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THE HEGEMONY OF VIOLENCE AND FREEDOM: AN OBSERVATION OF KIRAN DESAI'S *THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS* AND MAHASWETA DEVI'S *MOTHER OF 1084*

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Abstract:

*Women's suppression is the issue which is deep-rooted in the preconceived structure of the society in which women suffer and are tortured due to many reasons. In this patriarchal society, women have nothing to get their rights and face gender discrimination in every part of the society. The main purpose of this paper is to show women's subjugation in the family and society; women as victim of violence in patriarchy, and their endless exploitation. This paper is a comparative study on Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Mahasweta Devi's *Mother of 1084* aiming to analyze the suppression and subordination of women by any means in the male dominated society. No society can claim to be free from gender inequality. Violence is used as a tool for widening this verge and for keeping women silent inside the four walls of house. On one hand, 'women' are equated to Mother Goddess and Earth, but on the other hand, they are victimized by domestic, physical, sexual, and psychological violence. The paper discusses some of the major reasons behind women's subjugation due to which they have to be victims of conquest, oppression, violence, and domination as well as tortured. Empirical research methodology has been followed for the discussion of the issues in women's lives, first, this paper has been streamer with the major reasons existing behind women's suppression; secondly, it has been analyzed by taking both the novels into consideration; and lastly it has been concluded with the result of this study.*

Key Words: *Suppression, violence, male domination, harassment, subordination, oppressed.*

Introduction

Kiran Desai (1971), listed as one of the Indian Diaspora writers, won the prestigious award of Booker Prize for her second novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) which has the setting in the Kalimpong town of north-eastern Himalaya dealing with the women's subaltern position in Indian society. In this novel, women are circumscribed by tradition and culture which results into their oppression. Mahasweta Devi (1926- 2016), socio- political activist and Bengali fiction writer, was one of the prominent women writers in Indian writing in English. She was awarded with Padma Shri for her social work. Her Bengali novel, *Hajar Churashir Maa* (1974) is translated into English novel *Mother of 1084* (1997) by Samik Bandyopadhyay which represents traumatic lives of women affected by oppression, marginalization, violence, and Naxalite movement in West Bengal. The novels of both the women writers represent the true picture of Indian society and women's suppression. Gender discrimination; women as victim of male chauvinism and violence, and their helplessness are some of the major themes of Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Mahasweta Devi's *Mother of 1084* are discussed in this research paper.

Many researchers have been working on feminism in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Mahasweta Devi's *Mother of 1084*. The previous research studies on *The Inheritance of Loss* represented the image of women having explanation of three generations to portray the journey of women from suppression to liberation; discrimination of women from third world having theme of feminism; their

secret desire for freedom but helplessness in raising their voice against discrimination. So far as the novel *Mother of 1084* is concerned, agony of marginalized mother; women's suppressed voice; women's struggle against family and society for identity and independence in male dominated system have been represented in the previous researches. Psychological trauma of a mother as well as her journey towards social activism facing suppression in her life. The studies on domestic violence as well as political violence faced by women due to the consequences of the Naxalite Movement have been done.

But this research paper aims to show the comparison through its elaboration of women's issues; major reasons and aspects behind their suppression such as male chauvinism, social tradition, violence against women, inequality and subordination. Through the comparative study, the elaboration will proceed from an account of reasons having the canvas of feminism, flow with the exploration of the patriarchal ideology of the society, responsible social stigma for women's miserable condition, and violence against women in the family as well as in the society, and finally its consequences in the novels, *The Inheritance of Loss* and *Mother of 1084*.

Main Aspects of Comparison

Mahasweta Devi and Kiran Desai belong to the different generations and their writings deal with the suppression of women in the family and the society. Both the writers' novels represent the true picture of women's status in their contemporary societies which is very much similar. Violence against women, psychological trauma, inequality and subordination and urge for freedom are the main aspects of comparison in this paper. Although, many feminist movements have taken place in the society from many decades, but the treatment towards women in the society has not much changed; although Mahasweta Devi and Kiran Desai are the writers of different age groups, but their portrayal of women in their works and the attitude of the society towards women are similar; that is the major focus of this present study.

