

Vol. 8, Issue-II (April 2017)

ISSN: 0976-8165

THE CRITERION

An International Journal in English

Bi-monthly, Peer-Reviewed, Open Access eJournal



UGC Approved Journal [Arts and Humanities, Sr. No. 40]

Editor-In-Chief - Dr. Vishwanath Bite

www.the-criterion.com

About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>



ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

www.galaxyimrj.com

Patriarchal Boundary in Manju Kapoor's *Difficult Daughters*

Dr. Chetan Trivedi

Head,
Department of Humanities & Sciences,
Government Engineering College, Bhavnagar (Gujarat).
&

Nilam H. Gajjar

Ph.D Research Scholar,
Carolx Teachers' University,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat, INDIA.

Article History: Submitted-05/04/2017, Revised-20/04/2017, Accepted-26/04/2017, Published-30/04/2017.

Abstract:

The patriarchal system has a notion of ideology with that women are subordinated to men and women should be under the control under the supremacy of men and they believe women are the assets of men. In some South Asian languages, for example, the words used for husband are swami, shauhar, pati, malik, - all words which mean 'lord' or 'owner'. Here in the present research paper the word patriarchal system would not be in limit to swami, shauhar, pati but beyond that to a person with whom a woman shares mental, sentimental and physical aspects. The present research paper will focus on Manju Kapoor's *Difficult Daughters*, where the central character Virmati who dares to cross the path of an orthodox family and moving to a new path of her life. The novel describes a jerk into her reader and expanding snooping in him/her reading in such way that it as it open with the cryptic statement made by a divorced and childless Ida, the daughter of Virmati saying: that the one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother. The statement indicates the theme of the present research paper that the concept of freedom for women is still limit to patriarchal mindset, background and ideology. She is free yet she is everywhere in chains.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Feminism, Bonding, Manju Kapur.

The word patriarchy literally means the rule of the father or the 'patriarch', and or the 'male-dominated family', the large household of the *patriarch* which included women, junior men, children, slaves and domestic servants all under the rule of this dominant male. Now it used more generally to refer to male domination, to the power relationship by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways. In South Asia, for example, it is called *pitrasatta* in Hindi, *pidarshahi* in Urdu and *pitratontro* in Bangla. (Basin 3)

The subordination that experiences woman feel at a daily echelon, apart from of the class woman might belong to; take assorted forms - prejudice, disrespect, insult, control, exploitation, domination, brutality - in the family, at the workplace, in surrounding and society. The details may be diverse, but the premise is similar. It is distinct by various critics and research scholar in varied ways. Juliet Mitchell, a well-known feminist psychology, find

the word patriarchy to the account of affiliation systems in which men substitute women, and to the emblematic authority that fathers implement contained by these systems. For this authority she looks in this, it is liable for the 'interiorize' psychology of women. Sylvia Walby in her book, *Theorizing Patriarchy* calls it "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby 30).

According to some feminists- divisions, distinctions, oppositions, and dualisms characterize patriarchal thought and knowledge. Patriarchy, they claim, opposes mind to matter, self to other, a reason to emotion, and enquirer to the object of inquiry. In each of these oppositions, one side of the dualism is valued more than the other. Patriarchal knowledge systems are also seen to emphasize specialization, to be narrowly compartmentalized and fragmented and unable to see the wholeness of phenomena.

