

Pain Revealed in Translated Work of Mahasweta Devi's Mother of 1084

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I. Introduction

Women are born free, but everywhere they are found in chains in our society. They are considered as inferior human beings and are always looked down upon. Since ages, they have been crushed in the whirlpool of male dominated society. Woman is not free and secure as man. She has been a victim to both physical and psychological affliction. She is considered frail and fragile. Since ancient times, man has acquired and occupied a superior status to a woman in the society. Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* has highlighted the victimized position of a woman in the society and she opines, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (*The Second Sex*, 87). It means that the identity of the woman is socially constructed by the patriarchal system. Woman is not born fully formed; she is gradually shaped by her upbringing. Biology does not determine what makes a woman a woman—a woman learns her role from man and others in society. Woman is not born passive, secondary, and non-essential, but all the forces in the external world have conspired to make her so. Every individual self, regardless of gender, is entitled to subjectivity; it is only outside forces that have conspired to rob woman of this right.

'Mother of 1084' is a story written by Mahasweta Devi that brings out the sudden plight of a suppressed mother who received a phone call in the early morning giving a bad news of her son being dead. He was targeted to be in a naxalite movement and his body was kept in the police station. The story also covers the pain, a woman suffers where she is misapprehended repeatedly, first by her mother-in-law, then by her husband and then by her own children. Brati, the youngest son, was the only one, who had the ability and desire to see the inner beauty of his mother and had always wanted to protect her. But he was snatched away by death and the saddest part was that his mother, Sujata did not even know, if Brati died for right reasons. What was the cause that his son was fighting for and were those causes, worth fighting for. The novel brings a beautiful portrayal of what ugly reactions rebellions get, even from their very own people, forget about the society. After the news of Brati's death came, everyone in the family, except his mother and the aaya, started looking for measures to hide this incident from the world. The grief of Brati's death got shelved before the more important purpose of saving the family's prestige. Sujata found herself all alone weeping for Brati, who was lying before her as cadaver number 1084, cold, heavy and dead.

The play *Mother of 1084* is the original translation of Mahasweta Devi's Bengali play *HazarChaurasirMaa*. In the seventies, Mahasweta Devi dramatized one of her major works *Mother of 1084*, and then four of her finest stories convinced that as plays they would be more accessible to the largely illiterate audience she wanted to reach. It is a play of 12 scenes. The plot is condensed into the scenic space of single day through the device of the mother recalling, a year after the events that followed the morning when she was summoned to identify her son lying dead in the police mortuary. Through the device of dramatic condensation, Devi achieves an admirable effect of concentration in *HazarChaurasirMaa* [1]. SamikBandyopadhyay's translation of Mahasweta Devi's *Mother of 1084* has been looked upon as a Communist Manifesto, but it could be well translated as a study of Suppression. G.P. Deshpande in his *Anthology on Indian English Drama* introduces the play with a brief note: Mahasweta Devi, very eminent writer of fiction, Has been active with tribals of West Bengal and Bihar. In this play she looks at the Urban Bhadrolok Bengal In the context of the rising people's movement. She offers us a view of politics which is both Moving and disturbing [2]. for the establishment of the real home has provided an aspiration for them to live and to die. In the words of SamikBandyopadhyay, in *Mother of 1084*, Sujata, mother of corpse number 1084, can find a moral rationale for son's revolt only when she can piece together exactly two years after the killing, a part of her son's life she had never known. Unaware in her situation of life of the politics of economic deprivation and exploitation, the more she can see in Brati's revolt an articulation of the silent resentment she has called within herself against her corrupt respectable husband, other children and their spouses and friends the closer she feels to her dead son, and the more poignantly she feels the loss. In a sense she can 'find' her son and holds him to herself only when she can find in his death a fulfillment that she has yearned for and never dared to claim for herself. The one day in the life of Sujata, spent in 'discovering' Brati for the first time in a series of encounters with people beyond

