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The Mariner’s power over language allows him to shape discursive “fragments of truth” and be in “harmony” with the ideologies of Western superior difference, as demonstrated by Coleridge’s use of Orientalist inspirations in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. By juxtaposing different discourses and reconciling Oriental inspirations in his poetry, Coleridge produces a text that serves the dominant ideologies of his time. Therefore, the language in which history is written cannot be dismissed as window dressing, but rather serves as “window wash,” suggesting that it is neither transparent nor neutral, nor does it disappear to allow the pure truth of history to emerge (Leitch 2001). By juxtaposing different discourses and reconciling Oriental inspirations in his poetry, Coleridge produces a text that serves the dominant ideologies of his time. Therefore, the language in which history is written cannot be dismissed as window dressing, but rather serves as “window wash,” suggesting that it is neither transparent nor neutral, nor does it disappear to allow the pure truth of history to emerge (Leitch 2001).
human beings in general. Another French feminist theorist and linguist, Julia Kristeva commenting on the subordinate and marginalized position of women, writes: "woman as such does not exist" (Kristeva 1977: 16). This statement may be taken to signify the view that woman cannot be represented negatively and she as a patriarchal construct can only be understood relationally and positionally. As a consequence, women are rendered as the marginal, since, she owes to the patriarchal, linguistic – cultural order for her identity and existence.

The above given account should make it clear that the social structures, inherently though not essentially, are working to inferiorize and marginalize women and to make women’s conditions vulnerable to violence. Conventional, stereotypical gender roles create situations of inequality for women. It is often noticed that women are physically assaulted and subjected to mental cruelties in their own homes. Men resort to “violence as a means to reinforce their already existing social dominance” (Adelman 2005: 193). It further argued that wife battering is a patterned process encompassing “the values of strength, power, stoicism, action, control, independence, self-sufficiency, male-camaraderie, mateship and work, amongst others” (Barker 2010: 302) – on the part of men leads to a situation wherein women and their existence and experience are perceived as peripheral and insignificant.

Kiran Nagarkar’s novel holds a very special significance for the woman-concerns as it foregrounds the oppressiveness of patriarchy and precarious existence of women. Much of the unsettling and painful impact of the novel is related to the plight of the women characters. Almost all the women are subjected to violence and ill-treatment in the text. Herein even the institutions of their female counterparts and society mistreat the women both in and out of the home. Being deeply entrenched into the power of patriarchal and masculine ideologies and ‘sexual politics in a process whereby a ruling sex seeks to maintain and extend its power over the subordinate sex’. (Moï 2001: 26). The Second Sex (1949), a landmark feminist text published by a leading French philosopher and theorist, Simone de Beauvoir, highlights the cultural identification of women as the ‘other’, whereas man is the dominating ‘subject’, who is considered to represent

Gender Violence

Gender inequality, discrimination, subjugation, oppression and violence against women are all pervasive in any existing human society, especially in the groups and communities belonging to the lower strata of society. Autocratic and arbitrary operation of patriarchal and masculine ideologies are the key markers of the power imbalance in a given social setup. Multiple cultural, economic and educational disabilities which women have to face in a male dominated society, prevents them from leading a meaningful and dignified life. Sexual domination is the most pervasive cultural ideology and ‘sexual politics’ are the factors that reinforce this. Among the various cultures around the world, women are treated as the weaker sex and they are depicted as the submissive partner in the relationship. However, this does not mean that women are not capable of standing up for themselves and fighting for their rights. In many cultures, women are portrayed as the passive partner in the relationship and they are often subjected to violence and abuse.

The above paragraph of the novel describes an arrogant and male-chauvinist husband, Ajit’s acts of humiliation and beating of his wife Pratibha, despite her being very homely and submissive. Ajit meets out the similar treatment to her mother also. Both the women remain mute spectators, robbed of their rights and dignity in their own home. Being deeply entrenched into the
Mr. Kushank Purandre, the protagonist of the novel, is sent to fetch Ajit's mother, who is historically and socially constructed artificial hierarchy of patriarchy, Ajit considers it is his birth right to possess and control her. He sees her as a domestic worker with a body to please him—a human domestic worker with a body to please him (Barker 2010: 442, with partial adaptations). Ajit intoxicated with the attitude of macho—masculinity, regards his wife as a 'sub-human being' and her children as mere appendages of him. Ajit is a product of the patriarchal society where women are objectified and treated as a mere possession. Pratibha, the wife, is seen as a 'sub-human being' and her children as mere appendages of him. Pratibha is treated no more than as an object or a property by her husband: a 'human domestic worker with a body to please him' (Barker 2010: 442).

