

Adaptation of Universalness in Ashapura Devi's Short Stories

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Introduction

Ashapura Devi is one of the significant writers in the world of Indian writing in English. She has written several novels, short story collections, and children's works. A superior among the literary genius of the world. She is given Jananpith award and the Padma Shri by the government of India in the year 1976. She is also honored with 'Deshikottama award' by the Vishwa Bharati university for her phenomenal contribution as a novelist and as a short story writer. She is conferred with Sahitya Akademi fellowship, which is the highest honour she has received from the Sahitya Akademi council. She is simply denied to go to school to study because of the customs and systems in which her grandmother is bonded up so far in the family. But she cultivates the habit of reading from her mother, who has emerged from a well literate family. Her mother is the reason for her achievement as a writer in the world of literature.

Literature of the world is nothing, but which expatiates the issues of the humanity on this planet as a whole. According to David Damrosch "world literature is an elliptical refraction of national literature". Damrosch begins his book with a quote about world literature from the communist manifesto of Marx and Engels: "The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. Nation one-sidedness and narrow mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous notion and local literature, there arises a world literature.

Adaptation of Universalness

Ashapura Devi's collection of works has its own UNIVERSALNESS. She has made her protagonists as the speaker of the entire universe. She has manipulated verities in her characters, which cannot be withered by ages. Every character of her own enunciate the universal facts like Shakespeare, who is a magician and who has foresighted the entire human nature in his era itself. As the entire universe knows Literature is a mirror of the society.

Ashapura Devi's one such story *Poddolota's Dream* which delineates a society in which the character called Podi survives and gains her experiences through lots of hurdles and thorns in

her path as a daughter of Jodu Lahiri's brahmin cook. There are numerous girl children, who survive all over the world with the same state as the protagonist of this story is drawn by the author. Devi focuses on the characters of this story *Poddolota's Dream* with the base of the seekers of money and status in their life time. It is clearly portrayed in this story.

The story is bonded together with the character called Podi, who is the daughter of a brahmin cook. The narration of this prose begins with the longing desire of Podi, who wishes to go to her native village after a long period of her marriage. Women have their own fondness with their father's home and to enjoy their own moment there for some time throughout the world. But it never happens in the case of Podi's life because her father is no more, and she has no brother. She has only her mother, who works as a cook at Jodu Lahiri's home. Even then she gets her permission from her husband to proceed towards the village and to stay for four days. She is given warm welcome by the village people on seeing her in the good condition. But the very thing has not happened in the lives of young child Podi because the childhood of her own is not a pleasing one unlike other kids.

The young pathetic Podi is transfigured immensely as *poddolota* among the village people. She is invited by so many people to make her presence in their home. Her mind is cluttered with full of doubts and she does not decide where does she go first? And also where does go next? Jodu Lahiri's home is crowded by the people of the surroundings to meet *poddolotta* after such a long time. One of the characters called Shottabala pesters Podi to visit her home in the next day for a feast, but Podi is already invited by the daughter in law of *rai's* home.

Shottabala is her father's sister. Podi tries to make Shottabala to understand her situation, and she confirms her that she has come to this village only to stay for four days. Agitated Shottabala insists Podi that the people who have invited Podi are flattering on her because of the status in which Podi survives with her husband. Podi jumps into her past memories all of a sudden, which is filled with full of hurdles and insults. She walks over the thorns and cruel stones till the age of sixteen. Her mother is her only comfort zone in her life.

Podi's mother is a cook in the home of Joddu Lahiri. She has to wake up very early, and she is assigned with the entire household work by the wife of Jodu Lahiri. Sometimes unbearable Podi involves herself with her mother's work, but Podi's mother expects her daughter should not be burdened by anything and anybody. She is such a prodigious mother to her child. Jodu Lahiri's ailing wife's aggressive criticisms over Podi and her mother makes the young soul Podi feels fish out of water always. Podi and her mother cannot afford even a single good cloth, enough food, instead they are showered with insults and vehement criticisms of the women of the home.

If they had any brains of their own
I wouldn't have to waste my breath...
It's very easy to keep two people in food and Clothes, isn't it!
(Poddolota's Dream, P. 20)

She also remembers Mukundo Rai's home and the function, in which she is pulled up vehemently from the row, where the people have seated for a feast and how she is insulted by the older daughter of Rai's family.

