



An Enigmatic view on trauma of a woman and reign of Education in Sudha Murty's *Mahashweta*

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Abstract— *Myth occupies a major part in the life of women. Various kinds of belief made women to be in the corner of the society. We have seen many such taboos which suppresses women. This article discusses one among that. Anupama being suffered from Leukoderma was considered as a person of bad omen and sent out from her in-laws house. The entire society believed her as a person of untouchable. Though she slipped down slightly she successfully gave a good come back with the weapon called education. Education plays a major role in this novel which was used excellently by the heroine Anupama in the upliftment and betterment of her life whereas from the side of male protagonist even though he was educated he remained in shallow darkness. Anand being a doctor couldn't understood the reality and failed to stand by the side of Anu as he had only physical attraction over her. This article paves a way for every citizen to look into the beauty called character of a woman not merely external appearance. It also shows the tendency of Anu coping up with all kind of situation with boldness.*



Keywords— *Education, Leukoderma, Ignorance.*

Sudha Murty's work *Mahashweta* remains as a benchmark of this era in portraying the position of women. The enlarged vision of this article is to accomplish a better perspective for the community of women, who have been facing number of taboos in different forms. There is no similarity in the climax of this novel as in other works. As proceeded, it took the reader to various stages of critical analysis. Sudha Murty as a woman is a symbol of excellence, she maintained her own company and helped the poor people from the profit earned through her business. She wants to impart the same to the public. She decided to incorporate this to people through her pen. Her novel *Mahashweta* reflects her inner quest. With the start of the life of Anupama, she remained as an loyal, brave, independent girl who lead her life without the support of her father. She was a girl who was growing under the arms of her stepmother and subjected to face number of traumas. Even under that heart aching situations she performed well in her courses to obtain scholarship which was the main source of her survival. As per Sudha Murthy, "It was true

that Shamanna could not afford to pay for his daughter's education. His wife Sabakka, Anupama's stepmother, had told her husband categorically, 'Let us not educate her further. It might become difficult to find a husband for her. Besides, she will not support us. She has to marry and go to somebody else's house one day.'" (20)

Anu observed it correctly, that, in the absence of her scholarship she would be the wife of someone. So she believed that education was her life saver. Her stepsisters who were in her home could enjoy all kind of benefits which she couldn't enjoy as a heir of that family. She would sure to get married if she losses her scholarship that forced her to prepare well for her exams.

Apart from studies she had concentrated in enacting plays. She was a best stage performer who could enact any character in a lively manner. Through the character of *Mahashweta* she gained the heart of Dr. Anand. Anand made effort to own her against the wish of his mother Rathakka. Rathakka being a traditional woman don't want to have daughter-in-law from poor family. Though she had many

differences towards Anupama she accepted her only because of the wish of her son.

As a typical Indian woman, Anupama loved Dr. Anand but hesitated to expose it to her friend. In play, while enacting the role of Mahashweta on stage, she transfigured herself as real Mahashweta, who through her real love could regain her beloved breath back to the world. Being a poor girl, she assisted her own life and also supported her family. She was a multi talented girl who revealed these in stages. Her love towards acting soon came to an end after her marriage to Anand. Rathakka showed her dark side face towards Anupama in all the situations. She waited for an opportunity to disclose her chapter from the life of her son. As Anand was far away from his home town, Anupama suffered from Leukoderm. She had white patches in her feet, but she didn't reveal it to anyone as it was considered as bad omen in her society. She feared to lose her husband because of this but she had a little hope that being a doctor her husband will surely understand her. So she secretly consulted a doctor for treatment. But everything end in vain, she couldn't find any improvement, instead of increased size of patches. Meanwhile she found her sister-in-law's behaviour too odd. She tried to warn her but Girija changed the entire situation against Anupama and portrayed to Rathakka that Anupama was treating her rudely by making a fake story.

When Anupama's mother in law came to know about her white patches she addressed the same to her father and made him to take back his daughter to his home. For Anupama, her dignity was more important than continuing her marriage which put her in trouble. "Anupama went to her room, collected the few things that belonged to her, picked up one of Anand's photographs and returned where Shamanna waited for her. She took his hand in hers, and silently clutching her bag, walked out of the house. She knew in her heart that this was the last time she would be seeing the house or its people...but she did not look back even once. "(59) Anupama received hotness from her step mother after reaching her home. She wrote many letters to Anand with hope that he would stand strong by her side as the promise made by him during their wedding. But God has different plan for her. She didn't received any reply from Anand. The people in her village started to talk about her that she was a bad omen because of that she was returned back to her father's home from her In-law's house. Everyone believed that her sister's marriage was called off because of her bad luck. The habit of mending stories with a single stray remained as a habit for the people in nature. Even today this continued in many places, which hurts many souls. These sort of people have pleasure in criticizing others though they have bundle of dirt at their back. Though Anupama managed to overcome all, she slipped at

a point and decided to give up her life. But later realized it's seriousness and called off her decision and decided to move to Bombay. So that she won't be burden to anyone. She believed in herself, education helped her to achieve many things. She joined as a professor in college and moulded her students with her experience.

Education plays a vital role in Anupama's life, being a real Mahashweta she strived a lot to be away from the society which ignored her because of the patches. Anand who was not a person to maintain his promise, remained passive under the control of his mother words and failed to be a dedicated husband. To be frank he only loved the outer appearance of Anupama, failed to look her inner self. The Character of Vasant was entirely opposite to Anand, whom she met in her work place. He loved her inner self and ready to accept her with patches.

But Anupama knowing about Vasant very well ignored his offer. Because she didn't want to enter into a cage called marriage again. She wanted to be free. After marriage she was restricted from going outside, meeting her friends, enacting plays and about to get permission for doing things which was her basic one. She didn't want to enter into these struggles again. She wanted to explore her world again as Mahashweta. But now she wants to gain back the life of her own with full confidence and braveness. According to David Bouchier, "Any form of opposition of social, personal or economic discrimination which women suffer because of their sex."(2)

Myth plays a vital role in this play, which changes the life of a woman who wants to explore it. Even today many parts of our society used to have this kind of mentality and restrict the people's who were the victims from living a normal life. As like myths the problem faced by children from stepmother is also a matter in the conversing desk in today's life. As I stand in the side of women I won't accept the worse behaviour of stepmothers. A child being a delicate soul is being treated harshly which should be condemned. Sabakka in this story remained loyal for her daughters but failed to do so towards Anu. Shamanna lost his power and failed to stand by his daughter side. Lakshmi Vilas being a place of prosperity lacks its purity by the presence of Radhakka's family. Girija being disloyal to her husband enjoyed a luxurious life. But Anu being modest gained nothing but vain in her life. Apart from all these she faced sexual harassment too. But she faced it intelligently and came out of it. As Sushila Singh puts it in *Feminism and Recent Fiction in English*, "Human experience for centuries has been synonymous with masculine experience with the result that the collective image of humanity has been one-sided and incomplete. Woman has not been defined as a

subject in her own right but merely has an entity that concerns man either in his real life or in his fantasy life.”(7)

This paper brings out the insights of Anu from the patriarchal society in which she survives. She took the right decision at right time in many situations which needs to be mentioned. Anupama will be the role model for all those women in this society who are facing taboos by the name of myth.

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