Major Reasons behind Women's Oppression

When a girl child is born, the cycle of her suppression starts because she is denoted as a girl. This proves to be a curse on her, though she is unknown of this gender bias, still she has to face suppression at every stage of her life, and finally, she also becomes the accomplice of this biased system of the society. Cultural notions contribute to form this view of inequality, in the society, which promotes it from one generation to another. Society considers women less worthy than men, and this consideration proves to be 'curse of being female' because society runs on the cultural beliefs existing within the society. Cultural beliefs enforce silence and obedience on women. It is believed that a girl must be raised in a manner in which she must not demand but obey, and this quality of obedience proves to be a reason for their suppression. The anguish of being women suppresses the desire for attaining an identity in the society. The upbringing is also responsible for the pathetic condition of women. Parents nurture a male and female child with different set of goals. A mother, who learns from cultural notions, teaches her daughter to stop competing with boys, trying to put her in accordance to the image they themselves have in the society, as they consider this aspect of society as correct. A daughter notices her mother's place in the family, her household responsibilities as well as her plights, and when she experiences the same obligations expected by the society, she starts molding herself in the same frame. She does not learn all this immediately; but it is the result of that inferiority complex which was developed during her upbringing from her childhood. She becomes the mirror image of the women of the previous generation. Society starts to form expectations from women once the cultural stereotype is secured. Women's behavior is affected due to this stigma, and they start to act in accordance with the expectations of the society. They start losing their self-esteem in society and accept the discrimination. Studies have shown that "by ten years of age, most children are aware of cultural stereotypes of different groups in society, and children who are members of stigmatized groups are aware of cultural types at an even younger age" (Wikipedia).

Male Chauvinism

Women usually become the victims of male chauvinism. Men suppress women, consider

themselves superior than women, having control over productive resources as well as the string of lives of women remain also in the hands of men. Simone de Beauvoir stated that:

She is a womb, an ovary; she is a female: this word is enough to define her. From a man's mouth, the epithet "female" sounds like an insult; but he, not ashamed of his animality, is proud to hear: "He's a male!" (Beauvoir 41)

Society has a totally different face for 'female' which is immutable, and they are denied the right to compete with 'male' as they are considered to be lacking in physical strength. This lack of physical power makes them think of their weakness. They do not dare to be innovative, inventive, tough, competitive, and rebellious. They quietly accept a place that the society has decided for them, influenced by the cultural norms. This is the social stigma that being a woman is a curse. Society has branded them as 'woman'. In the words of Simone de Beauvoir:

Males have always and everywhere paraded their satisfaction of feeling they are kings of creation. 'Blessed be the Lord our God, and the Lord of all worlds that has not made me a woman,' Jews say in their morning prayers; meanwhile, their wives resignedly murmur: 'Blessed be the Lord for creating me according to his will'. Among the blessings Plato thanked the gods for was, first, being born free and not a slave and, second, a man and not a woman. (31)

Marriage is a compulsion for women because it is considered to be a 'safe haven' where people are supposedly faithful to each other. In most parts of the world, women are looked down upon as of lesser worth than that of man, because of this one third of all girls are married before they turn eighteen and sixty-five million girls are out of school. When a girl turns twelve and is in the state of utter poverty, her future is out of her control (Maria 2013). Due to their feminine psych, menstruation and pregnancy they are considered incapable to compete with men. Family treats differently the female and the male child. Education also contributes in strengthening this psyche. This stigma affects the behavior of women so much that they start accepting their place and behave in the same manner which is expected from them by the society. Females are considered as oppressed group and males as oppressor in the society that's why women are facing suppression from thousands of years. Society's view for the male is that he is permitted to do everything according to his wish; he can be aggressive, rude, and violent because his parents nurture him with this inbuilt quality; that it is his birth right. On the other side, the female gets tormented and harmed from her childhood. Her parents nurture her with different of rules that she must be humble, obedient, passive, and domestic.

