

CASTE AND COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN PREETHY SHENOY'S *THE ONE YOU CANNOT HAVE*

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Abstract - This paper deals with Caste and Communal Conflicts in Preethi Shenoy's *The One You Cannot Have*. The novel focuses on the impact of caste system in India. Shenoy is a contemporary Indian writer and her works deal with the issue of Indian caste and tradition. The Indian caste system is a complex mixture of different social groups. The division of people is made on the basis of caste system. In this novel, the character Shruthi is in love with Aman. Shruthi belongs to South India and Aman is a North Indian. They are unaware of the consequences of love. Shruthi's true love to her mother stopped her marrying with Aman. Unfortunately they did not break their tradition because of Shruthi's motherly love. The conflict of caste system spoils their true love. The Novel brings up the realities and effect of culture and tradition in Modern India. It conveys the positive and negative aspect of living condition of people in India and their sufferings. The characters in the novel seem to be in conflict because of caste and tradition. My paper intends to explore how caste and communal conflicts affect the younger generation.

Keywords: Caste, tradition, society, community, pain.

Preeti Shenoy is an Indian author. She has been consistently nominated for the Forbes List of the 100 most influential celebrities in India since 2013. She is honored with *Indian Today* call her 'the only women in the highest-selling league,' alluding to the immense popularity of her books. *Daily News and Analysis* has described her as a 'Keenly observant mind' and *The Time of India* described her writing as 'Excellent story telling skills'. Her famous works are *34 Bubblegums and Candies*, *Life is What You Make it*, *The Secret Wish List*, *Tea for Two and a piece of Cake*, *The One You Cannot Have*, *It Happens for a Reason*, *Why We Love The Way We Do*, *It's All in the Planets* and *A Hundred Little Flames*. Preeti herself says that her blogs and its immense success were reason that made her to pen.

The caste system originates in the early Vedic period then it was existed in the form of Varna system and it also divides the society. The word 'caste' was derived from the Portuguese word 'casta' which means race. Discrimination against the low castes is widely common in India. The Indian caste system is a complex fusion of many different social groups. It includes clans such as gotras, chowdry, pisharody and so on. Tribes and ethnicity are called as caste. Varnas are divided into several jatis. There are hundreds of jatis in India. Each jatis are different by their region and state. A well defined social hierarchy in Rig Veda is known as Varna's. Each of these caste systems was distinctive in India and it presents in human civilizations. The Indian caste system is inflexible and so for the social classifications will resist the human freedom. According to Swami Vivekananda the caste is considered as "I have seen castes in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan purpose so glorious as here. If caste is thus unavoided, I would rather have castes of purity and culture and self sacrifice, than a caste of dollars."

In this novel focus a rising incident and intensity of religious and cast violence in North India. Civil disorders have occurred as dissatisfied minorities goaded by militant communal leaders have clashed with

police and national security force. In Assam and Punjab, political and economic demands by activists have led to communal conflict, major civil disturbance and secessionist movement directly challenging national authority. Thus the novel directly focuses on the conflicts between caste and communal system. Shenoy's works give a clear view about the Indian society and its present problems. The new generations have trouble with their caste system. They are totally confused and troubled because of tradition and modernity.

Today, the educated Indians have a little trouble about the understanding of their own caste system. They think that it is an outdated and harmful practice, though they have some passion for their own caste and believe that caste is a unit of culture. This is also true in many parts of the world. India is sort of many inhabitants superimposed into one and the ethnic passions that come from being a particular caste can be quite high.

The title "*One You Cannot Have*" portrays the real life in India and its culture and tradition. The people in India strongly believe the caste system. The Novel says about the sufferings of Indian society and the living condition of two youngsters. It also says about the conflict between mind and body. It portrays the past and present situation of caste system and its consequences that they are facing in their life. It also says about the living condition of Indian society people and how the people face the conflicts in their life and how they overcome the situation.

The Indian people follow traditional rules. It cannot be vanished because it is fixed in their mind from one generation to next generation. It cannot be changed or abolished from the society. This novel says about the unsatisfied life of protagonist and her quest. She compares her past and present love. Some women try to break the rules in the society. If they break the rules, they are isolated from their community. The Novel totally brings up the realities and effect of culture and tradition in modern India. The positive and negative aspect of living condition of people and their sufferings are discussed by the author in the novel. The people cannot survive their whole life due to the conflict of caste and tradition.

