



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2020; 6(2): 338-339
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 28-12-2019
Accepted: 30-01-2020

Rohtash
Ph.D. Research Scholar
Department of English
Sun Rise University, Alwar,
Rajasthan, India

A saga of third soul in Mahesh Dattani's play

Rohtash

Abstract

This paper deals with the various forms of gender-based violence. It is considered that there are three souls mainly Man, Woman, and the third gender Hijra. Man is considered as the First Soul. A woman is considered as the Second Soul later Hijra is considered as the Third Soul. The article depicts the plight of Hijras in society. It also highlights the complexity of gender-based violence and its main purpose is to highlight the underlying cause of persisting gender inequalities. This research paper identifies all the points of pain that cause violence on the Third Soul like violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence, honor-based violence, forced prostitution, trafficking, negligence for hijras and sexual abuse, etc. It also represents what the efforts we are doing as a human being to combat the violence against the Third Soul. Examples of the affected Third Soul are also quoted.

Keywords: Soul, violence, Hijras

Introduction

It is a common thing that Hijras often come on the childbirth to bestow the newborn baby. They demand the child and check whether it is a normal child. It is considered that when we give some money to the Hijras then they shower their blessings upon us. We have seen the Hijras on the marriage occasions to bless the new couple. They dance on such occasions also. They go to the shops to bestow the shopkeeper and get money. On various places people see them begging. If someone doesn't give them money on these occasions, it is assumed that they will curse them. Hijras come in groups. It is their profession to go on happy occasions for the earnings. The statement written below refers to this.

“UMA: I am doing my paper on class-and gender-related violence.

Anarkali: What do you want me to do? Shall I come to sing and dance when you pass exam?

UMA :I have told you a little bit about myself. Now tell me something about you.

Anarkali : What is there to tell? I sing with other hijras at weddings and when a child is born.

People give us money otherwise I will put up a curse on them. (Laughs.) As if God is on our side. (Smokes.) I did not do anything to Kamla. She was my sister. CP-12

They have their own society. They are known with various names like Hijra, Eunch, Transgender, etc. They prefer to be live like a woman. They wear the dresses of women and apply the Sindoor on the forehead. Due to lack of sex like a male they have to remove their sex parts. They have their experienced doctor for such operations. It is an unauthorized and painful process called Nirvan by Dai Ma. Their chest is molded like a woman breast and their sex part is also molded like a woman. They are unable to produce a child. They prefer to marry a male. Hijras have a head called “Guru Maa”

In Ramayana, Shri Ram is worshipped as a god. When Ram had to go for exile the people of his reign were very unhappy to hear this. They decided to go with Shri Ram for exile. On this Shri Ram said that men and women are requested to go back home. Many persons went back to home on getting the order. Many persons didn't want to leave Shri Ram so they decided to lose their sexual identity from the male because they wanted to obey the order of Shri Ram as they have ordered to man and woman only. On this Shri Ram praised for them and boon them for bestowing whom they wish. The statement written below hints this.

“ ...There are transsexuals all over the world, and India is no exception. The purpose of this case study is to show their position in society. Perceived as the lowest of the low, they yearn for family and love. The two events in mainstream Hindu culture where their presence is acceptable –marriage and birth- ironically are the very same privileges denied to them by man and nature.

Correspondence Author:
Rohtash
Ph.D. Research Scholar
Department of English
Sun Rise University, Alwar,
Rajasthan, India

Not for them the seven rounds witnessed by the fire god, eternally binding man and woman in matrimony, or the blessings of ‘May you be the mother of a hundred sons’ CP10-11

In *Seven Steps Around the Fire* Mahesh Dattani elaborates the critical condition of the Hijra very aptly. Here Hijra’s condition is pitiable and they have their society. They are considered not to be respected. They are deprived of the society. They have been always tortured. Anarkali is innocent but she had to go to Jail in the case of the murder of her own Sister Kamla but she has not done that. The Agents of Subbu’s father Minister made for the murder of Kamla.

“Munswamy. You may see the hijra now if you wish, madam.

UMA. Will she talk to me?

