But no matter where he flew, the arrow followed (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows visit*, P.25).

Akshay returns to his home from the workplace suddenly and his mother finds him a little bit off and notices his unusual behaviour. Everyone thinks he is on vacation but in reality he has fled from Mumbai and has taken shelter at his home. Meanwhile his boss David call his mother and Akshay expresses his insecurity, "I wasn't thinking straight. I was a mess. I had to come home. I think I've screwed up" (Chandrasekhar, *When TheCrows Visit*, P.38). His mother tries to make him calm saying he is probably the best in his field and she will talk to David's parents and present them expensive gifts to settle the matter. When Jaya blames Hema for not feeding him properly Ragini, the maid of the house discloses how society treats a girl and a boy differently in the same family. "With my older brother it was always, do you want to eat this, do you want to eat that, as it he wasn't old enough to make eating decisions by himself. With me, no such thing. They sent me off to work when I was thirteen. I was never a child. He, on the other hand, was always a boy" (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.40). It is very true for girls. They become mature from the childhood and as it they have no choice in matter of having food, taking education and living life. They can't have whatever they like only can eat whatever is given to her and live her life how others allow her for living. Even we can get a glimpse of the violence of women happening around the society from Doctor Gopi who is a neighbour of Akshay, "Too much crime is happening there. Why, a day ago, a woman was raped by a mob of no-good drunken loafers on a deserted street. It's like something is a snapping inside people. Be careful. Cities are getting very dangerous" (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.36). The growing crimes on women and changing scenes of society is really pathetic but everyone is taking it casually. No protest is seen really. As if They are all frozen audience only to see but not making any actions. Gopi Even Talks about Akshay's habit of not giving respect to elders. He is talking to Akshay but as if he is not bothered about him. We get several instances where Hema accuses Jaya for guarding her Husband as a son from his evil deeds and inhuman nature. But he is saved by his forefathers from the consequences of bad deeds as he has performed rituals to please his forefathers. So Jaya thinks the crows are visiting their house as Akshay has't performed any such rituals that can make him free from his bad karma and cursed blood.

Your father—he never once missed the ritual of honouring his father and forefathers, not once in twenty five years. Look where it got him! Everything he touched was gold. Everyone used to say, he was the god's favourite...Jagan insisted on the ceremony even when he was sick and in his deathbed (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.41).

It is clear from Akshay's remark that he doesn't care for his dead father or his peace. He doesn't even like Jagan for his wrong deeds. " I don't care if he's in Hell or in some limbo world where his soul is tortured or if he finds release and is reborn as a rat" (Chandrasekhar, *When the Crows Visit*, P.43). Jaya asks Hema to make Akshay understand his duty. As Jaya took the responsibility of Jagan Hema should use the motherly power to lead her son. Inspector visits Akshay's house to meet him regarding a case where "a waitress from Bae Zee was ...brutalised by a group of men. Because someone propositioned her and she said no" (Chandrasekhar, *When the Crows Visit*, P.49). As Akshay , David and Uma all were there for a official meeting at the bar that day when the incident happened. For the investigation purpose the inspector searches for Akshay's flight tickets and other details. When his Mother Hema comes to know about the girl she addresses the girl as a bar girl and blames her for wearing short dress. Here we see the crime is not important but Hema is accusing a girl's dressing sense for protecting her son as it she deserves this, " She was working in a bar, inspector. What do you expect? She was serving men alcohol. Wearing what? A short dress? What sort of girl works in such a place." (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.51).

In India Sati is used as woman's proper name and Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject constitution and object formation, the figure of the woman disappears not into a pristine nothingness but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the 'third-world woman' caught between tradition and modernization (Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* P.102).

Like the demise of Sati as if women have no right to live their life, dress according to their will and speak for their own self. In the reply to Jaya's statement regarding the deceased girl the inspector replies a girl doesn't deserve this kind of treatment at any cost where ever she works. "When my colleague found her, her face was battered beyond recognition. Her body was cut and mutilated as if some wild animals had a go at her" (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.51). But it is again noticeable thing that the inspector wants to settle the case in exchange of money as they have a reputation as an upper class family in the society and they have power of money. Even as a police inspector he is not protesting against violence on women. "Think of your Son's future. Think of the decades of goodwill the family enjoyed in the society. Do you want all that to be tarnished because you're a little tight fisted? In return, I may accept whatever proof your son offers. (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.53). He again affirms Hema that though the girl is in a serious condition she is alive and people will forget everything in weeks but if the girl dies, the situation would be different and he can't do much help.

Even we come to know about the inhuman nature of Akshay's father and the ill treatment of his father towards his mother from Kavita who is Hema's sister. She had to take Hema to the doctor after his father's brutal torture and look after her family, Akshay, and mother-in-law but still Hema couldn't have the courage to say a word against Jagan or stop his nonsense. She couldn't leave him because of her son's future and economic dependence on him, "He could manipulate the system. I know that better than anyone. No Kavi, I was better off as wife and mother than as a penniless with no son" (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.59). At some point Akshay also realises the logic behind his father's mad behaviour as he sometimes feel it too, the rage in his brain and the anxiousness in his mind so asks his mother if his father has demanded help anytime from his mother or she has consulted any doctor regarding that, "Because he wanted to be saved! Surely he wanted that. Surely he realised he had a monster in his veins that made him go berserk at the slightest provocation" (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.67). But Hema tries to cover up this nature of his father in front of him saying she was a good man and a man of values.

