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Indira Babbellapati, *From the Biography of an Unknown Woman*, Partridge Publications, India, 2015, Pages: 257

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The book deals with the issues of women which the SAARC countries share as do they share culture but this is the black side of the coin that is hidden in light. It was released by Padmashri Ajeet Cour, President, Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL), an apex body of SAARC on 13th February 2015 at SAARC Literary Festival, Agra.

It is a unique biography that cannot be put into words of a novel or a drama or a biography itself, only poetry as is presented can do the justice and this work is truly an exemplary execution through poetry. Biography is generally written to understand the life and works of people worth noting. But this biography is not of a single person; rather it is of all the women vulnerable to social injustice. The title “From the Biography of an Unknown women”, aptly describes the work in its few words; that is by stating “of an unknown women”, the poet leaves a blank to be filled by any women, rather portrays her words as law to be applicable to all the women. All through the work, the poet presented the unknown women as a part of the untamed nature, rather portrayed the women as the nature itself that is unconditionally protecting the life over its fragile feelings.

The biographical poem started off on a contradicting note that “There is nothing that can be put in words: hurt and experience are far beyond expression”, by saying so the poet stated how invaluable this biography is in presenting the life of women, as undistinguished over the geographical boundaries. The poet uses the five elements of existence: the sky, the fire, the wind, the water, the earth to describe the biography, thereby capturing the coloured reality of the importance of women. The work has an inherent continuity as does the night follows the day. As the poet writes, “She’s the universal women”, she opens the doors of reality of women across the world.

The poem had a unique rhythm not of words but of feelings that reflected as rhyming words in each of its lines. The poet used a critical literary tool by using the opposite of personification all through the pages of the poem, by comparing the unknown women with mountain, river, terrain etc, and also this literary expression resonates as the poet colours her lines as, “She floods and she keeps flowing”, (pg. 15) also as she writes, “Once upon a time I was a fossil” (pg. 41). There are many such antonyms of personification through the length of the poem. The poem has a unique pattern of question and answer, where the poet renders herself as the poetic journalist who has written the biography as a consequence of the experiences of the women around her, which she shares boldly, instigating to them the sense of courage, confidence and healing through the aspects of nature that she uses as similes and metaphors.

The poet uses anti-nature elements to describe the grief and agony of the unknown women as she writes, “Where roses don’t bud, where seed doesn’t sprout”(pg. 88). The poet uses an extraordinary way of portraying the poem where her words display the situation with its colours and flow, as can be seen how the phrase, “drop by drop” in presented in page 114. The

poet knitted an exemplary poetry with the needle of her inner thought over the pages of the book. The poet drew the words with the same crayons of night and day but by changing their shades over the experiences of women. The poet in this biography presents not the statistical data over the headings of early life, middle age and an end, rather presents the abstract data of feelings over the headings of agony, suffering and no end, as she writes, "In the sandy castles is her dwelling in the house of cards her dreams reside". (pg. 18)

The poet describes the unknown women as a silent observer and spectator unable to express what she feels and what she dreams of. The poet presents sudden tides of grief and agony in the wavy flow of the poem. There is a rhetoric question to the male-dominated society as one reads between the lines of the poem. The poet uses the repetitiveness of the nature to speak out her thoughts again and again. The images of the instances of the poem creep out to one another as the poem proceeds on the puncher wheels of reality of women. The poet sublimates the suffering of women with the fire of courage and confidence, as she writes, "Sky is her heart, river is her desire, sea, her passion, fire, she breathes and walks upon the earth", "She's a woman, she's a celebration!", (pg. 10-11).

Drawing a line of reality, the poet disproves the abstractness of the horizon of women's suffering. The poet invents a unique style of narrating the true story with the mirage of comparisons. Every comparison that the poet makes enshrines the world of imagination with a new dimension of understanding. The entire work is cemented on the platforms of imagination, reality and prediction. The poet let her poem flow along with the waves of ocean, shine along with the lighted shadows of sun, twinkle along with the rarest of stars. Each page of the poem discloses infinite meanings to be taken from. Thus the book is not limited to the pages it is written on,

There are various angles in which the work can be perceived. It is a biography as it opens the fizzy bottle of outcry of women, it is a poem as it is rhymed with the greatest of poets, the nature, yet it is not a story as does the poet writes that this doesn't end with the quote, "happily lived ever after". The poet didn't characterize the biographical poem as its abounding thoughts cannot be caught in the net of titles, summarising them. The poem is folded over various situations that have been testing the deepened bruises of women. The poet melted the spread of the poem beyond the boundaries of caste, colour, religion etc, stating that women anywhere, whoever has been handcuffed with male dominance.

The poet inherently questions the inequality of gender that has rusted the rights of women in the law shelves. Over the borderless waves of sea, over the endless colour of night, the poet has built her poem. The poet studded the poem with apt similes to draw the sketch of the women she saw around her. One such invaluable simile was that of comparing women's life to a collage of picture that she is forced to paste.

The poem oscillates between the unknown women and the nature as it tries to touch the life of the women with the same words with which it has touched the nature. The flexibility of the poem is in the constraints to which the unknown woman is subjected to. The poem is song in the tune of outrage that the poet has seen as she interviewed through the lives of the suffering gender. The faint wind of the poem has rung numerous hearts to the state of everlasting disturbance. It's a strong poem, and it lingers once it's over. It has simple vocabulary but complex meanings or understanding.

The poem has a unique alliteration that creeps between paragraphs as the poet writes, "lamp bestows", "lamp dispels", "lamp vies", "lamp you lighted" (pg. 200). This odd one out

alliteration also conquers the page 201 of the book, as the poet paints, “Skin morphs”, “Skin feels”, “Skin hides”. The poem presents women as powerful though the sand beneath is snatched by occasional tides, as is evident in the thoughts of the poet, “yes, in pride I say, I’m a gift and it’s not my brother, if you fail to recognise my worth”. The poem is like a one act play but many plays interwoven in it that is there in the length of a biography the poem has dispersed many biographies within it. The poet brought a mythological tinge to the poem in the page 230, where she recognises the characters by their personality. The poet uses repetition of phrases all through the poem to bold the impact of her message, one such phrase is “once I was foolish”, in page 234. Bringing on the reality of the plight of the women, the poet describes how this reality is hidden by the mask of history that was written to show only half the truth, and half knowledge is dangerous, as she writes, “photographs somehow freeze only smiles”

The poet portrays the unknown women as the inner consciousness that resides in each and every person, as she quotes words as “This unknown women, Reveals to me what I am; Reveals to you what you are ”. (pg. 255). By writing through infinity “the biography continues”, the poet acclaims that this biography has no end till the unknown women knows who she is.