



RESEARCH PAPER

Marginalization of Women In Patriarchy: A Cultural Materialistic Critique of Kamal's *Unmarriageable* and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

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ABSTRACT

Matrimonial issues of the females have been the core issue of the human life since the history of humans. *Unmarriageable* (2019) by Soniah Kamal and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* in the context of Pakistani culture deal with the core issue of marriages being concerned with the society and the capitalism. Cultural Materialism (CM) appeals to explore the issues of the society where the society is being emerged with the materialistic thoughts. The current qualitative study explores the matrimonial issues of 19th and 21st century of the modern age. It explores both novels comparatively and differentiates the text of these novels with respect to the cultural materialism. The results of the study describe that the matrimonial issues are there in both societies and also the mothers of the daughters are very keen in making marriages of the daughters while the father always remain in keen of the finance.

KEYWORDS Marginalization, Matrimonial Issues, Patriarchal Oppression, Stereotypes

Introduction

Austen is known as a great novelist in the history of English literature. She discusses common and core matters of life. She has presented bitter realities of life. Her novels are recognized as the core creation that include "*Sense and Sensibility*", "*Pride and Prejudice*", "*Persuasion*", "*Emma*", "*Mansfield Park*" and "*Northanger Abbey*". The social problems are highlighted in her novels which belong to the Victorian age and these problems were rooted in the society in every aspect. The conversation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* has been made by Soniah Kamal in the context of Pakistani culture. Both of the novelists gave importance to the reputation of women. Accordingly to them as seen through the novels especially through the character of Alysba (Elizabeth) that the women should be consciously aware of the way they adopt. If they go beyond they may be excluded from society.

The opening of both novels gives an idea of money that a woman has to get marry in order to spend a good life. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that if you are the daughter of rich and generous parents, then you have the luxury to not get married just for security" (Kamal, 2019, p.14).

Literature Review

This study presents the analysis of cultural materialist approaches particularly Marvin Harris's (structure, superstructure and infrastructure) through the scholarly works *Unmarriageable* (2019) by Soniah Kamal and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) by Jane Austen. It is

an attempt to highlight the literature produced with cultural materialistic perspectives with an especial concern with Marxism and feminism.

Sinha (2015) in his study describes that postcolonial theory has left less masses to be discussed or criticized so Marxism also least allows to discuss the things as post-colonial theory, because the relationships of the things is imbalance both in postcolonial theory and Marxist theory. Hamadi (2017) made a descriptive study on "The Concept of Ideology in Marxist Literary Criticism" in which he has described the prescriptive and descriptive approach of Marxist criticism in literature. He says that the concept of Marxist theory varies from time to time. The ancient concept of Marxism criticism was to manipulate the relationships of socioeconomic systems and powers in society but from recent time the Marxist theory of criticism has changed its way from socioeconomic to relationships of society, definition of values, ethics, legitimating of the actions and socioeconomic class issues.

Asker (2012) in her study on money and love claimed that in Jane Austen's novels we come to know that how women dependence on men either in any way affects the relationships. In the life time of Jane Austen women were not free. They have to depend upon men for the means to marry independently on the basis love, because for marriage man's capability of providing them economically was also very necessary.

Kristik (2015) commented that pride and prejudice is regarded often as a Victorian novel because of its realistic representation of 18th century society, inspite of the fact that Industrial Revolution was changing the class structure continuously.

Lind storm (2010) discussed the same view in this way that money and class are the two fundamental themes of Marxism. She said through the perspective of pride and prejudice that there were limited options and opportunities for women in the early 19th century as far as education and occupation were concerned. They have not many opportunities like man in the period. They have to depend upon man for every purpose.

Shabir (2010) used the word 'Marriage market' for this purpose and said the women its active 'players'. With this business minded approach to marriage women became a source of being bartered, adorned or traded in this way. This was the marriage and matrimonial relations of pride and prejudice in her opinion throughout the period. Both of the novels begin with the description of a rich figure of a single man but actually it's all about the poor single woman.

