

Disjuncture Between The Power And Truths In Indira Ganesan's "The Journey"

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Abstract: Knowledge and Power are rationally defined in a different terms by ontological theorists against the Power and Truth. One can dialectically constitute both the terms in view of colonial self, materialized world, self-confinement of the contents within them. The terms also focus on the sterile life associated with American and Indian cultures. The paper presents how these two fail to rescue Renu from her generalized anxiety and confusion. Her continuous suffer and pain cannot be comforted by them. As a result, her life throughout the novel, moves through depression, psychological trauma and examines her being away from the life-giving choices offered by her Indian family or solitary life in America. Instead of opting any one of the ways, how she chooses the fatigue death embedded in ending of "the Journey".

Keywords: Anxiety, Confusion, Dialect, Power, Suffer and Truth.

INTRODUCTION:

The Challenges of knowledge and the approaches of confrontation do not have the same substantial results in terms of a perfect constant and sustainable world for socially excluded self. A socially excluded self tries to set the protocols of its own inclusivity and centeredness in a system of resistant knowledge by suspending the rules, conditions and notions of truth and valid meaning set by power. Whether it is in the societal systems, family, community, state or individual life, the decision of these stories and characters are foreclosed. The situations and the incidents in the life dismal an adolescent suicide based on the uncertainty of the world and a personal loss. One of such reasons made Indira Ganesan to choose protagonist, Renu Krishnan, of her novel, "The Journey" commit suicide as her external journey from India to America and Internal Journey from Truth to Power amalgamates her life a continuous psychological illness and physical strain.

STORY IN BRIEF:

Indira Ganesan's novel, "The Journey" moves around two major characters i.e., Renu Krishnan and her sister Meenakshi Krishnan whose lives are designed by two different cultures. They were born in the tropical Asian island of 'Pi' created by the novelist but they have grown up in align culture USA. All other characters like Adda

Krishnamurthy and Hippie Freddie Flat and others have also dual culture backdrop with a confusion and revelation. Renu's struggle is to come with the sudden loss of her twin cousin, with whom she had assumed a rare closeness. She is made to acknowledge her own repressed sexuality and incestuous love she had for her twin cousin Rajesh. In a nation of immigrants, the story of entrance and modification is a perpetual fictional favourite. But Ganesan's handling of the story makes Renu's cousin Rajesh meeting with an accident and is dead by drowning. Conceived on the same day and born on the same day, Renu and Rajesh are considered as twins. According to village lore, if one of the twins dies, the other will follow soon. So Renu believes that since her twin Rajesh is dead by water, she will die by fire.

Elaboration: Power of myth strongly influences Renu's early life. During the childhood days, Renu and Rajesh unknowingly and accidentally killed a monkey which is believed an emissary of God, Hanuman and felt definitely there will be a punishment in life for this brutal action. Such early impressions on mind at her earlier life sense that she indebts the gods for her misbehaviour continues with Renu over the years:

"Whenever she slipped into the American Way of life, When she stopped wearing the red tikka on her forehead, when she stopped going to temple, she could not free herself of the idea that the gods were still hunting her, that they were waiting to seek retribution" (14)

The very first line of the novel begins with the ambiguous ending of a major character in the novel by giving the information about the worst thing happened in their life. Rajesh died of by drowning into the water. It was happened where the train he was travelling slipped from the tracks due to heavy rains and fallen into river below. This death affects Renu beyond the reasons. She nurtures heavily introvert, worried, and alarmed. She gets nightmares and imagines all bad signs in dreams. She becomes melancholic and never spends time with anyone always thinking about her frightened future. She feels guilty and suffers from psychological illness. All the plans designed by Rukmini to bring Renu into the main stream of life by looking at suitable matrimonial matches are faded away. However, Renu made it very clear that she will die soon

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and there is no meaning in looking at matrimonial plans. Manx makes friendship with an American Hippie named Freddie Flat whose love and intimacy is no problem to her. Manx and Renu went very close to Freddie and gave permission to him to be very free. She freely expresses all her emotional bonds with her Spanish Aunt Alphonsa and Freddie. Renu takes the help of Rajesh to lessen her burden of truth i.e. the secrets of identity and parentage. She spends her time lonely near the beach and draws her attention to the drum fire. Finally, Renu explains Kish about parentage and surprisingly he never pays attention to it as he knows it already. Freddie explains that life is not like mathematics that life is void of logic. He goes on to say that sooner or later everyone has "to create an absolute" (168). At this juncture, Renu needs to act and decision is to return to America in spite of the fact that Rukmani will stay with her family. She used to that stone-swallowing women from her dreams are beckoning her on. The authorial voice states;

"We have been told that it is important and correct to feel the earth beneath, even while flight is in our hearts. Weightless travel, metaphorical soul soaring, a shedding of swallowed stones, a mobility that can hold the keys of the universe" (173-174)

In the real world, Renu is a young woman coping with clinical depression, but the cause, her relationship with Rajesh is not adequately developed. In a situation, Marya, the Seer asks Renu why she is preoccupied with death. Renu fails to explain. At this juncture, as a researcher, one can assume that Renu grieves for a presence that was a part of herself, her twin who remained in India and who bridges the space between. Renu faced with an arranged marriage, confused by the strange mixtures of Aunt Bala's superstition and her father's insistence on a world based on rational principles, seeks givens. Freddie advises her that the only givens are life and death. when life is not all that attractive and when Rajesh is gone, the ending of the book seems to imply that Renu chooses death. Renu is preparing for a return to America and rejecting the escape and metaphorical flight offered by the burning oil drum and Sati. The author has taken all safety measures to encourage the reader to go through entire book by introducing certain

comic situations. Ganesan's use of language is rich and moves the story very speedily. But sometimes it abruptly peeps into sensitive and parodic descriptions of adventures. Publisher Weekly rightly pointed;

"While the charm of the writing and observation about East and West engage the reader, Renu's story drifts into an arbitrary half-resolution" (52)

Conclusion: Ganesan's treatment of two different cultures is quite identical and completely balanced. Her handling the theme of knowledge and power is completely different terms from ontological point of view. The rational directions of understanding the power and truth are accidental in the novel but they are continued in the novel co-incidentally. The experiences of Renu at two different cultures makes her make a big debate in her mind on self identity, materialized world and also her practical implications on life which is associated with Indian and American cultures. Many times her extreme anxiety throws her into the verge of death as the only solutions to all her inner struggle. Her illusions, delirium of trauma at blazing drum of fire on the road to make end her life by herself and a few other incidents shows how she escapes from dilemma of death. At this juncture, Renu is very close to the character of Maya in Anita Desai's "Cry, a Peacock". Renu's isolation is due to the her belief on the death with five elements but Maya's isolation is different where she is taken herself away from Gautama and fling him over the ramparts down to death.

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