In "Kiran Nagarkar's Novel, cultural politics of caste, class, religion and gender: reading marginality, and her mother-in-law—have come to acquire a marginalized status. As far as Ajit's mother's mental make-up is concerned, she is completely unaware of her husband's violence. She is a victim of her husband's abuse and neglect, and she is deeply entrenched in her husband's culture. She does not question his behavior and does not seek help from anyone. She is a typical example of a woman who is trapped in a patriarchal society where women are objectified and treated as mere possessions.

The mother thinks that Pratibha's untimely and unnatural death is a God's revenge upon her. She even refuses to come home back to mourn Pratibha's death. "So be it. Tormenting an old woman, and what did she get out of it? It's like a judgement on me, she said to herself. I'm fed up. I've had enough. I don't want to live any more. I want to live. Doctor, I want to live. You will save me, won't you? They need me—my children. And my husband. The same questions. 'I want to live. Doctor, I want to live. You will save me, won't you?' She even refused to come home back to mourn Pratibha's death. The mother thinks that Pratibha's untimely and unnatural death is a God's revenge upon her. She even refuses to come home back to mourn Pratibha's death. "So be it. Tormenting an old woman, and what did she get out of it? It's like a judgement on me, she said to herself. I'm fed up. I've had enough. I don't want to live any more. I want to live. Doctor, I want to live. You will save me, won't you? They need me—my children. And my husband. The same questions. 'I want to live. Doctor, I want to live. You will save me, won't you?"

The mother is a victim of her husband's violence and neglect. She is deeply entrenched in her husband's culture and does not question his behavior. She is a typical example of a woman who is trapped in a patriarchal society where women are objectified and treated as mere possessions.
Mr. Kathavte, on the second floor, always felt the itch to beat his daughters at night. After ten. And he had a lot of daughters. The youngest was in the fifth standard. First he had three sons. Then he started on the daughters. He had white hair at forty and was sixty-two when his youngest daughter was born. A tough old man.

Even now, when his married daughters come to visit, the bastard has bearing sessions. To make them feel at home. At night. Only between ten and twelve. The youngest has quite a nice voice. The two middle ones have terrible voices. Rekha sounds like a vulture being dragged along the ground, and Meena is hoarse and scratchy. Her voice has stayed broken for twenty years. She started wailing in a little boy's voice, and then it somersaulted and changed, flattened as though it had been through a sugarcane juice wringer. All of them were beaten quite impartially. (23)

When Mrs. Kathavte intervened and pleaded her husband to stop beating their daughters, she also "got her share" (26)

Once, one of his daughters named Rekha fainted due to prolonged physical assault, Mr. Kathavte says that "she was shaming" (27). Mr. Kathavte would be totally unmindful of the fact that "the yelling and screaming" (27) resulting from his act of beating his daughters, might be disturbing his neighbours. Anna, a neighbourer being upset at Mr. Kathavte's routine battering of his daughters, would finally appear, "Kathavte, that's enough for now, Kathavte. Give it a rest, and let us all get some sleep. She is getting too old for this; she's a big girl now". (27) Even Kushank is moved by the pitiable lot of Kathavte's daughters and their constant subjection to violence and cruelty. "I prayed for those girls to die. I still do" (27), so that they can escape Kathavte's slaps and kicks.

Mr. Kathavte's sons received altogether different treatment from their father. Their privileged gendered position by virtue of being sons enabled them to raise their voice and protest against their father's overbearing and browbeating attitude.