Women writers have transformed their fictional works from deep rooted Indian ethos and they talk about woman character who departs from traditionalist notions, selfless woman character who narrates as devoted wife or daughter-in-law and shift their female protagonists who always look for self-discovery and never surrender themselves under submissive position of patriarchy society. But to the opposite side of previous Indian women novelties' fictional works delineates in their women characters from the era of thirty years of post-independence highlight themselves and dissent on their marriage and motherhood. Modern women writers have depicted woman's desires, her professional endeavors, and her newly contoured relationship with a man and the transformed outlook of sexuality in their novels. In the galaxy of Indian women novelists, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, Namita Gokhale, Gita Hariharan, Anita Nair, Shobha De and even the diasporic writers like Bharti Mukherjee, Shona Ramaya and others have prepared various approaches of the altercation to patriarchal standards in their fictions. The embryonic of women novelists in India have extensively slanted modify in the approach of the patriarchal Indian society. These, women writers have, very successfully, depicted the female consciousness; her dogmas, her anguish and finally her liberation. Women writers like Rama Mehta, Githa Hariharan, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De, Jhumpa Lahiri and Manju Kapur are significant for their illustration of an emergent woman in their novels. They describe urges, ideas, desires, and precincts of a woman. Woman portrays as in their novels as an individual creature with the autonomy of assortments. The woman is on her journey to rebellion from the dumb and contingent person to self-respect and self-possessed creature. Thus, these writers have described and build a new portrait of a woman in their fictions. Manju Kapur portrays a new image of women in Indian society in her fictions works. According to Sunita Sinha, "Manju Kapur displays a mature understanding of the female psyche. Striking a balance between a neutral coexistence and unfettered freedom and space on the other, Kapur's eloquent narration of women's issues is nevertheless, both Indian and universal.

Manju Kapur is the prominent Indian writer of contemporary Indian society who spends her childhood in Amritsar and born in this city in 1948. She graduated from the Miranda House University College for Women and went to take her M.A in English from Dalhousie

University where she is a Professor of English. Her childhood was spent in Washington, Dalhousie, Canada as her father worked in the cultural attaché in the Indian embassy there. She lives in Delhi. Manju Kapur is a contemporary novelist having five novels to her credit with a high degree of both critical as well as a popular success the world over. She is one of the most admired novelists of Indian writing in English (IWIE). Sarita Srivastava quotes Manju Kapur's statement regarding her writing style as, "I have evolved my own style, to suit my subject matter and temperament" (Srivastava 71).

Manju Kapur's maiden novel depicts towards the young woman protagonist named Virmati who born in Amritsar into a rigorous and high-minded family, *Difficult Daughters* is an outstanding triumph of Kapur. She has successfully described the middle-class family of Punjab takes towards pre- independence epoch swathing three generations of women and their relationship with their family. The novel is not only limited to the relationship of difficult mother and difficult daughters but it's beyond the women relationship towards her family and society. Kapur draws attention in the novel while the daughter Virmati who dare to cross the path of an orthodox family and moving to a new path of her life. The novel describes a jerk into her reader and expanding snooping in him/her reading in such way that it as it open with the cryptic statement made by a divorced and childless Ida, the daughter of Virmati saying: "The one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother"(1).

Virmati is the eldest of the eleven children is burdened with family duties because of her mother, Kasturi's incessant pregnancies and her giving birth to children one after the other and even though she is becoming physically wrecked she was not spared from delivering children. "Arre, what is here is all right, but they go on coming. Every one or two years. It is like a harvest!" (26). Though it is taking a toll of Kasturi, but the cognizance of the evil effect of this continuous pregnancy is not taken seriously till she became very weak and pale. To her father-in-law, the children are 'Raunaq in the house' but the one who brings this 'raunaq' is utterly neglected and the situation became so worse for her that she had to be sent to a cooler place to convalesce. Marriage is, of course, a social institution to have children but it is inhuman to go after having them at the cost of a woman who is treated as a breeding machine and whose thoughts, emotions, opinion and physical condition it totally disregarded. All this shows that she remains a mere toy in the hands of her husband who has no empathy for her.

Kapur describes a middle class Indian family life during the pre-independence time which narrates three generation female characters, one is Virmati's mother, the central heroine of the female character Virmati and third is self-centered and self-motivated Ida, Ida herself says in the beginning of the fiction as who never "be like my mother"(1). During those days, women were not allowed for higher studies but Virmati rebelled, got the permission to study further, and refused to marry the person whom she was engaged to. In the meantime, she fell in love with the married professor Harish and to give legitimacy to her relationship, she strived for marriage with him in spite of the family pressure. She overreacted when she defied the family for the sake of her love with the married professor. Because of him, she came to value education and the higher things in life. She replied that life's horizons are much wider than those that had been shown to her and that she had experienced. However, she cannot