NurBaladi (2008) gave a very realistic and universal approach towards the social psyche of women in the novel. There is no doubt in this perspective that people are socially connected and they are compulsory for each other in every matter of life. He favored Jane's positive mindedness towards society. The study illustrated that the feudal system is being depicted in the novel where the inheritance rights are abandon in Binat family as the family wealth have to be diverted to a far relative rather than to the females. The study also showed that females have no right to express their feeling and desires rather than they have to follow the social systems of the society where things are unequal as well as the marginalization of the women is much evident in many of the aspects. The social discrimination against the female gender can be seen when females are not given inheritance too.

Theoretical Framework

The most important aspect described in the novel is shift from Marxism to the time when there are too marginalization of the segments of society. Cultural materialism is basically the belief that society is driven by money & class consciousness and in *Unmarriageable* Mrs. Binat is at the height of Marxism for her is to only one objective to make married her daughters to some upper middle class men. Since, the Binats have lived their whole life in contact with the upper class society, the craving for money and power holds deep roots in their hearts and minds. In both novels we see that the families who had great wealth and high status, they were able to influence other characters. In this theory the relationship of social stake holders is described in the power concerns on the basis of wealth and the range of power. At the first the theory was manipulated to the politics but later it was judged as the theory of criticism in literature. The concept of this ethics of values was presented by Karl Marx and Friedrich in their book "The Communist Manifesto" The concept of values and ethics in Marx's book was named as Marxism in the history by which the critical aspects of Marxism theory was developed. This theory has influenced the fundamentals of ethics and values of life. Eagleton (1996) says that Marxism is the wide range of the theoretical analysis which helps to understand the ideologies, ideas, values and experiences which a society experienced in the time. It is also observed that Marxism is being discussed in contrary to the literary theory of feminism which is challenged by Marxism and addresses the power politics in context of male and dominant thinking of the systems of society.

As Materialism helps to manipulate the hidden powers in the society so this concept became a master pioneer of theoretical analysis. On the other hand, philosophy provides the basis to analyze the realities as are presented in the society but the problem occurs when the relationship of classes of society and realities of the life are being discussed then the people have no choice to take the things as it as the power, being carried up in the society

Feminist Approach

Though feminism's stance its male dominated society. Women have to depend upon men. Mothers try to marry off their daughters as soon as possible. Mrs. Binat tries to find the best match for her daughters. Women role is restricted that is also presented in both cultures. Specific laws of inheritance are made to limit the women. In this scenario the only way for them to get independence and money was marriage. The actual reason behind this social attitude was Marxist features of society which were presented in the novel. Through the analysis from the feminist perspective Alys is a unique character who has decided not to get marry. The main purpose behind this study is to give knowledge about the social manners and expectations of the society of that time when marriage was considered to be married as the only way of being honored in the society as well because there were many restrictions for females in the society as well. "It is truth universally acknowledged that a young girl in possession of a pretty face, a fair complexion, a slim figure, and height is not going to happily settle for a very ugly husband if he does not have enough money, unless she has the most incredible bad luck" (Kamal, 2019, p.12).

Charlotte's character is presented different from other characters in both cultures. She married just to fulfill her desire of being established through it. Her marriage is the realistic depiction of social status of the women of 19th century society. "Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage was always been her object. It was only honorable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune" (Austen, 1813, p.175). Charlotte's marriage was not a compatible one but this incompatibility can also be observed in the marriage of Jenazba, and Bingham. There was no matching at all. The bases were only greed and lust. The only reason for this marriage was enforcement from Fahad otherwise Wickham would gone and trap another rich lady

to fulfill his lust for physical attraction and wealth. "It is truth universally acknowledged that every marriage, no matter how good, will have ups and downs" (Kamal,2019,p.12).

