



Still! A Cry in The Wilderness

Dr. Mrs. P. V. Anila
Principal
Noble College, Machilipatnam.

Happiness has come to be an occasional episode in the life of a woman. Emancipation and empowerment, turned to be the buzzword of this generation. As far as woman is concerned, these words remain, in black & white, in the pages of dictionary. So tense is the atmosphere that the cry for help echoes everywhere.

India is a country with Vedic culture that has given women, her rightful place. Indian men seem to forget that the ideas of Ardangi & Ardhanareswari, are the bedrock of our culture. But unfortunately, the present generation is witnessing a totally different picture & version of its prestigious culture. The old image has gradually got blurred. Now the 21st century is existing in a morally degraded, ethically degenerated state.

Unless sexes are respected, the woman will remain

a means to be exploited , manipulated , possessed like
a thing and renounced again like a thing.

This is the pandemonium created for the women of this century. The newspapers, media, all other sources of information speak loud of the umpteen problems women face in their day to day life because of the noxious vermins_in the garb of men, infesting the living places and the lives of women.

There is a general feeling that economic independence would open doors to their dreams and desires. But the hard indigestible truth is that the husband owns the wife and her salary as well. The naked truth is “we deify woman, yet treat them as doormat”.

What one should understand is that woman has developed aversion to both the positions, for in both the places, she is made aloof and alone. This woman longs to be acknowledged and treated as human being with a head to think a heart to feel and a mind to respond. Women are not inferior by nature. They are conveniently acculturated into inferiority. Further as Geeta Ramswamy says, men do not differentiate between sex workers and other women. For them all women are sexual. Any woman can be accosted. Woman is merely treated as objects of desire.

There is a possibility for every woman to fall a victim either to exploitation, oppression or prostitution. It is really shocking to realise that these men are not outside forces prowling in the dark lanes, Often, those who throw dust in the eyes are men from familiar circles.

Gentleness, implicit obedience and passiveness are believed and made to be believed as the general traits of a woman. The one and only word that is well injected into the brain of a girl child is "ADJUSTMENT". She is tutored to be a passive recipient. A clean picture of the tuned mind of a woman is well picturized in the below lines...

No other people are so entirely captured, so entirely
Conquered, so destitute of any memory of freedom

So dreadfully robbed of identity and culture, so absolutely
Slandered as a group, so demeaned and humiliated.

And yet we go on blind and ask over & over again "what
can we do for them"? (men/ husbands). It's time we (women)
ask "what must we do now for us?"

A normal Indian woman's life style is woven with submissiveness, sacrificial spirit and Subservience. Anything away from this design, she would be labelled as stubborn & shrew. Men have created for themselves certain ideologies concerning the nature of women---- that women is innately weak, emotional, enjoys dependency, limited incapacities for work..... even that a woman is masochistic by nature. (Kren Hornary). The dirty ideology and dependency syndrome are reasons responsible for the vicious victimization. In reality, woman is made of such stuff where moral courage, spiritual energy and physical fibre are the ingredients. Who can cross if one says that woman is worth to be complimented in Shakespearean Voice....

Doing in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion. (MAAN) Women are not inferior by nature. They are conveniently acculturated into inferiority. She is marginalised and reduced to an object of possession. It is clearly picturized in the poem "The Princess" written by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

"Man is the hunter-Woman is his game, the
Sleek and shinning creatures of the chase we
Hunt them for the beauty of their skins".

Women are the only oppressed group in our society that lives in intimate association with the oppressor. Many women in India are the victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence can be a psychological abuse, Social abuse, financial abuse, physical assault etc. Domestic violence is a crime. Yet many go scot free. This is India today which replaced the then India which proclaimed.

Yatra Naryantu Pujyante, Ramante Tatra Devata
(where women are worshiped there live the Gods)

Evidences against women, cut across boundaries and all walks of life. The universal forms of violence include wife beating and rape. In India the gender discrimination results in female feticide, infliction of atrocities like dowry harassment, eve-teasing, wife beating, rape etc. Isn't being insensitive to gender discrimination, a national malaise? Elfriede Jelinek in Sports Play.

Sexual violence against woman is the actual
template of our culture.

Survival against physical assault, survival against sexual assault has come to be their main struggle. Woman is forced to lead an ill-favoured and ill-flavoured life.

Every woman is endangered with the menace of either rape, divorce, or desertion etc. It is quite obvious and non-controversial that, the reason for these deplorable, disgusting, dangerous circumstances is due to the unlimited, ultimate powers vested in the hands of men by the patriarchal culture.

Men are taught to apologize for their weakness
and women for their strengths.

God has created man & woman to complement one another. If only men can accept the basic truth that power is not a male prerogative, women will surely garner confidence to go ahead in life. Man has to understand and women has realise that "There is no force than a woman who is determined to rise". How true is the African proverb which holds a mirror to the contextual Indian Scenario.

"The axe forgets but the tree remembers".

These wounds will not be healed with the passage of time because the mind is raped, as well. It is not 'I' verses 'you', 'he' verses 'she', but we/us is the only hope that can change the appearance of the atmosphere at home & everywhere. As John F Kennedy says

Our task now is not to fix the blame for the past,
But fix the course for the future.

People are to be educated on the lines of moral values. If the inside is good then automatically an atmosphere of peace, joy, freedom shall be created for both men and women alike. Isn't it proper to have a vision and it is high time to think and adopt the oriental saying.....

Where the vision is one year, cultivate flowers
Where the vision is ten years, cultivate trees

Where the vision is eternity, cultivate people.

The prayer of Rabindranath Tagore in 1900 happens to be the prayer of every true mind even in this 2013 a scientific century-

Where the mind is without fear and the head held

high-----

into that heaven of freedom my father

let my country awake/ my women folk awake.

It's time to listen, to realise and enact to see what Schiller says "Honour women! They entwine and weave heavenly roses in our earthly life".

Why not try?!?