



THE WOUNDED SPIRIT OF THE GIRL CHILD: A STUDY OF ANURADHA ROY'S *SLEEPING ON JUPITER*

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Abstract:

This paper enunciates the suppression of the girl children in India. The focus of this paper is to light on the wounded spirit of the girl children in the Indian sociocultural structure concerning Anuradha Roy's *Sleeping on Jupiter*. Roy's protagonist 'Nomi' is the collective voice of the unrecognized Wounded spirit of millions of girl children in India who lost their identity, voice, rights, and status in the explosion of rich Indian culture. Indian culture is simply a hegemonical culture where women lost their all-inclusive rights. This paper aims to explore the impact of patriarchal hegemony and exploitation on the girl children and how it affects their spirit and alters their entire lives. Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future but acts of violence like rape committed against these potential nation-builders or undermining the country. It is extremely difficult to accept that the perpetrators are frequently the big teams of the girl children who underwent the violence by the close ones. They are the ones that the children anticipate to trust and expect love. When the children weakness to the crime against them, they lose their innocence and their irredeemable childhood. The only thing they could recall from the childhood harassment and the betrayal of their loved ones.

Keywords: Girl Children, Anuradha Roy, Sleeping on Jupiter, Indian Culture, Patriarchal Hegemony, Nation-Builders, Innocence, And Childhood Harassment.

"Women are the only oppressed group in our society that lives closely intimate with the oppressors," says Evelyn Cunningham. Throughout history oppression, as been institutionalized and implemented based on factors such as class race religion, and color but has been equal and oppressing responses to marginalization around the world including Feminism, Marxism, Harlem Renaissance, literature, tribal literature, and more. In Indian society, marginalization has primarily been applied based on social, cultural, ethnicity, and geography. This dividing line for the dominant was created by age practice that served the interest of the dominant class and denied even the most basic rights to the marginalized. This inequality became entrenched and is documented in all expressions and forms a great divide between the two groups of society. The religious foundation of Indian society fascinated the privileged and accomplished total elegance despite pressure while the upper class enjoyed freedom social standing and life secretary and the acquiescing parties faced fears regarding justice and security. "The attempt to destroy the genus of a people or to completely annihilate a particular ethnic group? is unfolding, rape is a prelude to dis-embedment and death" (Weitsman, 563).

Anuradha Roy is an acclaimed Indian author and journalist known for evocative and lyrical writing. She received prestigious awards including the Man Booker Prize Longlist 2015, the International Dublin Literary Award 2020, and the Sahitya Academy Award 2020. Roy's writing is characterized by deep empathy rich description and the exploration of complex human emotions and societal issues. She also co-founded a Permanent Black publishing house specializing in academic books on South Asian history and culture.

Sleeping on Jupiter 2015, the book was long-listed for the Man Booker Prize and has been praised for its intricate storytelling and vivid portrayal of human emotions and relationships. The novel interweaves the stories of several characters whose lives intersect in the town of the stories of several characters whose life intersect in the town of Jarmuli, a fictional seaside locate in India. The central character, Nomi is a young woman who writtens to India after many years to convert is a young woman who returns to India after many years to confront her traumatic past. She was adopted by a Swedish family after surviving abuse at an ashram in Jarmuli. Her journey is one of reconciliation with her memories and the search for closure. Other main characters include three elderly women Gouri, Latika, and Vidhya Jarmuli for your pilgrimage and Suraj local guide who becomes entwined in their stories. The novel explores. The themes of memory, trauma, spirituality, and the passage of time. It paints a vivid picture of contemporary India grappling with the contract between

its tradition and modern identities. “I’m tired of the naked, raped, beaten black woman's body. I want to see an image of black femaleness that alters our universe in some way” (Lorde, 67).

The status of the girl child in Indian society has been a major concern and focus for policymakers, activists, and communities. Historically the girl child in India has faced numerous challenges rooted in cultural, social, and religious factors. “One of the dominant reasons for crimes against women is the strong dominant patriarchal system that seems to dominate most societies in India and around the globe” (Varkey, 7). In *Sleeping on Jupiter* by Anuradha Roy the character Nomi embodies the collective voice of the wounded spirit of the girl children through our experience and then narrative. Nomi's story is set against the backdrop of a tumultuous childhood marked by violence exploitation and loss esseive a poignant presentation of the broader issues faced by the vulnerable young girls.

When Nomi's family is brutally murdered during a conflict in her homeland her childhood is tainted with extreme violence. This initial trauma sets the stage for her later experiences of vulnerability and exploitation. She experiences more abuse during her time in an orphanage, especially at the hands of a man who poses as a savior but turns out to be the predator. “He pressed me back against his chest. “Some things are forbidden, you know that, don’t you? We need rules when we live together;” (Roy, 91). This mirrors the real-world scenarios where children especially girls are often let down by those meant to protect them. In the words of social activist, and rescuer of sex trafficked victims Dr. Sunitha Krishan, “Trafficking is a crime where your body is tortured, your spirit is broken, your determination is destroyed and your soul is completely scarred. So, even if all the doors are open, you will not budge”. The exploitation Nomi faces at the hands of the very people who are all supposed to care for her strips away her innocence. This loss is symbolic of the countless girl children who face similar fates robbed of their childhood and forced to confront realities prematurely.

Nomi's journey to find her roots and understand her identity reflects a universal quest for belonging among children who have been displaced or marginalized. Her attempt to piece together her past and make sense of fragmented memories symbolizes the struggle of many girl children to reclaim their narrative from a world that often silences them. “...limits women’s choices directly by instilling fear in them, destroying their health, limiting mobility, controlling their sexuality, limiting access to resources and services. Indirectly, it impacts on a woman’s self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-identity” (Karbak, 3).

Nomi demonstrates incredible fortitude in the face of insurmountable obstacles. A survival and eventual escape from the oppressive orphanage showcase the strength and tenacity many girls display in the face of adversity. Nomi's journey from victim to survivor highlights the potential for healing and empowerment serving as a testament to the indomitable spirit of the girl child. "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them" (Angelou, 45).

Sleeping on Jupiter under so underscores the systematic nature of the injustice faced by the girl children. This institutional and social structure that fails Nomi is indicative of the broader failures that perpetuate the cycle of abuse and exploitation. In the narration of Nomi, Roy gives voice to the countless girl children who suffer in silence. "We realize the importance of our voice only when silenced" (United Nations, 8:00). Nomi's narrative becomes a powerful vehicle for highlighting issues that are often overlooked or ignored.

Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) and child trafficking are two of the most profitable and rapidly expanding forms of illicit activity worldwide. Numerous victims are affected by the worldwide enslavement of children, who are either taken from their homes and sold or trafficked inside their nations, where they are used as commodities for labor or sexual exploitation. Girls are especially prone to be trafficked into the sex trade globally: 98% of people trafficked for CSE are women and girls. The level of violence experienced has been associated with negative physical, psychological, and social-emotional development, and health and safety standards are typically deficient in exploitative environments. The approach based on human rights for child trafficking offers a thorough conceptual framework that facilitates the development, execution, and assessment of victim-focused and law enforcement responses. "During this conflict, an estimated 20,000 women endured sexual assaults in the form of torture and rape" (UN. ESCOR, 4).

Nomi's character in *Sleeping on Jupiter* profoundly represents the wounded spirit of the girl children, throughout her harrowing yet inspiring journey. Anuradha Roy sheds light on young girls' enduring challenges in hostile environments, underscoring the urgent need for compassion, protection, and systematic change. Nomi's story with the blend of pain and resilience encapsulates the collective voice of many girls and children who continue to fight for their right to essay and dignified life.

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