entirely nod off the sense of precedence so intensely entrenched in her and her, therefore, does not deem herself complete until she has married. Within a period of few years, through her different experiences, she nurtures up from an immature girl to woman full-fledged by affliction. She might have started on a search for true love, autonomy, and self's sense, but she has an apprehension ever of the reality that things are not always, as they emerge to be, or perhaps, they transform. "It presents a woman who considers marriage as the journey's end" (Prasad 12). In contrary to her, Shakuntala and Swarnlata who have tiled conduit for their autonomy against their parents' wish and who have their own concern. At the middle of the novel reflect Virmati's clashes in a politically surcharged and conference - ridden society. Rajput Kaplna observes: "She becomes a more typical daughter of a difficult daughter" (Kalpna 153). The novel starts with "Ida's going on a quest in understanding her mother (Virmati), who used to be a silent, brisk, and bad-tempered" (2). After her death Ida tries to ask relatives about "her mother the way she was" (4) and "digs and digs until they reveal reluctantly" (4).

When Ida connects the threads together, it transpires to her that Virmati was the eldest of the 11 children of Kasturi and Suraj Prakash. So, Virmati is the mother to all her sister and brother. She nurture for them, she ruled over them. She has to defend herself from the remarks of an aunt (a mother of only two children) who lives neighborhood. Thus at the beginning, it is fascinating to discern how a young girl responds to such difficulties in her life, and how she handles them. Sometimes she seeks for her mother's warmth, for some cryptograms that she was exceptional but she never gets it and depicts out the console from her school books. She is always hassled and drained due to her weary domestic responsibilities. Torn between her household work and duties and her love for studies she twirls into a bad annoyance girl. She accompanies her mother to Dalhousie to take care of her failing health and there she meets her cousin Sakuntala. Her spirited, independent and defiant nature plant seed of inspiration in her to like her cousin. She starts thinking: "It was useless looking for answers inside the home. One has to look outside. To education, Freedom and the bright lights of Lahore colleges" (17).She understands that it is possible to be something other than wife. "no she has to go to Lahore, even if she has to fight with her mother who was so sure that her education was practically over"(19). Professor Harish Chandra started and intellectual dalliance with the fresh, inquisitive Virmati and soon found himself falling in love with her. After having passed her FA she wanted to study further but in the eyes of her parents, she had done enough studies and her fiancé's (Indrajeet) parents also thought, in a similar way:

...She was already well qualified to be the wife of their son, the canal engineer. They did not want too much education in their daughter-in-law, even though times were changing. (45)

Luck has favored Virmati as her fiancé's father died and the marriage was put off giving her chance to continue her education and in college, she begins to secretly weave a dream house filled with marital bliss. The arrival of Prof. Harish Chandra turns Virmati's life upside down. At the first meeting, Prof. Harish played some of the sweetest music for her and was content by the look on her face and on the other hand, Virmati was deeply influenced by the Professor and considered him dignified for his concern towards women's edification. With

their increase meetings the Professor's desire to possess her increased too. Both Virmati and the professor were in love with each other. The physical intimacy, the sexual intercourse, the first feel of his body on her made her choose that he would be an important part of her life. Virmati too justified herself in the illicit relationship by consoling herself that there was 'no point in foolishly denying it on' College. The classroom was the only place where Professor saw her in the college; flower like against the backdrop of the male students. The feeling of love aroused because one day he found her intensely staring at him (the real reason for which was her myopia). He took her to the eye doctor and she started putting on glasses. "With them, she looked more studious and flower like and appealing. But by then Professor's desire to possess had extended to her and mind" (47).