One of the major reason of women's suppression is patriarchy as Allan G. Johnson points out in the work *Gender Knot* that "a society is patriarchal to the degree that it promotes male privilege by being male dominated, male identified, and male centered" (Johnson 5). Male has the control over all the resources in the family and society. Having power in his hands, male becomes oppressor and controller of female's lives as it is discussed by Johnson in the work *GenderKnot*:

What other term can one use to describe a state in which people do not have rights over their own bodies, their own sexuality, marriage, reproduction or divorce, in which they may not receive education or practice a trade or profession, or move about freely in the world? Many women (both past and present) work laboriously all their lives without receiving any payment for their work. (15)

Violence against Women

There is nothing to deny that women become the victim of violence whether of domestic, social, or at workplace. Women have to face domestic violence, marginalization and deprivation from education and economic support, sexual and psychological harassment in the society where they have their dreams to make their identity free from all the clutches, to attain liberty, and to live independently, but at the end they remain only the victims of such superimposed structures of the society. Violence inside the family by the

spouse or other family members, within the community and outside home, results in physical and psychological harm to women. Violence against women is one of the central social devices by means of which 'women' are enforced into a subsidiary position by the society. Violence against 'women' is widespread which kills, torments, and damages to women physically, mentally, emotionally, sexually, and economically. According to World Health Organization (1996), studies estimate that between twenty to fifty percent of women have experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner or family member (United Nations Children's Fund Innocent Research Centre 2000).

Kamla Bhasin expressed her views by saying that the society turns the distinction between the creations of nature into discrimination. The biggest hierarchy is between the woman and the man. In India, fifty thousand girls are killed every year either just after the birth or later before attaining the age of puberty. All over the world, hundred million women have had to suffer from violence. There is no greater war than the war that is running against women in our society. One incidence of rape happens in India in every twenty-two minutes. Our constitution talks about equality of women but it remains in the constitution with no avail.

Society denies to accept women as equal to men and to give rights to enjoy essential freedom. In the case of domestic violence, women choose to suffer silently. They tolerate all the assaults just to save her relations and family. They choose their family over their self-respect and keep suffering from inside without complaining, because being "oppressed and submerged, she becomes a stranger to herself because she is a stranger to the rest of the world" (Beauvoir 397). There is no society which is free of such violence on women; violence is that weapon through which women are forced to keep silent for unfair behavior towards them. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) defines violence against women as:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (UNCFIRC 2000)

The cases of sexual violence are on a rise all over the world. Rape of women is often used as a weapon of war. Sexual assault can also greatly affect the welfare of sufferers; women may be stigmatized and run out of favor by their families and others in the relationships. Its impact on women's mental health can be as serious as is on the physical health. Catherine MacKinnon defined sexual harassment as "the unwanted imposition of sexual requirement in the context of a relationship of unequal power" (MacKinnon 1-2). Sexual harassment remains a common bane for the society, and women usually become the victim of the exploitation having scars on their bodies as well as on their psyche. Allan G Johnson stated that:

No woman is immune, for example, to the cultural devaluing of women's bodies as sexual objects to be exploited in public and private life, or the ongoing threat of sexual harassment and violence. To a rapist, the most powerful woman in the land is still a woman and this more than anything culturally marks her as a potential victim (Johnson 22).

Research on domestic violence has been mentioned by Innocenti Digest (2000) which interprets the tortures in categories of 'physical abuse' such as slapping, beating, arm twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threatening with an object or weapon, and murder. 'Sexual abuse' such as coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing one to have non-consensual sex. 'Psychological abuse' which includes behaviour that is intended to intimidate and to persecute, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement in the four walls of house, surveillance, threats of taking away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation. 'Economic abuse' includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment,

etc. (UNCFIRC 2000).

Inequality and Subordination

It is the curse imposed on women by the society in the name of social rituals, culture and tradition due to which women have to suffer throughout their lives. It is the stigma of the society that the women who contribute for the welfare of the society as well as of their families; being half of the population of the society, but they use to be marginalized, deprived, burdened, exploited, oppressed, suffered, and harassed in the same society. Woman is known by her husband's name, she has to follow the religion of his family, and she has become his 'other half', but she does not enjoy the honor of 'other half' in the family, "she is annexed to her husband's universe; she gives him her person: she owes him her virginity and strict fidelity. She loses part of the legal rights of the unmarried woman" (Beauvoir 506). She becomes his vassal as stated in *The Second Sex*:

...woman, integrated as slave or vassal into the family group dominated by fathers and brothers, has always been given in marriage to males by other males. ...she is part of payments to which two groups mutually consent; her condition was not deeply modified when marriage evolved into a contractual form (503).

It is true that a lot of girls don't go to school due to poverty and traditions prevalent in the society, their parents can hardly afford the education of their son's, and daughters remain deprived of their right to education as Simone de Beauvoir stated in *The Second Sex*:

One of the most common is that the adolescent girl does not receive the same encouragement accorded to her brothers; on the contrary, she is expected to be a *woman as well*, and she must add to her professional work the duties that femininity implies (400).

