

MORAL VISION IN THE NOVELS OF NAMITA GOKHALE

Dr. Vishal Redhu

Asstt. Prof. in English

Govt. College Narnaund

Namita Gokhale is a well known artist and she knows the craft of fiction. As a matured artist she does not revolt against the moral values of the society. Her moral purpose is very clear in her every novel and she never shows indifference to the ethical values of the society. A lot of critics failed to admire her attempts as sexual affairs had been frankly discussed by her in her novels. Like Henry fielding she knows the importance of genius, learning, conversation and capacity to feel. Due to her natural talent she knows how to analyze people of different nature i.e. she possesses the act of invention as well as the sense of judgment. Like George Bernard Shaw she does not want to write a single line for art's sake alone. Her ethical purpose is very much clear in her novels though she cannot be called a iconoclast. It is true that she has analyzed the passions of her characters in her novels but she is not to be blamed as an erotic writer. As a matter of fact each of her novels has a serious purpose behind it.

Like Emile Zola she discussed the causes of corruption, moral degradation and various social evils. In Paro: Dreams of Passion Namita Gokhale analyzes the human passion such as vanity, jealousy, lustful behavior and false love. One can find the conflict between Paro and Bucky Bhandpur, between Paro and Priya and between Shambhunath Misra. If paro realized the reality of life she would not have suffered much in her life. When she was seduced by her teacher Marcus at the Convent School, She would have complained about this to the Principal to get the culprit punished. On the contrary she enjoys the fun and admits:

He was quite young, this art master and very good
looking in a long haired way. Anyway he tells me,
"you look like a nymph." Then he starts getting
sexy.... You know... and I don't know what is
happening but I sort of like it.

As a result she was found in a compromising position with him and expelled from the convent school. The social norms do not allow this type of liberty to a student. Due to her ambitious and material gains, she pays the price every time. She fails to understand the difference between unlawful sex and the luxury. Lust dominates her mind and heart and ultimately ruins her. As a lecherous woman she does not stay with B.R. and she considers herself as a liberated woman. It is true that Hardy's Tess gives birth to a child before marriage but she never plans any seduction with Alec and Hardy regards her a pure woman. But Paro is not a pure woman, the novelist remarks through Priya:

Sex had become to him, more than sport, It was a
duty, a vocation, a calling. I sensed that it was with
sex that he shut out thought emotion and feeling.

It is true that Priya is equally lustful and frequently enjoys sex with B.R. But she understands the situation in time. After the warnings of her brother and his wife she thinks of her home and hence returns to husband.

As the time passes Paro loses her physical beauty and in the same time Bucky Bhandpur and Lenin enter in her life and are cheated badly. Her flirting nature is responsible for her fall as she is a shameless woman. Paro expresses her hatred for Shambhu Nath Mishra but she enjoys his company with the feeling of delight. Through Paro and Priya writers portrays the middle class women of India who enjoy luxuries at the cost of moral values.

In A Himalayan Love Story , Parvati grew up in the lap of nature. Her father died when she was only one year old. She was looked after by the stepbrother of her mother Hiranand Joshi, Parvati wanted to study further and to fulfill her worldly ambitions. She felt hurt when she noticed physical relations between her mother and Srikrishan Ji. She admits:

My world was shattered. People were not as they
appeared. There was another lie behind their masks.

Soon her mother died of Tuberculosis and left her all alone in this world. But Hiranand Joshi took her to Nainital for education. In the school she developed sexual relationship with the history teacher Salman in spite of the fact that she knew that Salman would never marry her.

After the departure of Salman from Nainital she felt no pain. After that she felt attracted towards Mukul Nainwal at first sight. But Hiranand Joshi believed in Caste consideration and asked her to marry Lalit Joshi. Her marriage proved to be a failure as Lalit was very stubborn. Both of them felt lonely within the four walls of the home. She felt delighted for a short time when Raju the younger brother of Lalit came to live with them. She enjoyed the sexual relationship with Raju and never felt guilty for this act of betrayal. In the later days Lalit became a patient of Tuberculosis and died soon. Hiranand Joshi informed Mukul about the whole situation and requested for help. But at that time, Mukul had married Adaleine a Burmese girl. To him Hiranand Joshi was responsible for the whole situation. As a gentleman he found himself surrounded by problems. But he knew the fact that the same teacher had high moral character and did his best for his students. Mukul was a successful person now and he was above caste and creed. One day he felt attracted towards Pasang Rampa, the Tibetan girl and enjoyed sex with her and later he felt very much ashamed of himself.

