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A Theme of Survival in A. Revathi's Autobiography "The Truth About Me": A Tragic Life Of Hijra

Life is full of surprises and twists one person may have a happy moment in other hand others have tremendous moment .In a hetero normative patriarchal social setup, the statistics of gender always resembles a circular figure, where the central co-ordinates are assigned to the "male" gender, thereby placing the "female" gender at the periphery. Feminists opposed this central-periphery , binary and demanded relocation of co-ordinates. But, due to the emergence of the Gay, Lesbian, Queer and Transgender studies, this entire circular geometric structure of hetero normative gender studies was critically questioned and challenged.

Genders plays a vital role in the society where masculine genders are given more importance than a feminine genders . There is always a in equality between these genders . In the same way more than female certain people are suffering more . nowadays even the women are given half of their rights but these people are still alienated and cornered by the society . Such people are called the Hird genders. This paper will explain about this in detail from biological changes to their suffering, To Discuss in detail. In order to prove this particular fact is that they can be explained two scenarios the former scenario is sufficient

estrogens level in feautus and the latter situation is less estrogens so the child will be impotently born in this world .

This scenario can be further explained in content that a person fixed to a wrong body ,which really makes them feel uncomfortable and get isolated without mingling with other people. One of the terrible downtrodden level struggle of the transgender community is the struggle for a dignified social recognition of the transgender as an independent existing gender category. It can only be achieved if language is newly constructed and framed to incorporate the existence of tHird gender as a normal, socially approved, dignified gender category. These people are also called as hijras, Kothis , aravani's and so on . Instead of calling them as her or she we have special name as "Zei and Hir".

According to Stephen Whittle with reference to "The Transgender Reader" points out: [...] trans as a stand- alone term did not come into formal usage until it was coined by a parliamentary discussion group in London in 1998, with the deliberate intention of being as inclusive as possible when negotiating equality legislation. Cultural spaces and historiographies are constantly reframing the community, the identities, the cultures, and the language. We see new languages being developed constantly; for example as per as a pronoun was developed by UK community members with non-existent gender identities, and similarly the US term "Hir" for those who have both. (xi-xii)

As it is know that there are various discrimination where different sort of people face in the society . Where some people take advantage of people who faces such horrendous encounters and pester them .A. Revathy who is the author of "The Truth About Me" .who is a transgender ,social activist . Zei works for several NGO'S ,which is meant for these downtrodden people . Zei also has said about Hir own encounters that Zei have come through in Hir life, and Hir work "Truth About Me" has been translated into eight languages Hir themes are based on gender discrimination .

This paper therefore proposes to analyse the multilayered process of gender colonization that the “hijra” community of India endures, by taking into account the autobiography of A. Revathi who presents in her autobiography “The Truth About Me”: A Hijra Life Story .This autobiography of Revathy begins with a Preface, where Zei clearly mentions the intention behind writing this book:

As a hijra I get pushed to the fringes of society. Yet I have dared to share my innermost life with you--- about being a hijra and also doing sex work [...] My aim is to introduce to the readers the lives of hijras, their distinct culture, and their dreams and desires [...] I hope now that by publishing my life story, larger changes can be achieved. I hope this book of mine will make people see that hijras are capable of more than just begging and sex work. I do not seek sympathy from society or the government. I seek to show that we hijras do have the rights to live in this society. (v-vi)

The story begins now Zei was born as the youngest male sibling in the family of three brothers and a sister, Zei was initially baptized as Doraisamy.Zei , being born with the body of a male was expected to behave like a male by the hetero normative society. But Doraisamy’s male body nurtured the desires and passions of being a female/feminist . Zei always felt that a woman is trapped within a man’s body.