When Rekha was ten, Bhau stopped beating his sons. Only the girls were privileged from now on. The eldest son, Kishore, had warned his father, "You raise your hand against me and I'll smash you to a pulp. You won't be able to move for days. Bhau stopped beating him. (26)

So, here it would be quite appropriate to quote Sigmund Freud: 'Anatomy is destiny' (Barker 2010:294)

In the above two episodes, Mr. Kushank was more of a witness, while in the following one, he is a full participant. This episode is about one of Kushank's love-affairs as a college-student at Pune, with a girl named Chandini, who has come from Indore to study there. In Indian cultural milieu, falling in love and getting married is not exclusively personal and easy affair. So many hurdles such as caste, class, region, religion, language etc. come on the way of lovers, intending to marry. There are generations old encoded cultural norms and traditions specifying whom to love and in what conditions. In such an environment, transgressing the patriarchal norms at times costs the life of lovers. Herein, through Kushank - Chandini episode, Nagarkar reflects on unfair social practice of oppressive and unforgiving patriarchy, hostile to young lovers, that eventually succeeds in breaking and braking the affair and giving a full stop to the prospects of their love marriage.

In this episode of the novel when Chandini's father gets to know about his daughter's love-affair, he comes from Indore to Pune to see her and "to brain wash her" (142). Finding his daughter's act quite irrational, he tells her "not to be foolish and impulsive" (142). He tries to convince Chandini that her decision to marry Kushank is an immature one: "Chandini, this is puppy love. You'll soon outgrow it. Then it won't suffice and you'll leave him behind one day" (142).

In his unrelenting efforts to persuade Chandini, Chandini's father tells her that Kushank has not disclosed certain shady things about his family background:

He hasn't told you about his family, has he? I made some enquires about the Purandares before I came. His family are not respectable. Kushank and his brother aren't his father's children. And Kushank's aunt is a prostitute in Bombay..." (143)

He even writes a letter to Kushank saying:

Shri Kushank,

My daughter does not wish to marry you. Even if she did, she would be helpless against my opposition. I'd advise you not to try and see her. Have the intelligence and wisdom to realize what is good for you. (145)

When her exam is over, Chandini goes back to Indore. After sometimes, Kushank also goes to Indore to see Chandini, considering that her father will not send Chandini back to Pune for her further studies. With a fear of being spied by her family members, Chandini secretly comes to see Kushank in a cinema hall and apprises him of the situations at her home.

For days no one spoke to her. When they did, they called her a slut, whore, bitch. If she was near enough, they would grab her by the hair and beat her blue. (148)

For day and night Chandini's family members kept her telling awful things about Kushank and his family. They also made Chandini write to Kushank that she would not marry him. Thus, they (Chandini's family members) finally succeeded in breaking her affair with Kushank, although, even Kushank's own economic conditions were completely unfavourable for him to enter into a wedlock with Chandini.

Through all the three episodes elaborated above, Nagarkar has portrayed patriarchal gender relations. Women in all the three different subject positions - as wife, mother and daughter - have suffered oppression. Their marginalized subject positions deprived them of their voice to be heard.
They can exercise little powers within and outside the...Not a bird in sight apart from the carnivores. No green or yellow leaves. No dry leaves. Just...As a consequence, very often not necessarily, the lower caste people carry the...moral world (Parish 2008:8)...counterparts is a means of practical control. In addition, such inferior modes of representation...the exclusive source of water for the drought hit people. Here, 'the earth was smouldering...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...representation of the lower caste persons by their upper caste...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...represents the combination of multiple stigmatized images which...carrion is the concentrated repression of repulsion. Within the...assumptions about women have legitimated the power relations of dominance and subordination.

A'Wearing a world-creating web of rhetoric, defender of a...man and nature, both had changed unrecognizably here. As...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...kinship and marriage rituals is clearly an indication of the centrality of...assumption that the untouchable's body in perceived and treated as...the brain and its processing of information is seen as a...inertia/instincts/instinctual acts. Second, the reminder that...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...dominant order attempt to make that order seem natural, necessary,...environment, their fulfillment denied selves convince them to consider the cultural discontents...In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the...situated vectors of power...are guided by their emotions rather than reasons and believed that they...make him/her untouchable, unseeable, unapproachable. It is in this...and emotional blackmailing by her patriarch father and other family members. Thus, it becomes quite...Brahmanical social order responsible for producing and reproducing...assumptions about women have legitimated the power relations of dominance and subordination.

Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...A woman's body is a subject of transformation and is the site of transformative cultural practices. Thus,...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...A woman's body is a subject of transformation and is the site of transformative cultural practices. Thus,...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...A woman's body is a subject of transformation and is the site of transformative cultural practices. Thus,...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...A woman's body is a subject of transformation and is the site of transformative cultural practices. Thus,...Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural...In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the...intra-ethnic politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy...A Brah, Cartographies of Diaspora (1996:226)...A woman's body is a subject of transformation and is the site of transformative cultural practices. Thus,...
the scorched and crumbly earth and an occasional eye-stinging whirlwind. The scared, shrunken crees. (79)

On their motorbike, heading towards the Dalit locality (the Bhangi Colony), on the way Raghu and Kushank encounter the wretched and helpless inmates:

A bullock, his bones sticking out, gave up pulling the cart and slumped down in the middle of the road. The family in the cart were thrown forward, too desperate, too weary to utter any more than half-hearted abuse. Then that too died down and the village relapsed into stillness. (85)

Painting the ghastly pictures of the rural dalits, the above paragraph speaks volumes about the plight and miserable conditions and the utter helplessness of the untouchables. Let alone quality food and clothes, here the womenfolk have to struggle and fight everyday even for water.

Each morning enough water would collect in the one well in Nandadhela to fill three or four buckets. When that was gone, the women started to fight. But there was not spirit in their fights. They were too starved, too desperate, too weary to utter any more than half-hearted abuse. Then that too died down and the village relapsed into stillness. (85)

Indicating at the exploitative nature of the upper castes, Raghu tells Kushank not to make an ass of himself believing that the untouchables will be allowed to have, an access to the well, after the completion of the task of digging the same, "which son of a bitch in Nandadhela do you think is going to let the untouchables drink from the well?" They'll have to fight and force their way if they want water" (86).

Reeling under the unending indignity and misery, being crushed under the weight of poverty, and chronically suffering from such ailments as cholera, typhoid and dysentery, the physical appearance of the untouchables looks quite deformed and deshaped. The novelist has drawn a very disturbing graphic landscape of their faces:

Millions of lines, indefinitely finer than hair, held those faces together. Only the long snow-white lashes indicated that the old woman had a pair of eyes. The eyes of the old man on her right were petrified with watching the goings-on in the world for so many years. The seven spaced hairs on the other old man's bald head were like periscopes, observing the movements in the village from a distance. (86)

Nagarkar, hinting at a very degrading, and dehumanizing condition in which the wretched village people have to live and struggle through, remarks: "words like helplessness humanity and poverty had no meaning in Nandadhela. But even in that famine-ravaged place I had not seen people quite as broken, crushed and barely human as these. They just stood for a couple of hours. The diggers ignored them completely". (86). Even the diggers - who themselves were wage-earners - could afford to ignore and treat the village as insignificant, lowly creatures.

Thus, the Bhangis - the lowest of the low caste, who are given the job of cleaning the latrines and sweeping the streets - and the dirty nature of their work further the view of themselves as impure and stigmatized. Somewhere towards the middle of this section of the novel, Nagarkar comes to give a depiction of "the Bhangi Colony" (81), which symbolizes nothing less than an assemblage of disease, dirt, disorder, backwardness, violence and ignorance. The social and physical conditions of the colony in which the Dalits have to live, can not help but bring ill fame and evil repulse to the dwellers of the colony:

The Bhangi colony. Three mongrel dogs. And one mother kicking her child out of her way. A thin abrasive haze of dust softened the outlines of everything around. Then the village. A kid started to chase the bike. The women at the well pulled their saris over their faces. The old man at the door of his hut spat a greenish-yellow gob at our wheels. It splattered our legs as the bike went over it. The tailor, the peanut vendor, the doctor with the positions against old age and impotence, the grocer, the Rama temple, the blacksmith and his son working the parched bellows and hammering at a red-hot wheel.

Then a few scattered houses. (81)

