

Projection of 'New Woman' in Meena Kandasamy's Poems: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This paper proves Meena Kandasamy is so ingenious in her writings, giving an answer to the very important question whether 'New Woman' can sustain in this society by exhibiting an insight into the way of women in India. It is concluded in the way that Meena Kandasamy magically touched upon many such disputable issues as untouchability, casteism, disrespect of woman and apostasy the woman's face in the Indian society and sums up how her poems reveal the effects of patriarchal ascendance and social conditioning on women.

Key words: New Women

Today's world is drastically transmuting by the advancing tide of globalisation. Textbooks are now passing over the borderlines of the country and new budding women writers have written many literary works based on the marginalisation of women and they have accepted upon themselves the heavy undertaking of their crusade against established customs. The term 'new woman' implicatively suggest women with a new view on life and every woman will experience the attitudinal transformation in her lifespan. The new powerful woman who comes forth out of the oppression prevalent in the society becomes more self confident, adept competitive and self guiding and she reclaims her individual personality or identity in the society with incipient rules that she has redefined in the brightness of her feminine sensibility and feminist awareness. New woman endeavours to cripple her life. The idea of new woman is beyond all the boundaries of the female and they are committed to wage a war against the prevalent strong patriarchal system in which caste, class, gender, sex and race are

simultaneous factors of oppression. New Woman' appear as a new icon who re-read the conceptions and virtues of old-fashioned women which is a product of the inevitably ineluctable transformation taking place in our society as the country marches ahead to catch up with the rest of the world. New Woman is born out of the violence, molestation and psychological torture of the society . New Woman has reached the forefront of the society for maintaining human connection between communities of people and enable women and men to be pro-convivial with better understanding and interpersonal relationship. The powerful women characters powerful women characters pictured in the poetical works of Meena Kandasamy wage open wars to defend themselves against patriarchal rules to liberate women from their subservient position with the potency of cognizance to give them a transformative action. With prophetic vision she analysed the convivial and political structures of society and fight against the rigid caste system of India. Meena Kandasamy's major concern in her poems is to enable women

especially the marginalised Dalit women to gain an overall vigilance and knowledge about their pathetic condition. As a new woman she raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian women. Her poems are born out from her own experiences and her engagement with the championing caste and gender equipollence. Her poetry provides a visual impact; it is eminent for incipient generation phrases that she has a way of roping in her youthful readers in a cogent way. She breaks the long silence that has circumvented Indian traditional women, their feminine experience and their female world. In Meena Kandasamy's poem 'If everything comes crashing down' she explicates how the man engenders new women.

...But in billboards planted

Across my fervent heart,

I will celebrate you as the man

Who made me woman.

(*Touch*, 30)

Meena Kandasamy, through her poems questioned all the atrocities and she reflects pain, agony, violence and restrictions of being Dalit. Meena Kandasamy indited the story of her own domesticity and the subordinated statues which she had experienced through their prevarication and she had written the story of her own seclusion within the abode and in the society. Her themes transcend the personal, because what she endeavours to poetise is the experience of women. Meena Kandasamy addresses the Dalit community and reflects how the Dalit subaltern women are in search for self identity or individuality in the world where sexist and racist definitions of women prevail. She handles her poems with all its precision of the emergence of new woman who has transcended the boundaries of the female gender. Meena Kandasamy is the

polemical writer who utilizes her pen as a sword to fight the monster that is Caste. In her poem "Mohan Das Karamchand", very rigorously she criticises him and caste as a militant feminist.

You knew, you bloody well knew

Caste won't go; they wouldn't let it go

(*Touch*, 54)

Meena Kandasamy redefined their identity in the light of feminist theories. These writers begin to cerebrate and feel differently from other women and these women writers have utilized their potentialities in an incipient perspective. 'Apologises for living on' is one of the best poem of Meena Kandasamy which reflects the helplessness of women who want to be free like a bird but remained prevaricated to restrictions. In her lines:

I was a helpless girl

Against the brutal world of

Bottom patting and breast-pinching

I was craving for security

The kind had only known while

Aimlessly-a float and speculating in the womb
(*Touch*, 122)

The ultimate responsibility of 'New Woman' is to give voice to a voiceless woman in the society. Like Meena Kandasamy, all the 'New Woman' has deeper commitments to the overall well being of the humanity. 'New Woman' is concerned about emotional, spiritual, political, biological and ecological desiderata of women community and the entire society. Her poetry is the poetry of protest because she is against the emotional, familial and physical duties to which women in India have always been subjected. In her canvas she draws the tormented picture of Indian marginalised woman. She celebrates every moment when she verbalizes female

body and as a poet she uses unsophisticated language when she verbalises directly about sexual discourse she had with her partner. In a poem entitled “A Cunning Stunt”, Meena Kandasamy writes:

Cunt now becomes seat,
Abode, home, lair, nest, stable,
And he opens my legs wider
And shoves more and shoves
Harder and I am torn apart
To contain the meanings of
Family, race, stock, and caste
And form of existence
And station fixed by birth
And I can take it no more
(*Ms Militancy*, 11)

Meena Kandasamy celebrated her womanhood by singing women’s dreams and verbalising their bodies. Her writings arouse consciousness in women’s mind and her poems helped other writers to bring out their

poems in a socio-cultural milieu as it expedites their shift from a marginal position to a central one. In her dreams, new woman is not the suffering wife, weeping widow or sacrificing mother or caring sister. No other feminist poets in India could achieve the absolute rebellious dimensions like Meena Kandasamy because she became the mouth piece for exposing the right of every woman to protest and revolt against all those patriarchal forces in society which conspire to obstruct the development of their personality.

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Experience comprises illusions lost, rather than wisdom gained.
~ Joseph Roux