She is south Indian and I am north Indian. We have a caste system, and marriages outside the community aren't approved by elders, I try to simplify the Indian scenario to Mark. In India, it is not just two people getting married, it is two families connecting. Everybody is involved in a wedding, unlike in the UK, where the bride and groom decide and plan everything themselves and even foot the bill for their wedding, and only the closest family and friends are invited. (18)

Preethy Shenoy's novels give us a sight of the tension which is experienced by the middle-class women. The hero of the novel Aman and the heroine Shruthi suffer a lot in their life. Aman lost his love because of caste system. He belongs to north India and Shruthi belongs to south India. He thinks about his past memory and they are more painful but sometimes it gives happiness because of some sweet memories regarding his love with Shruthi. . The sweet memories send him back to his golden days. He calls her as a dream girl in that time and he also thinks about his future life.

The novel says about love and dissatisfactory experience in life. Shruthi is dissatisfied with her present life even though she remembers her past love and it slightly removes her pain. She is making effort for a successful life, but she faces a lot of pressure from the in-laws. During her college days, friends believe Aman and Shruthi as a perfect couple but it has totally shattered by the caste conflict. She thinks that life is an empty vessel and she compares herself to a statue. The wine of love is absent in her mind and she just lives like an instrumental machine. In all situations, she hears the name Aman and totally disturbed. She tries to protect her marriage life and she has the doubt that if she really loves her husband purely or not. Her inner mind says that she is still in love with Aman. When she says about her affair with Aman to her mother, she strongly opposes to it and scolds her. Shruthi doesn't hear the words; at last she realizes that her mother is diagnosed with cancer. At last her mother's concern words slightly changes her heart:

“The name Aman still has power to set my heart racing and Goose bumps. I have hundred of memories after all four years One’s life is considerable time to spend with someone and even today after nearly two years of marriage to Rishabh it take little to trigger memories. After all, four years of one’s life is considerable time to spend with someone and even today, after nearly two years of my marriage to Rishabh it takes little to trigger memories of our time together.” (9)

Shruthi’s inner mind compares both two males her life. She thinks that suppose the caste system had abolished before four years, definitely she would be married to Aman. The critic Olive says “The more intrist problem towards marriage and set particular (...) focuses on marriage law that denied women legal crisis just as they are opposed an economic system that forced women into loveless marriage and kept them tied to cruel” (32).

In Pisharadi community, people marry their own community people. If anyone don’t marry their own community people, they are fired from the society. Many people feel that intercaste marriage causes drawbacks to their children. Preethi Shenoy says life is what we make it. Shruthi is unsuccessful wife because she follows caste system. She remembers her love, “The respective colleges were participating at a cultural festival in his college and it was one of Bangalore’s best intercollegiate fest. What caught her eye was that he waswearing same shirt and had represented my college in the personality contest (89).

An individual cannot survive alone in their life. They need friends to share their problem in life. Shruthi discusses her problem with Asha and the Aman discusses his problem to his friend Vikram. When someone says their problems to their friend, they feel relax and get some energy to face all kinds of problems in their life. Mother’s breast cancer changed the life of Shruthi. Shruthi says that:

My tears were because of my helplessness in the whole matter. My tears were also for an end of a relationship that had meant the world to me. My tears were for my mother’s maimed body the body that had given birth to her , and nurtured her. My tears were also tear of relief that monster that we had all been fighting was finally Vanquished and mother was cancer free she has beaten it and is a Survivor now. (43)

The tears of Shruthi save the life of her mother and her sacrifice gives energy to her mother. Marriage causes internal conflicts in her mind. Thus the novel directly focuses on the conflicts between caste and communal system. Preethy Shenoy’s works give a clear view about the Indian society and its present problems. The new generations have trouble because of caste system. They are totally confused and troubled because of tradition and modernity. The novel ends in an optimistic note. All the characters realize their limitations especially Aman and Shurthi. Finally Shrtuhi decides to live happy and focus on the present life. Atlast the novel says that caste is just a tag for people but it cannot control their life.

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