I was amazed as my whole life flashes before me.

I am dying, I do not exist. I have left myself to
enter her.

In Gods, Graves and Grandmother, through Gudiya Namita Gokhale describes the psychology of children. If there had been no Ammi, Gudiya's fate would have been miserable. Kailash Shastri a religious man does nothing to help Gudiya. He just takes shelter in the temple and earns money with the help of his Panchang. Roxanne Lamba is to admired for her helping nature as she tries her best to awaken the soul of Gudiya and help her in her education. Miss Mehta and Madam Lamba help her to know the importance of a liberated career through the right education. Both of them tried their level best to explain her that education is meant for intellectual growth. But Gudiya ignores their advice due to lack of maturity like the common girls, she dreams of ornaments, beautiful cloths, a beautiful and rich husband but it was her bad luck that Kalki, from Shiv Mohan Band enjoys sex with her and her tensions increases in her life. Kalki proves to be a bad man who excites her sensations and disturb her emotionally.

Gudiya's ammi had never studied the sacred books of Hindus; she had just heard a little about Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Hanuman, Maa Durga but she manages to establish a temple and her plan succeeds. In spite of all the oddities, Ammi follows the principle of right conduct. She just pretends to be the widow of a Brahman Priest. However Gudiya admits that fate helps Ammi and the devotees never doubt their identity.

It was the shrine beneath the Peepal tree that
kept us fed and clothed although we were of
course not as rich as we had once been very long
ago.

Gudiya actually suffers as she fails to take the right decision. She lacks the sense of judgment which her ammi possesses. As she is ignorant of the tricky ways of the world and she becomes an easy tool in the hands of Kalki and ultimately suffers along with her child.

In The Book of Shadows, Rachita has learnt the bitter truth of life due to her unfaithfulness to Anand and there is no limit to her mental agony. Her passion has proved unbearable for her as nobody wants to share her agonies. The passionate love of Dona Rosa and Captain Wolcott excites her lust and she had to resist herself. Quite often she fails to check herself. She regards Wolcott the symbol of greed, prejudice and lust and yet enters his body as a spirit. She feels exhausted and remarks:

Walter Walcott had no core, no focus, no
definition, greed, prejudice and overreaching
clashed and combined with random force in his
mind.

Rachita does not have any regard for Marcus and Munroe. They pretend to be magicians and drink blood. Since blood is life, she condemns people who sacrifice it to please Gods. As Marcus and Munroe had no ethics and hence condemns both of them. Life continued to be dull for Rachita and the adventures of the tourists failed to delight her. Most of these fellows had no sympathy with the natives and used them as tools for physical pleasure.

When father Benedictus arrives to the house in Nainital, Rachita gets decent company. He is doing research on butterflies these days. He tortures these butterflies to reach some conclusion and ignores sympathy for them. Benedictus ignored the screams of butterflies. As a result he left for his divine abode and his soul was separated from his body. Dona Rosa and Nicholas Mann enjoyed sex passionately. But all these fellows had to suffer for their Karma and failed to return from this region. Dona Rosa died on the way to Europe with her unborn child.

In Shakuntala: The Play of Memory, Shakuntala suffers numberless agonies in Kashi. Her father died when she was five years of age. Her brother learnt the Hindu sacred books from the teachers she also enjoyed listening the same lessons. After getting married with Srijan she wants to know everything about her mother-in-law as latter joined the sangh of Buddhist monks. But Srijan did not encourage any discussion on this issue. He wanted a child from her. But situation changes when he brings Kamalini as a maid servant to look after the domestic works. She doubts his intentions for a short time and yet feels convinced of his love for herself. At that time Shakuntala is not prepared to trust anybody as she regards the world an illusion and a place of treason and betrayal. When she meets Yavana Nearchus she forgets that she is wife of Srijan. Her life changes after enjoying sex with Nearchus:

We do not go through the set emotions of desire
and arousal, there are no bites or coy looks or sly
smiles.

For a short time she feels confused –should she return home? Or flee away to see the world? Ultimately, the second voice wins and she forgets her home for adventure. She does not bother for worldly consideration as Nearchus is everything for her. When she reaches Kashi with him, she feels delighted. When she was pregnant she needed the support. Her mother had advised her to remain chaste pure. Now she was unsafe as well as impure. The bull hits her in her belly and all her dreams shattered.

Thus the writer Namita Gokhale is the follower of Gita and advocates the theory of Karma through her novels. Her ethical purpose is clean in all her novels and she never shows any indifference to the moral values.