The Cultural Materialists are willing to show that how the literary text (LT) are being used as an instrument of the orders of socio-cultural aspects throughout the period while these materialists also tell that how the threatening of coherent orders in apparently from the existing inner tensions as well as the contradictions are being made hidden apparently in the texts. These contradictions have been called 'dissident potential' of literary text by Alan Sinfield. Dissidence is the result of inner contradictions which characterizes any social order. Readings of dissidence in Cultural Materialism, allows us listening the marginalized segments of the society as well as the process of shaping marginalization and exclusion of the related characters. On the other hand, dissident reading are from the acts of past, like political intervention existing, in the current situations and furthermore the challenges of political concerns for conservative type of people.

The study inevitably works at three levels: the theoretical assumptions and the practical methodologies of Cultural Materialism; Greenblatt's and Sinfield's critical enterprises; and the politics of conservatism and the politics of dissidence. There are two basic key assumptions in CM about the societies describing at first that there is interrelation of the various aspect of the society with one another. It can also be termed as those when on social part are changes then there occur change in the other part as well. In the second perspectives of the society, there is foundation of system of socio cultural aspects in CM which are existed in environment as well.

There are the similar lines to which all the human societies are being patterned. Marvin Harris made classification of the environmental societies based on the three aspects in which these are existed and these classifications are Infrastructure, Structure and the Superstructure. Infrastructure -- population, basic biological need, and resources (labor, equipment, technology, etc.). Structure -- pattern of organization (government, education, production regulation, etc.). Superstructure -- social institutions (law, religion, politics, art, science, superstition, values, emotions, traditions, etc.). There is firm belief of CM that the basis of the society are on the trials and error manifesto as something is not considered as the beneficial to the ability of the society for the production, causing reproduction or the exceeding the reproduction then it will not be considered as the beneficial too.

Research Methodology

Research methodology involves an organized and systematic method of theoretical analysis of the procedures, techniques and tools to carry out research in the given field of study. Research methodology is usually divided into two main categories, qualitative and quantitative. This is qualitative research study and involves the close textual reading and analysis of the novels *pride and prejudice* by Jane Austen and *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal. The current study investigates and analyzes cultural materialist features and matrimonial and psychological experiences in the light of marginalization of women. The research is designed on the concept of Cultural materialism which provides the lenses for textual analysis on thematic level, which is carried out by the discussion and analysis of the character's social existence presented in the novels. *Pride and Prejudice* is a social novel containing many themes related to the society of 18th and early 19th century. Themes are the ideas which are universal in nature.

Results and Discussion

Culture is not a static phenomenon. It keeps on changing with the passage of time and this change affects human societies at large. The change of culture is actually a result of change in social setup influenced by the external forces such as dominating social systems. Marriage is a phenomenon which is an old but very revered one in every society but it is also not free from the effects of prevailing customs and value system especially in developing countries like Pakistan. Pakistan is a male dominated society where a woman has to suffer from the socially constructed ideals. For instance, marriage in this society is not a relationship of equal status between man and woman but of a master (male) and slave (female). One dominates the other and feels satisfied with the social structures dominating female individuality. This is concerned with the comparative analysis of the novels *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and *Unmarriageable* by Soniah kamal. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife (Austen, 1813, P.3).

The "good fortune" is the essential part to have the life partner at every cost or it is necessary for him to avail. The new historicism's perspectives describe that the things which are being settled in the culture manipulate the hidden realities as the "good fortune" is the toolkit and the production which is going to create the ideology of the people so it can be called as the cultural materialism perspective in the sense of Dollimore and the other Sinfield. The Althusser perspective seems abandon here because the social institution or the official correspondences are not here to produce the ideology of the minds of the time. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a girl can go from pauper to princess or princess to pauper in the mere seconds it takes for her to accept a proposal" (Kamal,2019,P.11).The lines are modification of the Austen's lines which is being raised from the perspective of Pakistani society. The society is too marginalized as the social institutes also play important role in this regard making the thinking of the people regarding the norms which are being constructed in the society. From the perspective of the culture the "becoming princess" is quite symbolic as the female wants to be the part of such family who is progressive by wealth or things which are necessary for the life which could not be enjoyed in her home. The other perspective is there that the female have to leave her parent's house in a way that she has to be part of an unknown person where the necessary things are there or not but it depends upon her parent's agreement with the proposal. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a young girl in possession of a pretty face, a fair complexion, a slim figure, and good height is not going to happily settle for a very ugly husband if he doesn't have enough money, unless she has the most incredible bad luck" (Kamal,2019,P.12).