"If knowledge is power, power is also knowledge, and a large factor in their subordinate position is the fairly systematic ignorance patriarchy imposes upon women" (Millett 42). This is the major reason behind women's weak economic condition. Education of women is important in order to improve socio-economic condition of the families, and education makes them stronger, healthier, independent, and free to choose their own future. It helps women to be aware of their rights, to make right decisions, to protect themselves against abuse and unfairness; however Sixty-five million girls don't have access to education (Marie 2014). Women do not receive her father's property as inheritance, or her part is given as dowry to her in laws, at last she gets nothing which could be called as her own. Marriage is the destiny of every 'woman' that society imposes on them, and they have to suffer throughout their lives without any power in her hands, ultimately, she is destined to become the man's subordinate being dependent on him economically. So far as the power is concerned, women have no right to take decisions, live according to their own desires, apart from that they have no choice except to be puppets in the hands of male in order to fulfill their desires as Johnson pointed out that:

In the simplest sense, male dominance creates power differences between men and women. It means, for example, that men can claim larger shares of income and wealth. It means they can shape culture in ways that reflect and serve men's collective interests....

.... But they stand out precisely because they are so unusual in a society in which male dominance is the rule. Like all subordinate groups, women also manage to have some power by making the most of what is left to them by men. Just as patriarchy turns women into sex objects who are supposed to organize their lives around men's needs (Johnson 6).

These factors contributing into subordination of women can be seen in the works taken for the study. The novels, *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai and *Mother of 1084* by Mahasweta Devi represent the suppression of women on a high extent. Women are the victims of male chauvinism, physical and psychological violence, exploitation, sexual harassment, and marginalization. This paper is a comparative study of the suppression of female characters in the novels, *The Inheritance of Loss* and *Mother of 1084*. Women are suppressed because of many reasons and try to cope up with the circumstances

but there is no end to this suppression. Kiran Desai's novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, has Gorkhaland Movement as its background in which Nepali Gorkhas are fighting against the government with the demand of separate region of Gorkhaland in order to get better status in the Indian society, and to get opportunities for education and employment. Mahasweta Devi's novel, *Mother of 1084*, also has the background of Naxalite Movement which is the revolution against the bourgeoisie class of the society having aim to eliminate the social inequality. The story of the novels revolves around revolution affecting the lives of the characters. Both the Movements have the same goal to create a healthy society which would be untouched by class discrimination, and that is a sort of positive step for the welfare for the discriminated population. But this uprising proves to be the cause behind women's suppression. In both the works, the uprising highly affects the lives of the male and female characters, but female characters are affected on a higher level rather than that of male characters. This paper explains the suppression and sufferings of 'women' in the society, and how their lives are affected more in comparison to that of men.

Comparative Study of *The Inheritance of Loss* and *Mother of 1084*

In the novel, *Mother of 1084*, Sujata faced exploitation, subordination and depression in the family. For her husband, Sujata was a sexual object, and he was the subject, apart from that, he had an illicit relationship with his typist at his office. He used the other woman as a tool to show his control over the sexuality of the women who were in his life. He did not have any affection for his wife, yet he decided to have more children because it promulgates his power to have a right over his wife's reproductive capability:

Dibyanath never cared to probe into these wounds. He was neither very attached, nor indifferent to his wife. The way he saw it, a wife had to love, respect and obey her husband. A husband was not required to do anything to win his wife's respect, love and loyalty... He had built a house of his own, he kept servants, and that was enough he thought. He never tried to make a secret of his affairs with young girls outside the house. He felt it was within his rights (Bandyopadhyay 45).

He allowed her to do job in bank only because of the financial crisis in the family, but later, when conditions improved, he wanted her to leave the job as he expected her to spend life on his whims and desires, and nurture children. He had always given respect to his mother because she appreciated his ideology:

Dibyanath had not allowed Sujata the most common rights that a mother has. His mother held the reins. Dibyanath never knew that one could honour one's mother without humiliating one's wife. His wife under his feet, his mother held aloft. That was his ethos. (45)

Dibyanath's mother showered attention to her son and his ideology, so "Dibyanath and his mother constituted the centre of attraction in the home. Sujata had a shadowy existence. She was subservient, silent, faithful and without an existence of her own" (9). Brati was the son of Dibyanath Chatterjee, who had his own chartered accountant firm as well as a high reputation in Calcutta. Although Brati was not facing the discrimination, but he had the pain of proletariat class, and got involved in Naxalite Movement in his young age, in fact he had a dream to have a classless society. He was the only member of the family with whom his mother, Sujata was highly attached. When he died in an encounter in that movement, his mother also shattered internally.

