

Religion, Caste, Community, and Hierarchy: A Study of UR

Anathamurthy's Samskara

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Abstract

Anantha Murthy's novel Samskara has accomplished translated recognition throughout the globe as a cutting edge classic of Indian writing. In spite of the fact that it has created a lot of critical remarks, insufficient consideration has been given to its gender representation. Discussions of the novel's gender politics have either focused on its positive depictions of feminine beauty and activity or have taken a dreary perspective on its sexist arrangements. Re-scrutinizing the novel's gender representation through socially shaded lenses, this article uncovers different sites of gender discrimination and identifies a subtext that can offer a progressively positive enunciation to Samskara's gender politics.

Keywords: Body, Consciousness, Culture, Gender, Kannada Novels, Literature, Prakriti, Rasa, Sexuality, Women, Orthodox, Prejudice, Anti-Brahmin, Anti-Caste, Anti Community.

Introduction

U.R. Anantha Murthy's Kannada novel Samskara has created a scope of basic sentiment since its distribution in 1965 and subsequent translation into English by A.K. Ramanujan. In any case, insufficient consideration has been given to gender representation in the novel.

The article is partitioned into three parts. An overview of its gender representation follows a summary of the novel. The second part analyses specifically the politics of gender operationalized in, around and through the figure of Chandri. At last, the article excavates an elective meaning to Samskara's gender coding in the portrayal of Bhagirathi.

Samskara tells the story of the interconnected crises variously upsetting the Brahmin and outcaste residents of its non-descript anecdotal town setting, Durvasapura. The vulnerability about who can or should play out the incineration rites for the anti-hero, Naranappa-making

a crisis of confidence and religious observances is symbolically and connected with the deadly spread of plague in Durvasapura, prompting a sociological crisis. These events, thus, trigger a spiritual and existential crisis in the religious guru of the settlement and legend of the novel, Praneshacharya, which it is the task of Samskara to follow till the end. This article seeks to outline the graphs of gender in such an interlaced account. A harsh stock of all the female characters in Samskara reveals two groupings, Brahmin ladies and various types of lower and outcaste ladies. The previous classification includes Bhagirathi, Anusuya, Sitadevi, Lakshmiddeviamma, and Lilavati, while Chandri, Padmavati, Belli and Putta's significant other have a place with the latter class. In the novel's telling, the "Brahmin ladies constitute an amazingly unappealing gathering of characters: evaporated, undesirable, envious, cowardly and gagging on their spleen. Against this, the lower and outcaste ladies are presented as varieties of sound womanhood.

As indicated by Mukherjee (1985: 172), it is basic practice in Indian novels that 'outcaste or lower-caste ladies are frequently enriched with more noteworthy sexual imperativeness than their high-

conceived counterparts.' Paraphrasing RajarKanta Ray's ID of socioeconomic factors to clarify this marvel, Mukherjee (1985: 172) writes:

“Chastity, satitva, and repentance for widows can't be the values of a class that does not have the monetary means to implement them, and obviously, this opportunity adds to the uninhibited naturalness of the lower-caste ladies. In any case, the arrangement of a stereotype is not a simple process. The easy accessibility of lower-caste ladies may also have permeated them with a progressively glorious suggestive quality in the male creative mind. (Emphasis included).”

The last two lines referred to here to play out an essential qualifying capacity. By bringing the question of male creative mind' to hold up under on a substance seen distinctly as a kind of symptomatic • description, Mukherjee directs regard for the possibility that what passes for target realism could similarly be a case of new projection. To create what is verifiable in her insight, easy accessibility' regularly is a euphemism for systems of institutionalized sexual abuse of outcaste and lower-caste ladies by upper-caste men.' Further, male sexual desires are routinely mapped onto categories of socially quieted female bodies and