19th century psychical conditions are being described in the lines as culture and the perceptions were not limited to the person whom is being concerned with the buddy that he might be with good fortune. The existing theology from the perspectives of the cultural materialism is that the person would be of good character as well then he can be proved as the property of the any female as well. The line is totally contradictive in respect to the Marxism that the capital is necessary only to buy the things but the things which are being described in the lines are concerned to the cultural materialism as the person would be loyal and have good manners.

The main aspect in this study is described that the female would not only concern with that her marriage will bring the atmosphere of the happiness only while the behaviors are always been varies from time to time. The person who is shaped in every aspect but the life has the ups and down because in Pakistani society, the bride has not only to be the part of the person but also part of the family where she has to be engaged with the different

types of relations as well as have to make them all satisfied. The things being discussed by Jane Austen in her novel are clearly existing in her studies as she is willing to describe bitter face of the society which is based on the male centered and addressing the people that the person having good fortune must be in search of a wife.

“Money is the best recipe for happiness” (Austen,1813,P.18).The lines illustrate the Marxist aspect as the wealth was considered tool of happiness as well as the tool of buying the things of happiness as well. The materialistic approach were there in the age of our Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (S.A.W). “ Being financially independent is not a Western idea, The Prophet’s wife, Hazrat Khadijah, ran her own successful business back in the day and He was, to begin with, her employee” (Kamal,2019,p.14). The cultural materialist perspective also shows that there is culture within the culture so the things which are being described in the novel are of high concerns .The ideology being constructed is of the high concerns that there would be money so that the fortune of females would be collected.

Many of the times, the cultural hurdles and the females discourse is not given much importance so the people are in the state of dilemma that how to express the issues. The stating dilemma is there even in the English society as the daughter of Bennet wants to express her love and show her feelings of love but she is not given permission. The choice and the selection of the words is so complicated for her that she is imprisoned of the cultural norms.

“It is a truth universally acknowledged that if you are the daughter of rich and generous parents, then you have the luxury to not get married just for security”(Kamal,2019,p.13).While analyzing the study, it is also observed that how the cultural materialistic approach affects the matrimonial aspects of the life and how the things are being manipulated from the perspectives of culture materialism to make the sense of humans in a way that how the society has the norms and restrictions for the females of the marriageable state. Cultural Materialism is a British-oriented literary theory which deals with the horizon of different cultures in terms of ideological constructions and discursive formations in regard with literature that presents the actively part to create the relations of powers while the culture is not reflected by it in the same way in which it is being produced but has actively contribution to constitute the culture as well as the history also.

“Its Western conditioning to think independent women is better than homemakers”(Kamal,2019,p.13).The cross cultural description is there that the Pakistani society does think that western females are free from the cultural norms and have the freedom of work rather than being housewife. The cultural materialistic thinking is there that the Pakistani society do make the female as the maid of the houses while the westerns female are given opportunity of being employed and work on their own behalf. The things are restricted in the society in a way that the marginalization of women is there in the society. The matrimonial concerns is there that females are being taken after marriage as the responsible person of the home rather than the society while many of the females think that their qualities of being social as well as being prominent in the society are being snatched in many of the aspects in Pakistan.