A woman trapped in a man’s body was how I thought of myself. [...] I wondered why God had chose to inflict this peculiar torture on me, and why He could not have created me wholly male or wholly female. Why am I a flawed being, I wondered often [...] and all the time I was obsessed, confused and anxious (TAM 15)

Zei autobiography narrates multiple incidences to show how passionately as Doraisamy Zei wanted to dress like a woman and how Zei enjoyed playing the role of female characters on stage during the school annual day celebration and how Zei enjoyed putting on the Female disguise .When Zei for the first time came to know about the existence of people like Hir ,the

first and the foremost emphasis was on the fact that they wore saris and then Zei focused on the fact that they had “an operation”. This emphasis on the gender specific dressing pattern in the hetero normative society actually creates a hegemonic discourse to strengthen its colonizing process over the marginalized tHird gender community.

The tHird gender as such does not have any specific set of dressing pattern. So during the initial years of Hir life, the transgender people cannot help but oscillate between the male and female dressing pattern and thereby unavoidably conforms themselves within either of the two socially approved gender category. And it is this forceful unavoidable submission of the tHird gender to the heteronormative dress code which speaks volumes about their cornered state in main stream society. The elders of the Hijra community when accepts a newcomer like Doraiswamy (Revathy) for the first time as a chela, it is a compulsion that a feminine man offers respect to the sari-clad and earns their goodwill. So, the sari-clad women within the hijra community enjoy a special status of respect. Revathi while narrating in details the customs and rules of the hijra community also refers to the importance of dress to earn respect:

If born a pottai, and when living amongst pottais, it is important that a person pierces her ears and nose, grows her hair. If you merely wear press-button earrings and a wig, no one really respects you. Likewise, if you happen to see a man crossing your path, you’re expected to make way for him, bend your head bashfully and make sure that your chest is covered.

(TAM 47)

The transgender community is miserably colonized economically. In India, the most common sight of a hijra is to see them either begging in a market place or in a railway station or to see them in groups going for “doli-baddai”: The tHird genders or hijras are more tortured by the common people. They are facing a horrendous encounters as a part of their day to day life. To be frank these people are always chased out from their home, but when

analysed in detail the final understanding is that its not their problem to change into a varied genders it all happens only due to hormone changes.

How much longer can we continue to live in fear ?

Don't we deserve to live (TAM 245)

At present one would very easily get tempted to accuse and blame the hijra community for choosing the life of a beggar, but no one ever acknowledge the truth that a hijra is never allowed to enter the main stream society .In whatever form it may be? Such is the social condition that a hijra can never be accommodated within an mainstream circle , which would promote their economic independence. It is not that they are inefficient to carry out jobs other than begging and sex work, but the authorization is ignored due to the fact of their being the tHird gender! Heteronormative society is tactful enough in perpetuating its hegemonic gender discourse.

The hijra community in India is thus enmeshed in the mire of lingual, sartorial and economic colonization. And it is A. Revathi who through Hir autobiography, for the first time, bravely attempts to challenge and break this cyclic process of gender colonization and hetero normative discourse. To narrate the everyday life of a hijra was not so easy, it was not so easy to re-live all those moments of agony and brutal torture, but Revathi took the trouble to do so only with a hope that after the publication of this autobiography,

Men and even women stared at us and laughed, and heckled us. I realized what a burden a hijra's daily life is. Do people harass those who are men and women when they go out with their families? Why, a crippled person, a blind person— even attract pity and people help them. If someone has experienced physical hurt, they are cared for both by family and by outsiders who come to know of it. But we —we are not consider human.” (TAM 83)

Why is it that we don't find any shop where a hijra is its owner or if not an owner at least an attendant? Have we ever met any hijra taxi/ auto/ bus driver? Sadly enough the answer is a big NO! If this is the scenario of private entrepreneurship, can one expect a different scenario in government sector or in academic domain. How long will this so called tolerate progressive society take to accept the hijras as human beings who feels — a person who wants to be loved and accepted, a person who wants to live .In order to make people treat the tHird gender equally few rules should be made .and a respect should be laid. if this change happens in a individual then it will at least make small impact on common people r mainstream society. Sometimes even the look on transgender may change .This paper will be a small tribute to make change in people's heart about their opinion towards a trans gender .

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