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Social, Cultural, Religious, Perspective in the Fictional Work Of Perumal Murugan

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Abstract:

This sensuous novel about an infertile couple in 1940s Tamil Nadu was met with a furore on its publication in India with the backdrop of Hindu nationalist fervor gripping India; One Part Woman finds a historical parallel in Rushdie's Satanic verses after the infamous fatwa. Set in South India during the British colonial, One Part Woman tells the story of a couple, Kali and Ponna, who are unable to conceive, much to the concern of their families and crowing amusement of Kali's male friends. Kali and Ponna try anything to have a child, including making offerings at different temples, atoning for past misdeeds of dead family members, and even circumambulating a mountain supposed to cure barren women, but all to no avail. The story at the book's core has been similarly overshadowed by offended sentiments and speculation surrounding the author's future. In Murugan's case, the Kongu Vellala community, backed by local Hindu right-wingers, claimed the novel showed their religious practices and their women in a bad light.

Keywords: childlessness, Ardhanarishvara festival, patriarchal society.

Introduction:

An author, scholar and literary chronicler, Perumal Murugan is one of the best known writers in Tamil literary scene. His works include six novels, four collection of short stories, four anthologies of poems, and ten nonfiction books related to language and literature. One part Woman by Perumal Murugan was originally written in Tamil. One part Woman is a charming and touching story of a South Indian couple. Set in South India during the British colonial period, one part woman tells the story of a couple, Kali and Ponna from Gounder community. It was translated into English by Aniruddhan vasudevan. The novel centers on a farmer couple's desire for a child and the extent that they go to fulfill this wish of theirs. Kali and Ponna are married for twelve years. They have been trying to conceive a child so long. Disappointed with childlessness, they resort

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to all kinds of prayers and sacrifices to please the gods. Meanwhile, as expected, people around them continuously annoy them with their taunts. They also suggest kali to remarry, which he does not agree with.

Ponna's family convince her to go to the chariot festival, known as the Ardhanarishvara festival in which ,married women without offspring have sex with strangers over a single night, often returning home pregnant, blessed by grace of the god Maachami in the body of an anonymous man. The Chariot Festival is a deep traditional celebration of local gods; particular ritual tradition is the sexual sharing of men. Before arrival of the festival, the two families have discussed kali taking a second wife who may be able to conceive where ponna failed. The novel questions several social issues. One of the them is the stigma that our society deliberately associates with childlessness. The couple is very much in love: they care for each other. Having a child is equated to a definite status in the society that everyone has to live up to. Whoever fails to adhere to it is subjected to incessant judgment by one and all. Moreover, the brunt of infertility is most of the time unthinkingly projected towards the woman alone and not the man. Also, when a woman speaks out in her defense or voices her opinion, she is looked down upon and reminded of what she cannot have.

Another issue brought to the fore here is the rigid caste system and how it has devoured the psyche of man so much that the human side ceases to exist. The novel tells how patriarchal customs in India turn women into victims of gender essentialism. The novel explores the role of gender in the tradition of marriage.

Literature review: Vivek Shanbhag portrayed about this novel "The life of an innocent couple who are led to believe that the expectations of the system defines their own personal pursuit of happiness forms Perumal Murugan's captivating story of love and desire. With his brilliant artistry, he captures the ups and down of their lives. Works such as these have the power to subject contemporary value systems to intense introspection, it is for the same reason they are met with resistance. This work of art by Perumal Murugan can be acclaimed as modern mythology for its unusual access to cultural memories of the land and language, and the extraordinary courage with which it is dealt Indian express has highlighted that "An evocative novel about a childless couple reminds us of the excellence of writing in Indian Languages...This is a novel of many layers of richly textured relationships of raw and resonant dialogues and characters...Perumal Murugan's voice is distinct it is the voice of writing in the Indian Languages rich in characters,

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dialogues and locales that are unerringly drawn and intensely evocative. As the novel moves towards its inevitable climax, tragic yet redemptive, the reader shares in the anguish of the characters caught in a fate beyond their control. It is because a superb writer has drawn us adroitly into the lives of those far removed from our acquaintance.

Conclusion:

One part woman is a controversial novel .It reflects the social customs, rituals, religious, beliefs. In this novel Ponna becomes a source of constant taunts from family members they were placing blame on her for childlessness. Childless couples, especially the women in these marriages, suffer untold humiliation even today. She had been suffering a lot. If we went to ancient time there is no change in the Condition of woman it has been same as past and present there is no hope to change. She lives under patriarchal pressure. She always sacrifices her soul, heart and body for wellbeing of their husbands. She does not have freedom to live.

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