She carried all the letters the Professor had ever sent her to the kotha. At the furthest point where the topmost branches of the neem tree could touch her face, she watched them burn undisturbed. When the fire had finished its job, she collected ashes and flung them towards her aunt's house, where he had once lived, watching the tiny black specks of her lost love float about. She would leave him to his pregnant wife and get on with the rest of her life. (113)

Her stay at Lahore is not only for her fulfillment of her desire to be with Harish without any interference. Harish keeps on exploiting her for a long time and finally one day she discovers that she is pregnant. Even at that time Harish, the professor does not come to the rescue and she has to get it aborted with the help of her friends and roommates, Swarnlata and Miss Dutta. Like typical women she thinks that she is his for love, whether he married her or not: "the basis of an outmoded morality" (114). Although social barricades and moral hurdles label their relationship as 'illicit', Virmati acted stubbornly. There sprang a lot of tension, anger and contrasting views between Virmati and everything around her. She was shamelessly acknowledged as a black sheep of the family. "Kasturi said tartly that where Virmati has concerned no course of action was right, the girl was so stubborn and independent, no matter what they did for her, she wasn't grateful" (113). They spent their first Diwali together which was a step towards publicly announcing their status, matrimony and the path of love. "Nevertheless, despite her resolution and her pain, she was still considered the black sheep of the family" (113).

Virmati tells her family that she still wanted to study further and that she did not want to marry Indrajit as he was not the boy she liked. At this, she is locked up. Indumati her sister marries Indrajit to save the name of the family. Then she comes to know that Professor's wife is pregnant and she is heartbroken. She wants to give new directions to her life and wants to make a new beginning. Kasturi came with Viramri at Lahore to admission her getting in RBSSL College. This college's principal make her assure about Virmati will never faced any trouble there which makes Virmati's mother Kasturi surety about her safety and after leaves her there, she regularly visits the college to meet her. Pursuing her Professor goes to Lahore and makes her the target of his sexual desires. In spite of her frequent requests, he is reluctant to marry her and wishes to keep her as a co-wife, which was, then, a part of the social tradition. He just seems to be another chauvinist steeped in patriarchal traditions. Virmati has become blind in his love. With her acceptance of his love, she shows her emotional weak

self. It fails to justify the expectations of the reader to look for an assertive self in Virmati. Not only the professor but she has become the slave of the physical desires as she thinks, "what was the point in foolishly denying it on the basis of an outmoded morality?" (125).

Torn between her passion and what she would really want to do; the guilt of all those wrongs come to her mind with the blunt observation that the ecstatic beginning of illicit relationship had no plan for marriage. This makes her disappointed, once she is, "she appears to be outspoken, bold, determined and action oriented" (Kumar Harit 97). Despair was the entire washer and the thought that it would be far better to be like Swarna, her hostel friend, "involved in other people, and waiting for no man" (138). Virmati's agony is expressed in the following words:

I break my engagement because of you, blacken your family's name, am locked up inside my house, get sent to Lahore because no one knows what to do with me. here I am in the position of being your secret wife, but of shame, wondering what people will say if they find out, not being able to live in peace, surds in peace....and why? Because I am an idiot. - Now you want to prolong the situation. Why don't we get married? You say your family makes no difference. Still you want to continue in this way. Be honest with me. I can bear anything but his continuous irresolution. Swarna is right. Men do take advantage of women! (149)

With all the ties snapped by her mother from her, she tried to be friendly with Professor's children but their mother, Ganga would not allow her children to go near her and whisked them away. She heard Ganga's son whispering to his grandmother, "Who is this 'gandi' lady? Send her away" (208) As such she has to keep waiting for her husband who goes to his college "leaving her to pass a day alone in a place where her pariah status was announced with every averted look" (221). "...when she thought about home, ideas of revenge come into her mind, which she slowly put into practice. Her only weapon was husband, and she started to use that" (232).

Ganga said silkily, "Don't be upset, what can you or I don't? Now your new mother is going to provide you with lots of brothers and sister and you must be very good and share everything with them" (233). Her marital relations were nervy and Virmati was unhappy, her hunger has gone down. Harish felt it so intensely and was at his wits' end to discern that it had been over a year since their marriage and all that had made Virmati so dear to him looks to have destroyed completely He felt: "In her place was a block of wood, whose only response to the world was the passive oozing of tears. Even his most ardent caresses could not arouse her" (247). He talks to her to interact with her:

'Why not, darling, why not?' Harish started being more insistent.

'It hurts'

'I'll be gently. It won't hurt you, I promise.' 'Then, when she said nothing. Don't you love me anymore?'