Edward Said in his book 'Orientalism' remarks: "The orient was almost an European invention" (Said 1978: 1). Extending the argument of Said's book to study the 'Politics of Caste', it can be maintained that the representation of the Dalits (untouchables) and their locality (the Bhangi colony) is an act of powerful upper castes. Here the colony is conceived in terms of such demeaning images as 'mongrel dogs', 'mother kicking the child', 'abrasive haze of dust', 'but', 'a greenish-yellow gob of spit', 'potion against old age and impotence' etc. The truth of the Bhangi colony is an effect of the upper caste people's powerful position, as these people can only define their inferior the lower caste ones and not the vice versa. The analysis of the above given paragraph regarding the representation of the 'Bhangi Colony' in terms of violence, dirt, backwardness, ignorance, is an effect of the politics of caste, working on the principle of domination, control and exclusion etc. Such a degrading socio-cultural representation of the untouchables give them inferior subject position in their society. Their subjection to the dominant regime of representation affect everyday life of these people. They cannot be oblivious of themselves and their identity in the dominant culture. The untouchables would hate the degrading images of their locality as the 'Bhangi Colony' which signifies as a place of ill fame, an evil reputation, the ghetto'. They just can not escape the burden of their degradation embedded in the institution of their caste. Their association with 'chillum' (91) and the 'bubbling of a hookah' (92) are further projection of their inferiorization and backwardness.

"One's sense of self-consciousness as well as one's sense of self worth is .... dependent upon the recognition by those whom one seems worthy to recognize ...." (Crossley 1996: 66). Unlike, "the women at the well pulled their saris over their faces" (81) of the Bhangi Colony, non-dalit Sardar, Bhisander Singh, whose family lives at some distance from the colony, boasts of being very modern and up-to-date: "we are very forward looking, we do not have purdah in our family, unlike the rest of the village" (90).

Here, in this section of the novel, Kiran Nagarkar's narrative draws our attention towards the dehumanizing practice of the caste system and its incompatibility with democratic values. The
Because of his constant subjections to unemployment and resulting poor economic conditions, Kushank is forced to offer tuitions. If this isn't to brush up his grammar. Sometimes I got bored and told them stories. One of the parents warned me againstwhelming the m authority. It's the matriarchal family. Kushank and his brother aren't his father's children. And Kushank's aunt is a prostitute in Bombay.

*Based on Nagarkar's *Seven Sixes are Forty-Three*.

As one of the fundamental categories of social stratification, the term class signifies collectively sharing the same social privilege and greater prestige and authority (Miku!a 2008: 24). The concept of class is at the centre of the narrative of the novel. As social beings, Kushank and co-workers have only one commodity to sell, the labour power of theirs in order to obtain possession of the means of production and subsistence. They are under the constant pressures of economic insecurities, and precarious living standards, which they consider the present day identifies a lack of equal possibilities for flourishing and suffering (Sayer 2005: 218). Thus, even in the context of the novel, it can be maintained that 'class matters because it creates the irrelevance of class analysis to study people's life as they consider the present day identifies a lack of equal possibilities for flourishing and suffering' (Sayer 2005: 218).

Despite the suggestions coming from the feminist and post-modernist theorists regarding the irrelevance of class analysis to study people's life, many culture thinkers the concept of 'class' and 'class consciousness' are central to their analysis of cultural politics of caste, class, religion and gender, reading marginality in contemporary India (Sartori 1985; Sayer 2005). Of course, the concept of 'class' has been labelled too fluid and too complex to be captured in the rigid category of class than they were in the past (Miku!a 2008: 24). As per Bourdieu (1984: 95): "I am not interested in the categories of 'upper class' and 'lower class' that are used by sociologists in order to designate social strata. I am interested in the fact that society is made up of different social forms that have the same distribution of the economic resources, professions and powers. These social forms are what I call 'classes.'"

Despite the definitions of class, it seems to be too ambitious. Marx and Engels (1939) defined class in terms of relations of production whereby the working class, the proletariat, who are excluded from the means of production and subsistence, are the source of alienation from the work and the process of exclusion expands alienation of the working class from the means of production. The present day capitalist mode of production presupposes the working class to have no say in the decision-making process to obtain possessions of means of subsistence and who therefore have to sell their labour power in order to obtain possession of the means of subsistence and who therefore have to sell their labour power of theirs in order to obtain possession of the means of production. As one of the fundamental categories of social stratification, the concept of 'class' and 'class consciousness' is at the centre of the narrative of the novel. As social beings, Kushank and co-workers have only one commodity to sell, the labour power of theirs in order to obtain possession of the means of production and subsistence. They are under the constant pressures of economic insecurities, and precarious living standards, which they consider the present day identifies a lack of equal possibilities for flourishing and suffering (Sayer 2005: 218). Thus, even in the context of the novel, it can be maintained that 'class matters because it creates the irrelevance of class analysis to study people's life as they consider the present day identifies a lack of equal possibilities for flourishing and suffering' (Sayer 2005: 218).