The ironical description against the men can be seen in the line of *Pride and Prejudice* in a way that the females are very soft nature but the males are nothing before rocks and mountains. “What are men to rocks and mountains?”(Austen,1813,P.194).The feministic voice goes against their way that the pride of men is not being broken rather than is being merged so the cultural aspects can also be seen that ego of the males create issue for the females as they want to have attention of the males so the ideology is based on the pride of

the male of the society as they are not being interested in the females. "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me" (Austen,1813,p.14). The same issue in Pakistani context "But the issue is that women don't seem to have a choice that is free from judgment"(Kamal,2018,p.12).The things being described in the culture become the ideology of people. The cultural voices and the thinking could have the diversity but this diversity is least seen on the superstructure level in the society but the voice of females as suppressed segment and females are not given the choice to judge the males in the perspective and the norms of society."Mrs. Bennet was beyond the reach of reason, and she continued to rail bitterly against the cruelty of settling an estate away in a family of five daughters, in favor of a man whom nobody cared anything about".(Austen,1813,P.80).

"...by a young woman of inferior birth, of no importance in the world, and wholly unallied to the family" (Austen,1813,P.438).The world of capitalist society is far beyond the humanity as the lines illustrate that the female which is being born in the lap of the poor people is being considered as the miserable beings. The capitalism and feminist perspectives can be seen in the current study that the remarks of the female regarding a female who have got birth in the family of poor people is being treated as an object of misery where her marriage can be great challenge.

The cultural materialism also illustrates from this perspective that the females are not given so prestige in the society rather than the constructive ideologies are being imposed on the females in way that they would arrogant and would centered to them. "At what age might one's own experiences outweigh a parent's?" (Kamal,2019,p.16).The marginalization of women is being described in these lines which highlight the core issues that women have to face in the 21 century society. The feministic perspective from this regards can be seen in a way that the females are being puppet in the hands of their parents. The depiction of the society and norms when a female is being married is of high importance as it describes the elements of being looking intended and good at every regard. The elements which are refereeing to the style of the writer is that the writer is too intended to show the cultural things as the cultural representation is kept more important in the writings of Pakistani authors.

Sex is considered as the psychological desire of being indulged in the isolation which is also the core necessity of the individuals even for the both gender. The religious perspective which is according to Althusser is the ideological state to make the things clear. "Because without marriage our culture and religion do not permit sexual intimacy"(kamal,2019,p.20). The controlling of the minds of the people in this perspective is there when the individuals will be given the direction of not being indulged in the sexual activities without the social formalities (marriage) then the things will be more comprehensive to understand the state of stability.

The style of the writer also shows that the use of code mixing is much important in the process of describing the cultural manifesto because these things are kept too necessary in a way that these things are considered as part and parcel of the life for illustration of the culture. The writing style of the writer kept the things as necessary as could be for the clear depiction of the style and culture. The marriage issue is kept as the hot issues in the world so in Pakistan this issue is kept sensitive because of the cultural voices. The strong reaction is being seen in using native language words shown in the novel as the novel addresses the issues of the concerns that the "bardashtkro" (to bear and tolerate) is the manifesto for the cultural representation in the regard of the marriages. "It is a truth universally acknowledged,' Alys said, 'that hasty marriages are nightmares of bardashtkaro"(Kamal,2019,p.138).

Conclusion

The passivity of the roles can be seen in the both societies where the females are considered as the utmost anxiety because of their marriage as well. The marriage is being considered the most important factor for the females who have to pass rest of the life with a person rather than parents. The factors which make the society materialistic and the passivity of the female members of the society in both of the societies is there that there are capital approaches and senses in the society. The religion is being called as the tool of production of the social ideology in the minds of the people as the manners would be as much good as the religion describe in Pakistani society while the society is being depicted to be materialistic even the religion does not permit of the such type of the thinking as well. The restricted aspects are there in the minds of the people regarding the social norms and social ideologies which are being produced by the religion in Pakistani society while by the class system in the western culture the females of the middles class were not to be so exposed before the natives. The crucial aspects are there in the social ideology of the minds of the people is this that the females are given no voice in this matrimonial aspect but is deserved a lot.

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