She lay in her bed all the time, with her eyes shrouded by her hands. She never cried aloud. Hem alone stayed with her to give her sleeping pills or hold her hands... It took Sujata three months to start going to her job at the bank again. (6)

It was that movement which had taken her son away from her, and with his death Sujata lost the motive to survive due to the trauma of alienation which damaged her psychologically. "In her sleep Sujata cried out for Brati and then she would come awake. The dreams seemed so real, so irresistibly real, that

Sujata would wake with a start and start looking for Brati" (14). She thought herself responsible for the 'killing of Brati' who was a true companion of Sujata with whom she used to laugh, spent many happy moments, and shared her feelings, but "with Brati's death, Brati's father had also died for Sujata. The way he had behaved that day, that moment, had shattered numberless illusions for her" (7), because Dibyanath "had had to pull so many strings to hush up the news that his son had died such a scandalous death" (7). He was not sorry for the dreadful death of his son rather he was afraid of losing his reputation as well as his business projects if the news of Brati's encounter was leaked in the society. Finally,

Dibyanath had succeeded in his mission, his string- pulling. The next day the newspaper reported the deaths of four young men. Their names were reported. Brati was not mentioned in any of the reports. That was how Dibyanath had wiped Brati away. But Sujata had never been able to do that (8).

He was the man who didn't care about that he lost his son, he never tried to investigate personally what was happened to his son due to which he forced to go on that way for social change, and the only thing he did that he wiped everything related to Brati as his memory, on the other hand Sujata lost everything with her son's death, her companion, her beloved son for whom she bore so much pain, and who became the dearest to her. Sujata was left alone to find out the answers of the questions which were buried with Brati because he secretly planned to act according to the movement with other comrades. What happened with him just before his encounter? Why he didn't tell anything to Sujata? What was going on in his life? What he thought about proletariat class? Only Sujata was curious to find out the answers because she was the suppressed mother, and reached to another comrade, Somu's house where his mother was also harmed by this uprising because her son was the only hope for the family to get educated and earned for livelihood. Somu's mother was totally dependent on her only son, who was another comrade and friend of Brati, studied in a good college having hope for bright future, but unfortunately, he also died with Brati in that encounter. She knew everything about their rebel against unequal social class system, but she could not do anything to save them from the police. Her husband also died after some time of Somu's death, and in the house, she lived with her daughter to have facing the difficulties and sufferings due to that revolution. Somu's sister gave tuitions for running the household. If Somu's mother would have been educated like Sujata, they might have protected themselves from economic crisis. In this way, the female is butchered for saving the male. She had the same pain of mother as Sujata had for Brati, both of the mothers are so much impacted by the uprising that they could not forget all this in their lives, and the scares of this traumatic accident got permanent in their minds.

The trauma of Sujata is similar to that of Nimi in the novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, where she was victimized by domestic violence; her husband exploited her physically as well as psychologically. She lived in her father's home which was like a prison for her, and after marriage she was in custody of her husband. As Simone de Beauvoir states in her work, *The Second Sex*: "She will free herself from her parents' home, from her mother's hold; she will open up her future not by an active conquest, but by passively and docilely delivering herself into the hands of a new master" (Beauvoir 396). She tolerated all the sufferings and violence quietly, perpetuated by her husband, and cared about family's honour and never created trouble by bringing anything to the forefront, even before servants, and denied to go back to her home although she was suffering physical abuse at the hands of her husband:

The bruises didn't fade for weeks. Ten blue and black fingerprints clamped on her arm, a thunder- dark cloud loomed up on her side where he had pushed her into the wall- a surprisingly diffuse cloud for that one hard precise push (Desai 305).