Eventually, she submitted to his caresses, but that was all it was, a submission, and he was too sensitive not to mind. (247)

In a painful state of losing her parental home and relationship and living like a pariah in her husband's home with his first wife's eyes following her everywhere and every time she cannot even have the physical relationship with her husband openly for the fear of others listening to their activities in their bedroom. She conceives a child and her mother-in-law felt very happy knowing about it and told that it will be a son and take upon herself to take care of her. Obviously, it was not for her sake but for the sake of the professors' child. On the contrary: "Ganga's face, swollen with hate and fear, had followed her everywhere, the venom concentrated in the gaze of her evil eye" (246) and she would pray that the child should not be born. Complementary to her prayer, it was a miscarriage. Then the plaintive tone that Virmati had begun to hear in her dreams: "Oh, why was I born? Surely, I committed a terrible sin in my past life that should happen to me? Please God, take away quickly so this disgrace can end" (231).

Ganga who had taken her duties as a wife "seriously, looked after the house, children, in-laws, and husband's salary, but she had got no recognition for her hard work and years of sacrifice" (250). Swarnalata, a friend of Virmati asks her to join the agitation and tells her about the drafting of the Hindu code Bill. Virmati says: "what did remove inequalities mean? Would a new Hindu code remove the inequalities between two wives? From Ganga's point of view, she was the one with too many rights, the one with a monopoly. Their husband's semen should be shared. Virmati began to giggle hysterically to herself" (252). Anxious to broaden her horizons she took up Principalship and Nehru, but the Professor was not to allow her peace. His visit there cost her, her job. She decides to go to Shantiniketan but fate had it otherwise. Now it was Professor to face the dilemma and agony of being tattered between his family duty and illicit craving for Virmati. Finding no escape, he married her, breaking the last thin tie she had with her own family: "this separation is ordained from birth" (260).

Another important woman character in the novel is Kasturi. She is the mother of Virmati, an ill-tempered mother. She belongs to an Arya Samaj family in which child marriage is considered as an evil. During her childhood, Kasturi used to go to the Mission school, but the day when she was found praying in front of the picture of Christ proved to her last day in that school. Consequently, a separate school for Hindu girls was built and Kasturi: "...became the first girl in her gamely to postpone the arrival of the wedding guest by the tentative assault on learning" (62). After graduating at the age of twelve, she was trained by her mother in the household activities so that she could please her in-laws in future. She was a perfect daughter and her parents were sure that a good husband would suitably reward her. As she was fond of reading, she used to read at night. She was married to Suraj Prakash who impregnated her every year and left her with: "...the tiredness of seventeen years of relentless childbearing wash over her" (9). Vera Alexander says: "In the juxtaposition of marriage and education, education is either described in terms of a threat or portrayed as a dead end, reducing accomplished female characters to obedient wifery and dependency rather than enabling them to make a living out of their training" (Alexander 275). After giving birth to eleven kids, she was exhausted and annoyed woman. We cannot blame her bad temper, which she takes out on Virmati. Though she is an educated mother, she is a typical conventional woman

who considers marriage as the ultimate aim of a girls' life. She is so strict in her higher education for her daughter. As an educated mindedness and broad-mindedness from Kasturi which she lacks in all reverence.

Ida, the daughter of Virmati revealed as a radical woman of present-day India. Her attempts to forge a self-identification leave her hard-hearted and desolate. She is the difficult daughter of Virmati who wants to live a life on her own terms. An issueless divorce, she succeeds in breaking out the unsuccessful marriage and staying single, a phenomenon unheard of in her grandmother's time. She is not in good terms with her mother and after her death; she delves into her mother's past in order to understand their relationship. She grows up struggling to be a model daughter. She is not a good scholar like her mother and father. Because of Viramti's restraint upon her, she starts looking for routes to escape. She refuses to show any signs of intellectual brightness as she is engaged in the pursuit of other better things in her life. She protests her mother by saying: "Why it was so of culture, a disseminator of knowledge like her father. But getting Ida aborted, in denying that incipient thing in my belly; he sowed the seed of our breakup" (156).