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Despite the definitions of class, it seems to be too ambitious.
Chandini’s father considers Kushank almost a street urchin. Keeping in view, the disadvantageous socio-economic condition of Kushank, he dissuades his daughter Chandini to marry Kushank, saying that the relations of intimacy between the married couples can not last long, if they are not supported by a strong financial security. With an effort to convince his daughter, he says: “Chandini, this is puppy love. You’ll soon outgrow it. Then it won’t suffice and you’ll leave him behind one day”. (142)

Keeping in view his pathetic economic conditions, Kushank himself could not commit marriage to Chandini despite Chandini’s offer to wait till both start earning. “I promise we won’t get married till we’re both earning our living” (139). However, not being sure of himself and his improving economic lot in coming times, Kushank ruminates:

Left to myself, I couldn’t have asked her for another four or five years, no, not in a lifetime. If the distance between your mouth and your belly is uncertain and elastic, then your opinion of yourself is likely to fluctuate too. Add to that extreme self-depreciation and insurmountable inferiority complexes. And Chandini becomes unattainable. (39)

Prachiniti episode in the very early sections of the novel is another harrowing account of suffering caused by penury. Very intimate to Kushank, Prachiniti married to a painter, named Shatlaj and the mother of little Arshad, is admitted in a municipal hospital. “If Prachinit had been taken to hospital ten months earlier, she might have lived another couple of years” (34) Prachiniti’s prolonged and insufferable ailment coupled with her family’s utter state of destitution, hurts Kushank immensely, despite his own being in a state of privation. “Shatlaj tried to sell his paintings. Tutored others in painting. And then sold his colours and easel too. To buy Prachinit’s medicine” (34). Finally Prachinit and her husband Shatlaj look up to Kushank for the monetary help to meet the hospital expenses and contact Kushank for the same. However, Kushank is pained at his utter helpless and replies:

“If I had money I wouldn’t come and eat at your house every other day. “There’s no one else I can ask. I’ve already borrowed from other friends. And they ask me why I always need money. To survive. To eat. Why don’t they understand? Don’t they ever get hungry? Morning, noon, and night? Why not just eat once? For a lifetime? Why do we eat so often? Even people who have never lent me money ask the same questions”. (34-35)

Kushank still efforts to arrange the money and asks his friends and relatives but only to meet his dismay. His rich but callous friends remain unmoved. Kushank recounts:

Sometimes, I tried begging, begging doesn’t necessarily get you anything. Certainly not money. My friends were happy to take me to the movies, the theatre, concerts. But they didn’t offer me the money for the tickets. So my wallet stayed empty and Prachinit went without medicine for days. (34)

And Prachiniti “only died, slowly through ten months, ten times thirty days. Days and weeks and all the hours of the day”. (35) And eventually realizing the futility his efforts, Kushank is so much overpowered by the grief that he did not even turn back to look at her “oxygen cylinder, temperature charts, jars of saline, bottles and bottles of medicine”. (36)

Hunger and poverty at times become a breeding ground of shame and humiliation. The poor class subject position affects access to esteem or respect from others. It also affects our relationship with others and shows how people are valued in this situation. It has been noticed that life-chances and achievements are heavily affected by the lottery of the birth class. In the context of the novel, Kushank recalls an incident that occurred to him in the early part of his life, when he was heaped with humiliation:

When my mother died I started eating out. My father gave me money every month and let me fend for myself. If I asked for more, he gave me more. But I didn’t like to ask too often. Then I had to go hungry. I had got used to two-day fasts. But sometimes my head and stomach would play havoc. There’s a point up to which hunger is unbearable. Cross it and then it’s easy. But when I’d missed three or four meals, I felt a string wind itself round me and start to tighten. The world swam before my eyes and there was a numb humming in my brain.