In the meantime David comes to talk to Akshay privately in his house. Hema accuses David of throwing out Akshay of his job. David informs her about the unusual habits of Akshay in workplace. He stayed up to late night in the office but didn't submit files in times even he didn't follow the orders of the boss. When he tries to talk about the tortured girl and her condition in coma Hema calls her by 'bargirl'. Even being a woman she doesn't pay respect to another woman. Then David discloses the whole truth, how a group of men has exploited her and transformed her into a corpse. He continues, No, don't go Auntie. (To Akshay) Don't you want to know what happened after you left? After Uma and I had dinner? I went back to the bar for a drink. I was there till after midnight. I came out at probably quarter past when I heard a weird animal mewl like a cat caught in barbed wires. The mewl wouldn't stop. I followed the noise, and I saw...in a recess between buildings the girl and the men. Three men. One was holding her feet, the other her head and arms. One was...he had broken beer bottles that he was thrusting into her, between her legs...She was alone, in a pool of her own blood. Her intestines were out. Her face, her face, her beautiful face bloody and torn and crushed as if someone wanted to erase it, erase it with a broken bottle. (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.70).

David has called the police and gathered the people. He has identified the two culprits who have done the crime but it is really shocking that police hasn't showed the picture of the third person for further investigation as according to him it is definitely Akshay. The third person was clutching her hands to the ground and he has identified Akshay clearly from the shadows but Akshay couldn't see him. The police informs that the girl is already dead. But the news is not spread over media so the situation is in control.

Antonio Artaud. The french dramatist introduced the theme of cruelty in the modern drama. He has lived in the generation of 'First World War' and has experienced the disintegrated condition of men in the face of unemployment, hopelessness and poverty and the world was threatened by the rise of the dictators like Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini. Artaud's world is full of hypocrisy, lies and aimlessness and that is very close to the philosophy of existentialism. Artaud's theatrical philosophy reflects the perception of cruelty in human being and at the heart of the nature. He opines that there is an innate savageness, sexuality and taste of crime in human psyche. Artaud believed in disturbing the peace between audience and performer and confront the audience with shock. The Cruelty is sensory and it attempts to release the repressed emotions of the audience and connect to the act. We also get this kind of experience from this

play. The scenes brutality, torture, exploitation give shocking experience to the audience and defines the marginal voices of woman.

Even when Akshay explains a game to his mother his description of the game is symbolic to the symbolic to the dystopia we live in where women have no safety and people are only killers. “This is urban dystopia. It’s anarchy and chaos. The rule of the game is to survive. Everyone is the enemy. Except me. You and I have to team up and kill everyone” (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.84). In reality too Akshay is committing crime and Hema is safeguarding her son with the power of money and they both are working as a team. Hema has sent Akshay to a boarding school and to tells her to take a job away from his city as his mother wanted him to be a better person than his father, “I let him violate me every night. I bore the brunt of his temper so you could be a man worthy of everyone’s respect. I wanted you to be better than your father (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.86). Akshay confesses his crime when her mother wants to know the truth. He says that night Akshay and other two men were waiting for auto and bus and then the girl looked into the eyes of those men and her attitude was rude as no respectable woman looks into the eyes of man. As per akshay’s opinion she was rude because she was not like her Amma. “They wanted to teach her a lesson...I wanted to warn her to behave like a good woman...she started calling us names, and one thing led to another and they were on her.”(Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.86). Akshay’s describes how he feels in his body and what he thinks in his head and toxic masculinity overpowers his sane mind and how easily he can play with a life of a woman and get the satanic pleasure by forcing them on a helpless girl. “A rakshasan was in my veins that night. My head, my heart...I felt feral, like I was inhabiting a body of beast. I felt sleek...and powerful. I like that. I liked who I became...A warrior ...A lion. I didn’t feel lonely. I didn’t like I had no place in this world. I connected with those men...We all belonged to each other for a brief time. We were brothers—in—arms. And for the first time, there was no past..no future...only the present...and we were kings” (Chandrasekhar, *When The Crows Visit*, P.86). It’s really a dystopia where men feel as kings by torturing a woman and feel the most powerful by exploiting the powerless even in the last scene of the play we see how this criminal nature of Akshay repeatedly demands validation by exploiting women again again. When Ragini tells Akshay that she will leave her work as a maid he behaves in an unnatural way. She discloses about her role as a village girl in a film and Akshay states that working in films is an exploitative profession and she should know how men’s mind work. He lets her know that he thinks about her. But Ragini resists him to do such thing and turn the thing in any other direction. Akshay locks Hema and Jaya in a room from outside while these two women are busy in conversation and listening to music. Akshay exploits Ragini and her bloodcurdling scream is heard by Hema. When she tries to save her by calling her. A sound of smashing the cell phone is heard. Slowly the people in the neighbourhood understands something is happening wrong in the house and they call the police. Akshay even doesn’t leave Ragini to sleep away from his criminal mind. Jaya mention that it’s the blood that is curses in this house generation after generation in this house. She has no explanation left to justify the incident and this is how women are marginalises and their voices are restricted for by the paws of patriarchy years after years in this society.

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