Munswamy (chuckling) She! of course, it will talk to you. We will beat it up if it doesn’t” CP-7

Anarkali : What is there to tell? I sing with other hijras at weddings and when a child is born. People give us money otherwise I will put up a curse on them. (Laughs.) As if God is on our side. (Smokes) I did not do anything to Kamla. She was my sister. CP-12

It is controversial that the Hijras are true or a liar. It is assumed in the story that they speak lie but their predictions are considered as believable. *Seven Steps Around the Fire* is an ironical among the society that Fire cannot witness for the marriage. But it has become the concept in the mind of the people after the seven steps around the fire and chanting some mantra binds the man and woman in relation. It is considered that Hijras have no value for the relations. The statement given below shows that Hijras have value for the relations as Anarkali give scratches on the face of her sister to save her life from the culprits. Anarkali has a love for her sister. Kamla did not know herself as a eunuch and cannot produce a child after marriage. A woman who cannot produce a child is not considered for love due to patriarchy society. When Kamla got love to marry Subbu then she was murdered. On the other side, hijras bestow the new couple for prosperous life and mother of hundred sons.

“Munswamy, If you don’t mind me saying, what is the use talking with it? It will only tell you lies.” CP-7

“Anarkali. I did not kill her. She was my sister!

Munswamy (hits the bars with his stick). Ai Go back! (Hits harder) Back!

Anarkali. Would you kill your sister? CP-9

Hijras are considered a useless and abusive community. They live alienated from society. They follow their own rules and regulations. Munswamy thinks that it is a waste of time to meet Anarkali the Hijra. Munswamy treats hijras like animals. He addresses them a pig. Even people don’t like to meet them. He says these hijras quarrel with each other like animals. Anarkali is beaten by her mates in jail. Anarkali, Kamla and many Hijras are the victims of society.

“Munswamy, Anarkali ! Come here.

Anarkali (from far). No! I don’t want to meet any journalist.

Munswamy. I will come inside and beat you up, you worthless pig!

UMA. I am not a journalist.

Anarkali. I don’t care if you are the mother of all the whores in Bangalore. I said I am not in the mood!

MUNSWAMY. Why do you want to bring this shame on your family, madam? I beg of you go home. CP-8

MUNSWAMY (hits the bars again) Back! Beat it! Kick the hijra!

The other inmates begin to beat Anarkali up”. CP-9

It is controversial that Anarkali is in the male prison Cell. Anarkali addresses Munswamy her brother. It is difficult to decide to keep her in Male or Female Cell. Hijras have been sold and trafficked for the purpose of sex also. It is considered that they have no values for relations. Nobody wants to keep relations with them. When Anarkali says Munswamy her brother then Munswamy gets irritated on this. Then Anarkali tries to persuade him sexually only for a cigarette which shows that Hijras are sold for sex and fun. The statement given below refers to this.

“Anarkali. We make our relations with our eyes with our love. I look at him, he looks at me, and he is my brother. I look at you, you look at me, and we are mother and daughter. Oh, brother, give me a cigarette, na.

Munswamy. Shut up, And don’t call me brother.

Anarkali. Just one, na. (Very sexual.) I will do anything for you, brother Give, na.

Munswamy. Chee! Who would want to ...Flustered. I-I don’t smoke.

Anarkali. If you had a beautiful sister, you will give her a cigarette for a fuck, no?

Munswamy . Just because madam is here....

Anarkali. You are not a sister-fucker?” CP-11

Conclusion

Hijras are always in fear that anyone may insult them. They are treated only like beggars. Anarkali had to scratch the face of Kamla to save her life from Mr. Sharma when she came to know that Kamla and Subbu wanted to marry each other. Perhaps Kamla didn’t know that she is eunuch. Subbu and Kamla got married. Mr. Sharma’s agents murdered Kamla. Anarkali couldn’t tell to the police officer that Minister Sharma’s agents murdered her sister Kamla. It elaborates the gender discrimination like women. Hijras are suffering from critical situations. A family is saddened by the death of a member of the family; another member of the same family is punished for the death. It creates double torture for the third gender. Hijras are not believed whatever they say. But people expect hijras bestow. It is the dual personality of the social for a single person. Munswamy the constable represents the mindset that refuses to say Hijra as human beings. The word useless for the Hijra tells the heartless discrimination of society. Hence discrimination harasses mankind.

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