And when the hunger became insufferable, Kushank finally dropped in at his friend Jitendra’s house and it was his “third meal in four days at Jitendra’s”. It was almost midnight, but I knew they are late and anyway, however, lat it got. I was sure of getting a meal there. As I reached for my second hot chapatti, Jitendra’s mother said something angrily, in Sindhi. There was a sudden silence at the table. Jitendra’s little brother and sister stared at their plates. I had never learnt Sindhi, but I did know enough to interpret what she had said, “Hasn’t he a home to go to? Here, every day…. Is this a home or a restaurant? Only Jitendra continued to eat calmly. I thought of pretending that I hadn’t understood. But my face had paled. (168 – 169)

Despite his friend Jitendra’s consolation that “Don’t let her (the mother) worry you. After all, I’m the breadwinner in the family, aren’t I?” Kushank could never forget the bitter taste of biting words. It is quite possible that Jitendra’s mother would not have behaved the same, had Kushank been from an affluent class or family. In this regard, Adam Smith, the father of Modern Economics, very befittingly comments on the human tendency to treat the rich and poor with double standards: “This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect, persons of poor and mean condition, is the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments. (Smith 1759: 1984: 61)

Exploitation is a pivotal concept in the Marxist analysis of class. It is a process through which the dominant group or person excludes a major chunk people from having access to productive resources including land, capital, raw material etc. And the very process of exclusion enable the exploiter to appropriate the labour output effort of exploited lots. So, exploitation is a direct result of the inequalities in incomes generated by inequalities in the ownership
According to Frantz Fanon’s expression, the “domination of institutions” is achieved through the “two apparatuses.” One is the State Apparatus (SAs), which includes institutions like the police, the military, the courts, etc., through which the ruling class enforces its rules. The other is the Ideological State Apparatuses’ (ISAs), which encompass institutions such as the educational, the legal, the religious, the family, the political, the communication (press, radio, television, etc.), and the culture (literature, arts, philosophy, etc.).

In the context of the village of Nandadhela, there is a severe Maui drought that has led to a water crisis and the destruction of the crops. The Sardar, Bhisander Singh, projects himself as a messiah of the local people and urges them to work for the well-being of the village. Sardar Singh’s main objective is to let the people leave the village at no time. The villagers are powerless to stop the Sardar from executing his intention.

There is a curse on Nandadhela that not even the white men could lift. The Sardar Bhisander Singh, projecting himself as a messiah of the local people, urges Raghu to stop his men from digging the well. However, the villagers, particularly Mrs. Singh and her daughter Prachinity, are in favour of digging the well. Sardar Singh promises to give them a jhooli (a traditional vehicle) if they agree to let the work be stopped.

It seems quite convincing to Sardar Singh that the villagers will agree to stop the work as he is working here at Nandadhela to counter the disaster and digging a well for the people. However, the real intention of the Sardarji is to let the people leave the village at no time. Giving them false hopes, you’ll up and leave one day, but they’ll stay and die of hunger. These are my people. I won’t stand by and see them suffer. (88)

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Raghu started at him incredulous. "You sold your land?" "Yes, sahib, Not just me. A lot of people in the village sold theirs too."

Each morning enough water would collect in the one well in the village. However, the villagers are condemned to sell their dear land to “the stock villain” (81), during the course of the deal, Raghu says to Bhisander “you brought half of the village for me."

In the given episodes involving Kushank, Prachinity, Chandini, and Raghu, Sardar Singh has gained a significant material advantage by excluding the villagers from access to water resources. To be more precise: the material welfare of people is the ability to fulfill certain basic needs, which is the inverse proportion to the suffering of the Nandadhela villagers, who are ‘quite broken, crushed and barely human” (86). The Sardar makes his material advantage by excluding the villagers from access to water, which is the only source of their livelihood and survival.

Of course. To receive money and not put my thumb on the deed — it’d be as if I had masturbated in a whore’s bed.”

There is no water in this village. You’re wasting my people’s resources, really leads to the damage and debasement of people. Hence, to be more precise: the material welfare of people is the ability to fulfill certain basic needs, which is the inverse proportion to the suffering of the Nandadhela villagers, who are ‘quite broken, crushed and barely human” (86). The Sardar makes his material advantage by excluding the villagers from access to water, which is the only source of their livelihood and survival. Thus, it seems quite convincing to conclude that the privileged position and the advantage of a person/group is at the expense of the disadvantaged. “In the case of exploitation, the exploiters actively need the exploited: exploiters causally depend upon the material deprivations of the exploited. This means that the interest of the actors within such an exploitation process is in the material advantage. In this process, both the exploitation and the material advantage have a significant impact on the individual and the society, and they are interdependent. When the individual is exploited, the society gains material advantage, and when the society gains material advantage, the individual is exploited. This process continues indefinitely, and the individual and the society gain material advantage. When the material advantage of an individual is exploited, the society gains material advantage, and when the society gains material advantage, the individual is exploited. This process continues indefinitely, and the individual and the society gain material advantage.