To quote Dora Sale Salvador: "In *Difficult Daughters*, we do not listen to Virmati's voice. She could not speak out, being certainly situated at the juncture of two oppressions: colonialism and patriarchy. What we have is her daughter's reconstruction and representation there is, then, a qualitative leap between the life-histories of (narrated) mother and (narrating) daughter"(qtd. in Rollson 8). She divorces her husband and she knows that Virmati is upset with her decision, but she is happy that at last, she has got a life which she may believe to be her won. She is been tormented by the fact that she could never understand her mother and so she tries to create a space that he mother had caved for all her life. It is evident from the novel that Ida, the narrator through whose voice Kapur speaks, has achieved more than her mother (and much more than her grandmother) and that this is so through the simple creative fact of 'writing down' her own family history. In addition, as another of Kapur's commentators, Gur Pyari Jandial, correctly points out: "It would be mistake to devalue Virmati's struggle she failed, for what mattered was to have made the attempt: what is necessary is to break the patriarchal mould and for Virmati to do that in the forties was great achievement"(qtd. in Rollson 11).

Ganga is seen as another victim of the traditional society. Married to Harish, when she was three years old, she never had the opportunity to attend a school, but she was fully trained in all kind of household affairs. She tries to be a good wife, good daughter in law good mother and succeeds in discharging all the responsibilities. Though a good homemaker, she cannot become an intellectual companion of her husband. Harish even tries to teach her but she was not able to take the studies very seriously and due to her illiteracy and lack of intellectual closeness with her husband, he fell in love with a learned woman Virmati. Her husband's marriage with another woman torments her but she is not ready to give up. She never allows Virmati to be a part of any of the household activities. Her ill feeling for Viramti is quite natural because no wife would like interference in her married life. She is someone who loves her role as a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. At the resolution concerning Virmati's further learning, Ganga resents her studying the most. She thinks, "She could not read, and Virmati

was to do an M.A.! If that much attention had been given to her, she would not be in a position she was in today" (250). As she is a simple and traditional woman, she does not react her husband even though he marries another woman and keeps on taking care of her.

Shakuntala and Swarnlata represent the modern women who fight for their place in the society and live on their own terms. They are learned, intellectuals, with the mind of their own, and enough to take their decisions. They are the mouthpieces of the contemporary modern women who fight for their rights. They seem to personify the 'new women' who try to throw off the inhibitions which women have had been carrying for ages. Mythili rightly states:

Virmati wants to free herself from the family bondage, commits an irrevocable mistake and has to suffer throughout her life. Knowing full well that Harish is impractical, irresponsible, unethical and insincere why should Virmati bear with all his idiosyncrasies? Because with the passage of time, she comes to know that no matter what the consequences are she has to respect the traditional values and norms. No one would marry her after what has happened. The one wise decision taken by Virmati is to marry Harish. She knows that if she rejects Harish, the decision would be self-destructive (Mythili 160-161).

To conclude, Virmati is led to either a false existence or else to death and destruction in order to determine a new meaning in life. Both ways, she is penalized. This sense of the essential absurdity of life, of a willful waste of human potential, comes through the reading of the novel. Virmati's tragedy is the tragedy of ambition, the quest for freedom and identity.

Agreeing to the decision taken by the professor, she goes to Lahore to do her M. A. Philosophy. When she is in the final stage of completing her M.A., there broke out the riots between Hindu and Muslim. With this when Virmati comes home, Ganga has already left and now Virmati takes the hold of the house and the first thing she does is to remove the traces of Ganga from the bedroom thus trying to put her presence in the house. "When Virmati came home to Moti cottage, the first thing she did was shift everything belonging to Ganga to the dressing room. Doing this, she felt light-headed, as though she had conquered and won. Now the dressing - room was Ganga's and the main bedroom hers" (273). Marriage being an important event in the life of a woman is celebrated as significant even in the family and society at large. In our society when the girl learns early that she is 'Paraya Dhan', another's property, and it is her parent's responsibility till the day she is handed over to her legal owner. What a girl constructs of her life, how she outline herself as a personage, what profession she chooses is not as significant as the issue of her marriage and the person to whom she is married. Marriage is the last aim life of a girl. Marriage thus is a fortune conventionally authorized to women by society but marriage is not the similar obsession to a man as to women. The two sexes are diverse from each other, though one has the essentially of the other. De Beauvoir observes: "This necessity has never brought about a condition of reciprocity between them; women have never constituted a caste making exchange and contracts with the male caste making exchange and contracts with the male caste upon a footing of equality" (Beauvoir 446).