Really, if a brahmin cook's daughter can get the respect due to a brahmin's daughter ... then what stops a cockroach from being awarded the title of bird. (Poddolota's Dream, P. 23)

Then she reminds of the rumor regarding herself with Murari of the shannel house, which is not a true one, and she wishes to meet Murari and his family at once before she leaves the village. she happens to meet murari finally, who is totally cursed by the life. It is very unpleasant to see Murari in this state of utter disaster. She cannot bear the condition of Murari, though Podi is insulted badly by him. She comes to know that the house and the land are mortgaged by Murari to maintain his daily needs. He cannot see Podi in the good state of life and does not feel happy for her, instead he mocks at Podi like,

Look, "Podi", a cockroach turning into a bird is fine- but don't try to turn into the mighty Gorur bird all at once! (Poddolota's Dream, P. 29)

But Podi does not heed the words of Murari and she simply gives five-hundred rupees to Murari's wife to reclaim the house and the lands. Podi does not want to focus her present state of good fortune, and as a well enough lady of the universe, but she yearns to substantiate that even a cook and her daughter too have their own self-respect in this mere world. This is what Podi needs to prove the people, who are tied up with the devil called ignorance concerning with money and the status in the society. The author has drawn a twist at the end of this short story as Podi is once again caught by the monster called fate, which has made Podi's husband as a looser of the expected higher job because of the lost money, which he has kept to surrender to get the job. she is admired as the goddess of her husband's home by her husband, even though Podi's life meets its own ups and downs,

I regret having agreed to let you go at this time-You are the household Lokkhi, if you'd been here, I would not have been reduced to this condition (Poddolota's Dream, P. 31)

The author draws the twist in the mode of a letter, which is penned by Podi's husband with the content of above mentioned sentences. The audience of the universe is

illuminated through the minor and major protagonists of the story as life is nothing, but a short survival of a creature in the world. So everyone should be respected in the society.

The short story “Entering the underworld” lives the piteous character called Aroti, who is focused as the central figure of this story. An young Aroti is well conscious of her self-respect and a regretful person of begging things from others. But she is born to a heartless mother and a father. Her father is a selfish, who does not even have a thought of going for a job and to take care of his family members. His wife respects him and wishes to prepare delicious meal though he is unfit for a worldly life even if there is nothing. But the only hope of herself is her daughter Aroti, to whom she has given birth to beg from her co sister and the neighbors.

She is tormented by the fate in the name of her father, and her mother. Her father visits the home once in the month with the expectation of relishing foods. But her mother never be ashamed of sending her own daughter to beg for money, or some little ghee and potatoes from her neighbors and relatives. Aroti is enraged because of her mother’s attitude towards her, and she thinks that she is given birth by her mother only for their purposes. She stands as a self-pitying character, because there is no one to think of Aroti and feels sorry for her. one day she is sent to her father’s brother’s home to get some little ghee and potatoes, but she is not even given a glance by her father’s brother’s wife. She acts like as she has some other work, and she pretends to be very conscious of her work instead of listening to others. The actual intention of herself is to make the pity girl Aroti to stand and beg her constantly. So she does not even hear Aroti though she hears her request clearly. she notices Aroti face to face finally, when her brother’s son enters into the home with two mrigel fish, and she assures Aroti that she is really fed up of offering things for all the twelve months. She insults Aroti with all sorts of unpleasant words.

Go tell your mother to cut down on the wifely devotion, Aroti. You can’t lean on Someone else’s shoulders all twelve months. I can’t put ghee on everyone’s plate in My own house, should I always go giving to charity? Go tell her –there isn’t any. When you can’t even find the rice for the meal –Why this whim about ghee! (Entering The Underworld. P. 55)

Aroti loses all her patience and rushes to the home with a great enraged face for having insulted by her mother’s co sister. She shouts and assures her mother that she never begs for anybody hereafter, and she does not want anybody in her life. She insists her mother regarding her father it is better to hang by himself instead of sending his own daughter to beg his meal from others. she shouts at Aroti as a cruel mother and make sure of her obedience towards her father, even if her husband is nothing to the family. Aroti bursts out of crying for having such a cruel father and mother. In the meantime Aroti’s mother’s co sister has sent some little ghee and some fishes through her servant. This has made happiness among the husband and wife though

their daughter is in the utmost weariness for having received all sorts of insults on behalf of her father and mother. Aroti's character is made with her own self-respect, so she is ashamed of her parents, who have become happy on seeing the food which has sent with all sorts of insults by her mother's co sister. She realizes that her own father is a curse of her life, who always think of his delicious meal and shows his presence to the family once in the month. The author ends up the story with the meeting of Ronajit and Aroti and makes her own twist by the meeting of these two characters.

Conclusion

The protagonists Podi and her mother are shown as the great daughter and the lovable mother towards each other In the story *Poddolota's Dream*. But Aroti and her mother are focused as not at all bonding together with themselves in another story *Entering the Underworld*. Podi's mother is portrayed as an image of devotion towards her child, but Aroti's mother is portrayed as a burdensome person towards her own daughter. In the case of podi, she is only tormented by the society in which she survives with her widowed mother. This is quiet opposite in the case of Aroti because she is tormented by her own parents and by the cruel society in which she survives. Ashapura Devi focuses her characters with their own sorrows and troubles because of the reaction of the society in which they survive, and also how they overcome from all sorts of misfortunes in their life. These stories reveal the Universalsness of suffering of women and their adaptation to the environment. That is universe.

References

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