

# MARGINALITY OF THE PROTOGANIST IN “MANJU KAPUR” A MARRIED WOMAN

**N.NISHADEENU.Dted.,M.A.,B.E.d.,MPhil.**

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**BON SECOURS COLLEGE FOR WOMEN**

**THANJAVUR**

## **Abstract**

Manju Kapur is an accomplished Indian writer in English language. She usually sketches her ideas which she deeply influenced by feminist thinking and she declares herself to a feminist. She was awarded for the common wealth writer's prize for the first book. A Married Woman is best proto-feminist novel .even if the woman educated they lack the courage and boldness to come into the patriarchal hegemony, just like all women of Manju Kapur.Even today, thousands of girls sit within the four walls of their houses and wonder why they do not have the right to choose their own lives, decide for themselves whether they want to be home makers or more marriage is still the reason for their birth. My paper is an attempt to study the changing image of women moving away from traditional portrayal of enduring self-sacrificing women towards. The silent suffer and traditional values of family and society.

**Keywords:** Patriarchal, Self-Sacrificing, Victimization.

Manju Kapur born in Amritsar, India is a novelist. Her first novel “Difficult Daughter “won common wealth writers prize for the year 1999,best first book, Europe and south Asia. Her second novel A Married Woman written in 2002 is set in the time leading up to the destruction of the Babri Masjid in India in 1992. It deals with the crisis of a middle class woman from Delhi caught in an unhappy marriage. Astha is the protagonist of the novel. She is the only child of simple, God fearing parents who are very productive and expert her to conform to traditions. Her father wishes her to have a successful career and so be independent.Astha mother only thinks of her successful marriage. Astha looks forward to married life with a nice, romantic dream boy. She happily agrees to an arranged marriage with an American-returned MBA,Hemant, who seems the complete antithesis of a traditional Indian man .she has a habit of submission and has a devotion to the family. She had seen how her mother had been devoted to the family and husband and she thinks that this is what she has to do in future. Astha becomes a school teacher obeying her husband's wishes. She looks after her husband and agrees whatever he says .her husband does not give any importance to her job. Hemant craves for a male offspring. But when Astha says that the onus of bearing a male child rest on the man not the woman , her husband looks annoyed of having an educated woman for a wife . His attitude towards his wife changed totally. The conflicts grows in Astha

.she suffers from recurring migraines and then a growing face problems distance from her husband. Astha has to fulfil the demands of growing children ,pressure at home , silent disapproval of in -law and the attitude of an unresponsive and non-understanding husband . The conventions of the patriarchal society make her husband go by his wishes and Astha is not treated as an equal by him. Even in money matters he does not consult her. Whatever Astha question him he simply crushes Astha's rights to speak. She started writing poetry but it is not appreciated by her husband. She meets a social worker Aijaz at the time of Ram Janmabhoomi –Babri Masjid , who appreciates her talents as a writer and narrator . This is the turning point in the life of Astha . But a blow comes on Astha when Aijiaz's ultimate death in hindu-muslim riots. This incident brings another change in the life of Astha . She now participates in peaceful movements led by secularists. Now she got courage to participate in rallies against communalism. She also stars producing painting and poems that depict her massages of peace. These painting have a quick sale and her husband also admires her. Hemant changed into an adversary from a lover. She still craves for a complete loving and giving relationship, her need for romance which is still unfulfilled. Later she falls in love with a woman called pipee and it also felt strange making love, friend instead of an adversary. Hemant notices the change in Astha and he tries to bridge the gap. Even when she is physically present he feels he is missing her. He is totally committed to her but Astha is unwilling to leave her home life. She wants both pipee and her home. Thus Astha is neither bold nor strong enough to live with pipee forever. After some time pipee leaves for the U.S.A. And the relationship breaks up. Now Astha spends her time to prepare paintings. Her paintings are strong and effective statements to the society. She starts questioning the established norms of the society for her identity. When she led a life of sacrifice and adjustment she failed to get appreciation from her husband. When woman expresses some aspiration as man does, she labelled as feminist. A Married Woman, at its best, is a weak, proto –feminist novel, and at its worst is a pulp romance. This is the irony of the manju kapur's women in her novels.

Indian culture is a composite heritage and its multi-dimensional character helps to find the real need of the people. The post-colonial women writers has to find interpret and rewrite issues related to pre and post-colonial experiences as they appeared on the stage of Indian English literature, they started portraying emotional and psychological themes on par with the partition experience in general and by referring them to women's experience there by adding a gender perspective to the issues related to partition. Manju kapur works focusing on aspects related to partition exposed the critical, differential dimension and the impact of partition on men and women with substantial light being focused on the reality of the relation between gender and socio-historical process, as Seema Malik writes "History of women may not necessarily be the same as the history of men. The impact of cataclysmic event like partition on women was much different and more traumatic and enduring that men. The word partition in inadequate to encompass the myriad meanings this event has for women or to even approximate the many levels of experiences that they lived" women under the patriarchal pressure and control were subjected too much more brunt's and social ostracism. They were discriminated and were biased in lieu of their sex.

The life women lived and struggled under the oppressive mechanism of a closed society were reflected in writings of women writers in the post- colonial India.

They tend to become different from a traditional woman and want to break into new paths. Even if the woman educated they lack the courage and boldness to come in to the patriarchal hegemony, just like all the women of manju kapur. with this consideration to the change image of women moving away from traditional portrayal of enduring self-sacrificing women towards self –assured, assertive and ambitious women making society aware of their demands, just like the protagonist Astha in the A Married Woman.

#### Work Cites

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