Kiran Nagarkar’s Novel Seven Sixes are Forty-Three
Cultural Politics of Caste, Class, Religion and Gender: Reading Marginality in *Kiran Nagarkar’s Novel Seven Sixes are Forty-Three*

Kushank, wrongly accused by the police, is beaten savagely. Believing him to be a Muslim, he is shown no sense of sympathy and fellow-feeling. In the garb of securing and safeguarding the interest of the society and acting as a state agency, the police subjects Kushank to cruel, degrading treatment and barbaric torture to secure confession.

Also charging him to be a traitor, Kushank is further subjected to inhuman treatment to extract information from him. "And after a while, the officer opened my swollen lips gently and pushed in a Novalgian tablet and then some water". (210)

It took me a long time to surface after he had kicked me in the back. Then I was out of the water and had hit the air. I could breathe but couldn't force the air down my throat. My eyes bulged and my ribcage came apart at the seams. Then I lost control over my body and the breath flowed in. I moved my leg and found that I had wet myself. "Oh, God," I whispered, "This can't be happening, can't be." (212)

The given below couplet by an American punk Rock Band, 'the Dead Kennedys' popular in 1980, written satirically as a mark of protest on social and political issues, including the state and police atrocities, seems quite befitting here even in the case of Kushank's subjection to the police torture:

Roll down your dress, here's is kick in the ass, Let's beat you blue until you can shit in your pants. (http://www.scintilia.altervista.org/Archivio/Festi/...)

And finally Kushank looses his voice in history forever. "Only the certainty of a full stop. Then blackness and no more pain. Was it hours or days of unconsciousness? All I know is that it was a time without pain without myself". (213) In this regard, a social theorist remarks a very pertinently:

Personal pain is degrading and dehumanizing experience unless meaning is vested in it. The investment of personal pain with meaning transforms it into suffering, which then becomes a social process. The individual derives dignity out the acknowledgment of her [his] pain and is thus in a better position to feel worthy of the suffering, and available to the possibilities for healing. (Ramphele 1997:114)

In the novel Kushank is not able to transform the pain inflicted on him into suffering and thus he meets a very bad death.
A politically correct critical reading of the horrendous and ghastly account of the disturbances and violence that has been responsible for a lot of suffering and damage to life and property. The novelist in his constrictive and moralistic rush to right the wrongs, to voice the pain and suffering that has been inflicted on millions of innocent people, has effectively silenced the victims of the violence and repression. The study of marginality aims at unveiling the structural approaches and structuralism deny the role of individuality, a way that enables him/her to differentiate from or feel similar to other people. It is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's identity. It is primarily understood as a person's perception of the self and that of others. It is explained as the recognition of the plurality of our affiliations and in the celebration of cultural diversity, speak creatively of the multiplicity of the human condition. The term individuality, a way that enables him/her to differentiate from or feel similar to others, is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's identity. It is primarily understood as a person's perception of the self and that of others. It is explained as the recognition of the plurality of our affiliations and in the celebration of cultural diversity, speak creatively of the multiplicity of the human condition. The term individuality, a way that enables him/her to differentiate from or feel similar to others, is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's identity. It is primarily understood as a person's perception of the self and that of others. It is explained as the recognition of the plurality of our affiliations and in the celebration of cultural diversity, speak creatively of the multiplicity of the human condition. The term individuality, a way that enables him/her to differentiate from or feel similar to others, is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's identity. It is primarily understood as a person's perception of the self and that of others. It is explained as the recognition of the plurality of our affiliations and in the celebration of cultural diversity, speak creatively of the multiplicity of the human condition. The term individuality, a way that enables him/her to differentiate from or feel similar to others, is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's identity.
The struggles of the last two centuries for democratic rights, gender equality and social justice that went in hand with the struggle for independence and freedom of various nations and ideological sources - caste, class, race, etc. have proved decisive in resisting and challenging these domestic English and Foreign Languages Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak


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