The tradition of dowry is considered compulsory in the Indian society, which is proved to make a bride as an object of contract between the families. A female is considered as inferior and less worthy that's why dowry is given to compensate her subservience; it seems reward for the male's family in order to show female's inferiority. Jemubhai's family had a dream to send him to England for the studies of ICS, 'but there

wasn't enough money no matter how much Jemu's father worked' (89). So, they loaned from the moneylenders 'at 22 percent interest', but it was not enough, so they start to search for a perfect bride with whom the dowry would be included in the wedding ceremony as it is compulsory in the Indian society. They were preparing their mind that dowry should be prior in the match for Jemu. Exactly they want to utilized that bride who belongs to a rich family which proved their 'best bet'. On the other side, Bomanbhai, Nimi's father, was one of the powerful men in Piphit. "He offered soldiers unauthorized women in an unauthorized part of town on whom they might spend their aggrandizement of manhood" (89). When he came to know about Jemu's forthcoming departure for England, his 'eyebrows drew together as he mulled over the information' (90). He imagined the bright future of his 'most beautiful daughter', who was uneducated; 'kept carefully locked up behind the walls of *haveli*' with the man like Jemubhai, who would be 'one of the most powerful men in India'. He organized a luxurious wedding party of Bela and Jemubhai in order to show his lifestyle 'awash in ghee and gold', and gifted cash and gold as dowry with his daughter:

The bride was a polished light- reflecting hillock of jewels, barely able to walk under the gem and metal weight she carried. The dowry included cash, gold, emerald from Venezuela, rubies from Burma, uncut *kundan* diamonds, a watch on a watch chain, length of the woolen clothes for her new husband to make into suits in which to travel to England, and in crisp envelop, a ticket for passage on the SS *Strathnaver* from Bombay to Liverpool (91).

This marriage was only for the sake of dowry which would be helpful for Jemu's family in attaining their son's bright future, but Bela, who became Nimi after marriage, was totally like a doormat in the family. Her father sacrificed her identity by promoting dowry tradition for showing off his prestigious personality. For Bomanbhai, she was looked less worthy than Jemu because of this she faced the reality of being married by the age of fourteen. If she would be educated, there were the possibilities to make her own identity as well as to choose the suitable life partner. Dowry was proved curse for her. She remained silent till the very end because she did not want to break her relationship with her husband. Nimi's father did not have a son that is why after his death complete power was seized by her uncle which created havoc for her father. Her uncle denied entry to Nimi because she was female and did not have any right to claim on property. He also advised her to ask forgiveness from her husband in spite of the abuses she suffered. He told her rudely:

You are your husband's responsibility. Go back. Your father gave a dowry when you married- you got your share and it is not for daughters to come claiming anything thereafter. If you have made your husband angry, go ask for forgiveness (306).

Nandini was another female character in the novel, *Mother of 1084*, badly affected to get involved in the movement. She was also the comrade of Brati's group, completely involved in their plan, but she was arrested by the police. All male comrades were killed in encounter but she was tortured in a 'solitary cell':

A long spell in the solitary cell in prison made one perhaps oversensitive. For a solitary cell is too lonely, too desolate. There one lived all alone with oneself within four walls, with an iron door and a sole small hole in the wall. Immured in the solitary cell one tried to penetrate the world outside with a mind as keen and cutting as the knife of the surgeon in the morgue or the blade of a bayonet, to discover those that remembered (Bandyopadhyay 72-73).

She was harassed by the interrogator as she had to sit under the 'thousand- watt lamp' unceasingly that's why her eye sight got damaged and skin got burned. She felt herself dead because she found it difficult to forget her traumatic days of confinement in a solitary cell where she had to sacrifice herself in her flourished youthful age for participating in the movement for the welfare of the society, and due to her beloved, Brati's death. Nandini confessed her grief to Sujata that "Brati is dead. And so many things are dead too. I too have died a slow death as I thought and thought over the past all by myself in a solitary cell" (77). Due to that strict interrogation, she was injured physically and psychologically. She expressed her

tortures in the police custody to Sujata:

...clamp the burning cigarette to the skin of the face naked under the thousand- watt lamp. Cigarette burns caused only surface cutaneous injury. Only the skin gets charred.... The burn on the skin healed soon. But in the young heart within, every single burn ached forever. Then back to the solitary cell. Alone with oneself.(73)

