

PORTRAYAL OF BRIGHT AND DARK SIDES OF WOMEN IN DIXON'S FICTION

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Abstract:

The theme of women with all their pros and cons of temperaments, their innocence and cruelties have been the theme of Dixon's fiction. Dixon, being a man of the white people's pride, and prejudices against the Black, pains the dark sides of black women, but he also blames the white women for their greed, selfishness and foolishness. The women in Dixon are at times ideal and at times manipulators. The women whether White or Black have their charms as well as their evil motives. In the paper, three novels are discussed in brief, with a special reference to the female characters.

Key Words: Women, Cruelties, Pride and Prejudice, Black, Pains.

Literature in all languages consists of female characters. Even the early epics like Homers *Iliad* and *Odyssey* described the war created by the beauty of Helen of Troy. Similarly, the Lanka war in *Ramayana* was created due to Seeta, In the *Mahabharata* too there had been Kurukshetra war because of the beauty and insult of Droupadi. Shakespeare's women in dark tragedies are expression of the dark side of women. *Hamlet* has a cruel and characterless woman Gertrude his mother. His *Macbeth* has selfish and cruel wife Lady Macbeth. His king Lear depicted wicked and selfish daughters Goneril and Regan, they express respectively how a mother, a wife and daughter should not be. However, his last plays Tragicomedy, *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *Tempest*. Show innocent daughter and mature loving mothers.

The Portrayal of selfish and shrewd, helpless and sacrificing, victimised and foolish women has been parts of all writings in all languages. This is what D.H. Lawrence terms as feminine mystique, whether the writer is American, a British or Australian or Russian or Indian or Latin American, There is a picture of bright and dark sides of women.

In the present paper, Nan Primrose in *The Root of Evil* (1911), Cleo Peeler in *The Sins of the Father: A Romance of the South* (1912) and Nance Owens in *The Foolish Virgin: A Romance of Today* (1915) portray the dark side, while Ruth Gordon in *The One Woman* (1903) Mary Adams in *The Foolish Virgin* (1915) show the devotion and innocence respectively. A woman has a good as well as 'evil qualities' in her. The hidden 'selfish motives' and the manipulation technique shrouded under the mask of physical charm tonal grace and deceptive smile. They, with their art and falls loveliness can confuse puzzle a man at times madden them instigating them to kill others or themselves. In reality, man has a dream to "catch the stars in the sky" but ultimately he falls down in "the wiles of women". In Thomas Dixon's *The One Woman* Ruth Gordon helps the man.

A man sprang to his feet, beckoning to an usher. When he reached the seat the woman had recovered by a supreme effort of will and seat erect, her face flushed with anger at her own weakness (Dixon 1903:1). Ruth Gordon helps The Rev. Frank Gordon with a glass of water and serves him in his illness.

In the mansion on the hill at Albany the Governor sat that night in his magnificent room alone until the down of day, holding in his hand an old battered tin type picture of a laughing girl standing beside a poor young lawyer. (Dixon1903:350)

After the killing of Overman, Frank Gordon is in prison. Fortunately, the Attorney named Morris King had been her old friend. With great effort Morris and Ruth had brought Frank Gordon out of jail. This is the story of the sacrifice of Ruth Gordon. In *The Foolish Virgin*, the teacher Mary Adams falls in love with a man who in reality is a thief or a criminal:

Mary Adams, you're a fool! The single dimple in a smooth red cheek smiled in answer. You're repeating yourself, Jane--- You won't give him one hour's time for just three sittings? (Dixon1915:1)

Jane Anderson warns her friend Mary Adams to think over her decision to marry Jim Anthony. Just after two or three visits. Jim is a fine driver and drives very fast but his history is unknown to *The Foolish Virgin* Mary Adams.

You have changed, Jim--- Her eyes sought the depths of his soul in a moments silence, and she slowly extended her hand: We'll try again! (Dixon1915:353)

After a great storm, when Mary Adams had given birth to a baby and Jim Anthony had been saved after the fatal attack by his mother Nance Owens. Doctor Williams mediates and once again Jim and Mary are united. It is the story of innocent Mary and the criminal Jim.

That's our little gal, Cleo- that is I mean of course its Lucy's gal! She's just home from school and she's scared to death and I don't blame her! The girl clung to her rescuer with desperate grip, pressing her trembling form close with each convulsive sob. (Dixon1912:24)

The old Negro named Bob peeler requests Major Norton to appoint his daughter Cleo to look after his son Tom. The girl Cleo enters and falls down at the feet of Norton who had a lot of pity and sympathy for the Black daughter and Father.

For a great man I knew a little, loved and lost, dearest your grandfather for whom we named you, Little Dan's eyes grew very serious as he looked again at the flowerstrewn graves and wondered what it all meant. (Dixon1912:461)

Tom and Helen tell their child how grandfather was a great man; they do not tell him that Norton tried to kill Tom and then shot himself. The little Dan looked at the grave with a lot of respect. It was the cruel plan of Cleo but Dr. Williams had revealed the secret of Helen's birth. The poor girl Cleo had turned into the wicked woman to grab the property of Norton. There is metamorphic change in the woman who for revenge used her teeth and claws. In memory of Daniel Norton, Tom had named his son as Dan but they never allowed any Black woman in their home as the result of the Black Cleo's wicked plans and sinister motives.

Ruth Gordon (*The One Woman*), Barbara Bozenta and Catherine (*Comrades*), Mary Adams (*The Foolish Virgin*) are good at heart but Kate Ransom (*The One Woman*) Nan Primerose (*The Root of Evil*) Cleo Peeler (*The Sins of the Father*) and Nance Owens (*The Foolish Virgin*) are devils incarnate.

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