her circuit of experience, is spent in forging a connection with Brati or rather with what he strove and died for. Hence it is Sujata's story, not Brati may be SujataBrati's. Sujata, a traditional upper middle class lady and an apolitical mother wakes up one early morning with the shattering news that her favourite son Brati, is lying dead in the police morgue with the dehumanized identity, bearing the corpse no.1084. To be more emphatic and supportive to the context the stage directions are moulded accordingly. They give the indication that it is the 'Seventeenth January Nineteen Seventy'. A telephone rings as an early morning glow spreads over half of the stage; it means that the other half of the stage remains in darkness – the presence of light and darkness indicates the duality of life. This dramatic device is used to hint at the fact the happy house hold shall soon be engulfed in the shadow of sorrow. A voice on the other end of the line brusquely questions her relationship with BratiChatterji. She is called to Kantapukur to 'identify the body' that is in the dehumanized form. Brati's father Dibyanath refuses to send the car to the police morgue to identify their dead son with the fear of stigma to his family as their son is involved in the anti – establishment's activities. Moreover, taking help of Jyoti, their elder son, rushes to hush up the matter. Brati's father sees to it that all traces of Brati, the rebel, the errant Naxalite, are completely obliterated so that he can hold up their bourgeois' family name.

DibyanathChatterji, a true representative of patriarchal society, least bothered to value the feelings and sentiments of Sujata towards her son and proceeds ahead with his plan of action. This cold attitude of father shocks Sujata a lot. Not only he refuses to send the car, but also ignored her, in spite of her being the second important member of the family. SUJATA. (Uncomprehending, in a panic)What will You hush up? What are you talkin g about? DIBYANATH.Jyoti, there's no time to waste He goes out.(14). After two years exactly on the same day that is seventeenth of January, accidentally it is a day of birth and death of Brati, Sujata gets a phone call. It is from Nandini, fellow comrade of in the mission of Brati, who is released from the imprisonment on Parole for medical treatment due to the brutal interrogation of the police. Sujata accepted to meet Nandini. The plight of Sujata is clearly can be comprehended from her words: SUJATA. Nandini... Yes. This is Brati's mother... O. K. I'll come right at 4'o clock then.... I'm not going to the bank today. It's Tulis' engagement... (36) Sujata is subjected to humiliation in her home because her presence is ignored. She is not consulted in fixing the date of the betrothal ceremony of her youngest daughter Tuli and either the death or birth anniversary day of Brati is observed by none of the members of the family.

A reader can analyze the irrational discrimination to which Sujata is subjected at home. Sujata feels that she has failed as a mother. She is unable to understand Brati and his vision for which he is secretly languished and given his life. She embarks now on the mission to know her son better, to understand intricacies of the cause for which he has fought. With this intentions she visits Somu's mother and Nandini. Sujata tries hard to come to terms with her loss. But it is a tough fight. She hardly find any sympathetic members of the house around her. Grief brings the two mothers together. When Sujata meets Somu's mother, the crisis that envelops society comes to them. She is informed how her son has taken plunge into the revolution. The words of Somu's mother express her grief over the loss of her son.

II. Conclusion

It is very ridiculous to see that when the children get spoiled, complete blame is thrown on mother. Women have always been treated like beasts of burden and an object for pleasure. She remains calm as a sacrificial animal with moist eyes ready to accept whatever life has in for her. We find how men in the veil of discrimination take women for granted. Her husband's accusation that she is responsible for Brati's death accelerates the process of recognition of her psychological moorings. She now feels relieved of the burden of guilt she has all along been bearing. In such recognition. What pains Sujata is the indifference shown by the people to the cause and to the sacrifice of youths like Brati, Neetund Somu.

References

- [1]. SamikBandopadhyaya. Playscript. Five Plays: Mahasweta Devi. (Kolkata: Seagull), 1986
- [2]. Simon de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 87. (London: Vintage Book, 2010).
- [3]. Mahasweta Devi. *Water Five Plays*. (Kolkata: Seagull Books), 1986, 99.