Male comrades got liberation in actual sense but behind them, the females were left having the pain of losing their dear ones in their hearts. All females were suppressing in different ways to have their affectionate feminine quality, and struggling and thrashing for having some reason to survive in this pessimistic world for them. They are suppressed due their unbearable emotional turmoil. The same thing happened in the novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, the Gorkhaland movement created the difficulties for the female characters. Sai was going to be suppressed due to that movement because Gyan was Nepali Gorkha, and involved in the movement due to which he ditched Sai by leaving her alone. He was happy to be involved because he was fighting for the rights of Indian Gorkhas as well as his upcoming benefits resulted by the revolution, but Sai was getting depressed due to his disloyalty. Gyan and Sai had a love affair before he joined movement, everything was going normal in their relationship, they both were devoted to each other, but being influenced after seeing the procession of movement, Gyan felt embarrassed for spending his valuable time with Sai. He was thinking:

It was a masculine atmosphere and Gyan felt a moment of shame remembering his tea parties with Sai on the veranda, the cheese toast, queen cakes from the baker, and even worse, the small warm space they inhabited together, the nursery talk.... (Desai 161).

When he joined GNLFF group, he decided to be away from the love of Sai:

He would have to sacrifice silly kisses for his adulthood. A feeling of martyrdom crept over him, and with purity for a cause came ever more acute worries of pollution. He was sullied by the romance, unnerved by how easily she gave herself(175).

Gyan was not economically able to lead his life smoothly, and giving tuition to Sai was his only sources of earning. His house was in 'Bong Busti' which was the poor part of Kalimpong. His house was "a small, slime-slicked cube; the wall must have been made with cement corrupted by sand, because it came spilling forth from pockmarks as if from a punctured bag" (255) where he lived in poverty leading problematic life. He found the hope to get some improvement in his life status as well as the employment resources by joining the movement. In the insurgent group, Gyan showed his masculinity pretending about his superiority over his beloved whom he left later. He was embarrassed of his humble belongings. He decided to join the Gorkhaland Movement, and part ways from Sai.

She would be humiliated. He had hit on the age- old trick that remade him into a hero, 'the desired male'... The more he insulted her behind her back- 'Oh, that crazy girl is following me...' -the more the men would cheer, the more his status would grow at Thapa's Canteen, the more Sai would be remade behind her back into a lunatic female, the more Gyan would fatten with pride.... (262).

He used to enjoy the parties at Thapa's canteen within the gathering of other comrades. He regularly participated in the marches during the revolution, apart from that he started thinking of mismatch status between himself and Sai because he considered her superior to him as she had an 'English accent', and he took a step for a complete different way of uprising, but this uprising proved a cause of suppression for Sai because Gyan was the only man with whom she spent beautiful moments of her life otherwise her life was totally docile from her childhood. She was orphan girl studied in the convent school, after her parents' death, when she came to live in the house of her maternal grandfather's, Jemubhai Patel, she usually faced discrimination by her grandfather. She was deprived to access education after coming from hostel, and used to study at home by Gyan. She found a true companion in Gyan with whom she wanted to spend her whole life. When she noticed Gyan's ignorance towards her due to that uprising, his complete

different and rude behavior to her, she got hurt and depressed to think about his unfaithfulness. It was that uprising because of which Gyan diverted to the way for his welfare leaving Sai behind in the suppressing condition.

Lola and Noni, the sisters, lived in their house in Mon Ami, their economic source was the pension of Lola's dead husband, and they spent their lives with many hardships due the death of Lola's husband. Lola faced insult; first by the insurgent boys when they entered in their house silently, and told her that "Don't worry. You are too old for us, you know" (239). This shows that the woman, who is young and has reproductive ability, is useful for man. Second, when she went to Pradhan of town to complain of GNLFB boys for taking their piece of land forcefully, Pradhan also showed his masculinity and power while saying these words: "I am the raja of Kalimpong. A raja must have many queens... I have four, but would you... dear Aunty, would you like to be the fifth?" (244). The excitement of male for doing something worthwhile works in suppressing and in the subjugation of female.

Conclusion

It has been clear that the position of women is that of a subordinate in the society. In every part of the society from thousands of years, women's condition has been despondent, and worth noting. It is disgraceful for the society that women, who have the power of creation, are usually abused by men through violence and exploitation. They are exploited to the hilt because of their compassionate nature and power of tolerance. There is no end to this exploitation and it can be said that the issue of gender inequality is notable as one of the major issues of the world. Although many efforts have been done for the improvement of women's position in India; many laws are there to promote the scale of education and employment for women, but the first and foremost step which must be taken against unfair and unequal gender treatment by women themselves.

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