Manju Kapur is the one who has brilliantly touched upon the theme of marital relationship of the middle class people and highlights the problems like conflicts, disagreement, struggle and incompatibility in married life her novels. Here the set forms and ideology of patriarchy has almost influenced the motives of the life of Virmati. As Agrawal observes: "the novelist seems of child marriage, gender discrimination, women's education and other outmoded value systems which lie at the root of modern malaise. Hence, there is a need to modify and not to change them" (Agrawal 246). Thus Virmati who saw her mother giving birth after birth to children has to take care of her younger sisters and brothers forgetting her childhood - its joys and fancies, happiness and love and has to relentlessly work liking after siblings-feeding them, bathing them, dressing them, etc. She did not know what it was to be a child as she is burdened with the strenuous responsibility. In addition, she is born in a traditional, austere and high-minded Punjabi family with the conditioning that the duty of every girl is to get married and a woman's shaan (glory) is in her home. As such into much importance is given to Virmati's education. She taught that marriage, setting up a new home, bearing and rearing children, striving for domestic harmony and marital gratification are the only things that a woman should struggle for keeping the set norms of set patriarchal society in mind. She is free yet she is in unseen locks of emotional pressure of sensibility. Vera Alexander says: "In the juxtaposition of marriage and education, education is either described in terms of a threat or portrayed as a dead end, reducing accomplished female characters to obedient wifhood and dependency rather than enabling them to make a living out of their training" (Alexander 275).

Works Cited:

- Agrawal, B. R. "Indian English Literature, and the Crisis in Value System: A Study of *Difficult Daughters* by Manju Kapur." *Indian Fiction in English: Roots and Blossoms. Vol.I.* Eds. Amarnath Prasad and Nagendra Kumar Singh. New Delhi: Sarup, 2007. Print.
- Alexander, Vera. "The Representation of Education in Indian Novels in English." *Mediating Indian Writing in English: German Responses.* Eds. Brend- Peter Lange and Mala Pandurang. London: Transaction, 2006. Print.
- Basin, Kamla. *What is Patriarchy?*. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1993. Print.
- Beauvoir, Simone De. *The Second Sex.* Trans. H.M. Parshley. Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1979. Print.
- Kapur, Manju. *Difficult Daughters.* New Delhi: Penguin. 1998. Print.
- Kumar Hart, Satish. "Tragic Flight of the Female Protagonists in Manju Kapur's Novels". *Novels of Manju Kapur: A Feministic Study.* Ed. Ashok Kumar. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2010. 93-109. Print.
- Mythili, J.V.N.L. "Conflict and Modernity - Delineation of Man in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*". *Indian Women Writing in English: New Perspectives.* Ed. Sree, S. Prasanna. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons. 2005. 156- 162. Print.

- Rajput, Kalpna. "The Self-Syndrome in the novels of Manju Kapur". *Remapping the Female Map: Jhumpa Lahiri and Manju Kapur*. Jaipur: Yking books. 2012. 151-166. Print.
- Rollason, Christopher. "Women on the Margins: Reflections on Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*". *Novels of Manju Kapur: A Feministic Study*. Ed. Ashok Kumar. Sarup & Sons. New Delhi, 2010. 1-9. Print.
- Srivastava, Sarika. "The Voice of Protest in the Novels of Manju Kapur". *Novels of Manju Kapur: A Feministic Study*. Ed. Ashok Kumar. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons. 2010. 93-109. Print.
- Srivastava, Shilpi Rishi. "A Quest for Identity in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*". *Novels of Manju Kapur: A Feministic Study*. Ed. Ashok Kumar. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons. 2010. 15-21. Print.
- Walby, Sylvia. *Theorising Patriarchy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990. Print.