

Untouchability, Casteism and Disrespect of Woman in the Poetical Works of Meena Kandasamy

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Abstract

This paper proves Meena Kandasamy, magically touched upon such disputable issues as untouchability and casteism, disrespect of woman and apostasy the woman's face in the Indian society and sums up how her poems reveal the effects of patriarchal ascendance and social conditioning on women. As a new woman she raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian women. 'New Woman' can sustain in this society by exhibiting an insight into the way of women in India.

Key words: Meena Kandasamy, untouchability, casteism, society, marginality, subjugation, inequality

Meena Kandasamy opens stage to defend themselves and act as a liberate women from their subservient position with the potency of cognizance to give them a transformative action against patriarchal rules, political structures and caste system of society, through her women characters pictured in her poetical works. Meena Kandasamy's major concern is to women especially the marginalised Dalit women to get vista and knowledge about their pathetic condition. As a new woman she raises her voice against the gender inequality and systematic subjugation of Indian women. Her poetry provides a visual impact; it is eminent for present generation to leads their lives with overfilling awareness for the readers. She breaks the long silence that has circumvented Indian traditional women, their feminine experience and their female world. The term 'New woman' tending to imply something to suggest that women have their vista over on life based on the experience, this transformed every individual's attitudes in their lifespan. This is the concept were undertaken by new budding women writers based on the marginalisation of women and try to establish the women's empowerment. The new powerful woman who comes more with self-confidence, adept competitive, and self-guiding and she reclaims her individual identity and redefined in the brightness of her feminine sensibility and awareness. The sparkling idea of 'New woman' is beyond everything, as a new icon and re-established and transformation taking place in the virtues of old-fashion, which concerns individual woman in everywhere from the world and encourage them to fight against the prevalent strong patriarchal system in which caste, class, gender, sex, race, violence, molestation and psychological torture are the factors of oppression. New Woman has reached the society for maintaining human connection between communities of people and enable women and men to be pro-convivial with better understanding and interpersonal relationship.

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In Meena Kandasamy's poem 'If everything comes crashing down' she explicates how the man engenders new women.

...But in billboards planted
Across my fervent heart,
I will celebrate you as the man
Who made me woman. (Touch, 30)

Meena Kandasamy reflects pain, agony, violence and restrictions of being Dalit women in a subordinated status are in search for self-identity or individuality in the world where they exists to prove them. She handles her poems with all its precision of the emergence of new woman who has transcended the boundaries of the female gender. Meena Kandasamy is the polemical writer who utilizes her pen as a sword to fight the monster that is Caste. In her poem *Mohan Das Karamchand*, very rigorously she criticises him and caste as a militant feminist.

You knew, you bloody well knew
Caste won't go; they wouldn't let it go (Touch, 54)

Meena Kandasamy redefined their identity in the light of feminist theories. *Apologises for living on* is one of the best poems of Meena Kandasamy which reflects the helplessness of women who want to be free like a bird but remained prevaricated to restrictions. In her lines:

I was a helpless girl
Against the brutal world of
Bottom patting and breast-pinching
I was craving for security
The kind had only known while
Aimlessly-a float and speculating in the womb (Touch, 122)

The ultimate responsibility of 'New Woman' is to give voice to a voiceless woman in the society and making a deeper commitment to the overall well-being of the humanity. 'New Woman' is concerned about emotional, spiritual, political, biological and ecological perspectives of women community in the entire society. She draws the tormented picture of Indian marginalised woman and protest apart from her familial emotion and duties to which women were subjected and subjugated by the society. In a poem entitled *A Cunning Stunt*, Meena Kandasamy writes:

Cunt now becomes seat,
Abode, home, lair, nest, stable,
And he opens my legs wider
And shoves more and shoves
Harder and I am torn apart

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To contain the meanings of
Family, race, stock, and caste
And form of existence
And station fixed by birth
And I can take it no more (Ms Militancy, 11)

Meena Kandasamy celebrated her womanhood by singing women's dreams and her writings arouse consciousness in women's mind, shift from a marginal position and become the mouthpiece for every woman to protest against the society which conceives the obstruction to the development of their own personality.

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