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DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN MEENA ALEXANDER'S NAMPALLY ROAD

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ABSTRACT

Meena Alexander an globally acclaimed poet, scholar, and writer was born in Allahabad India. He raised in India and Sudan her writing is sensual, linguist and maintains a generous spirit. In 1993 Alexander published her autobiographical memoir. Alexander's works examine the different elements of her heritage and her cultural displacement and deliberate particularly on her status as an educated woman of the south Asian diasporic living and writing in the west. Alexander's search for spiritual wholeness through language a prevalent, theme of her poetry also articulates the concerns facing many post colonial writers silenced by the dominant literary traditions of the imperial past. Critical significant discussion of her writings often centers on these feminist perspective on literary and cultural issue. In this semi autobiographical novel, situation in Indian during the civil unrest of the 1970's a young English teacher named Mira returns from school in England to take a teaching job in Hyderabad. The plot develops around the arrest and torture of an innocent by stander, rameeza who's the diasporic inspires the local activists, one of whom is Mira's boy friend and fellow teacher ramu. Mean while mira's mentor Durgabai, resists oppression by ministering at a local shelter to victimized woman.

DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN MEENA ALEXANDER'S NAMPALLY ROAD

Meena Alexander was born in Allahabad, India. She turned five on the Indian Ocean, on the journey with her mother from India to Sudan. She was raised both in Kerala, south India and in Khartoum, Sudan. At eighteen she went to England for her studies. She has a B.A honors in French and English from Khartoum University. She also has three earlier volumes of poetry published in India. She has edited Indian love poems from the

everyman's series, and published a critically acclaimed. Alexander's feminism, and the diasporic consciousness that characterizes much of her writings, is deeply rooted in India and in her childhood travels. It is this consciousness of being towered of being cut from, or being set apart from, in her own particular version of dislocation that has constantly surfaced amidst the external civilian struggle in Nampally Road. Inspired writers are a section of the diaspora that can represent the fluctuation between cent figural and centripetal, between the centre and the edge, assimilation and

subversion. Mythical works of expirations are a major source of knowledge about the diaspora, making them objects of metropolitan interest.

The conditions in the diaspora are discussed by exiliated writers, the works are not destined exclusively for their own communities. Many Indian diasporic writers vigorously grill the terms of their Indian, instructive its diversity and examining their alienation from their own communities, especially the women writers do this for instance. A vital and inevitable issue needs to be considered at this occasion. Nampally Road where in a delicate thread separates the image from the reality, or the fiction from non-fiction. They create an uncertainty in the reader as to whether the supposed fiction. She is reading is really a fiction. It must in expressing fantasy, transform fantasy, at least somewhat toward conscious social, political, moral, intellectual, or religious meaning. The position of woman in society is one of the recurrent themes among the diasporic writers. Since of the revolting view that a woman may be the source of casement and life, but she is better approached. When she is a little dehumanized into the image, something a man can master and control even multiply required.

Meena Alexander is a daughter and writer of the Indian diaspora. Her writings reflect her own lived diasporic experiences. On the one hand those of uprooting, exile, trauma, separation, and loneliness, but on the other, those of hope and a privileged multiple vision that can alone transcend rigid national and cultural barriers. Alexander's writings by highlighting the subversive diasporic vision that they systematically offer. Even though the diasporic condition can often mean displacement, isolation and confusion, a rather more positive view can also be upheld. As broadly argues in the location of culture, the diaspora can also be seen as an empowered and luminal space who's undecided in between condition allows for the generation of counter. The hegemonic discourses that defy and question fixed geopolitical boundaries.

To put it differently, the diaspora can become a resistive site from which to interrogate, as Alexander do not only class and gender conflicts, but also nationalism and its influence, both on a grand scale and on rather more local spheres. Alexander moved to Sudan when she was five. Some years later she went to England for higher education and then returned to India to teach in Delhi and Hyderabad before finally moving to Newyork in 1979. Her wandering life has meant, among other things, learning and speaking in many tongue, beside with her determined curiosity.

Meena Alexander's sense of disarticulation has always been partially countered by the Gandhi an ideology to she inherited from her nationalist

grandfather Ilya, whose influence undoubtedly contributed to the awakening of her cultural identity. Nampally road and on meena Alexander's reflections and statements concerning the problematical nature of diasporic living and writing, all the more so when this writing is done in English. The problems of identity as a child, only corroborates the healing and therapeutic powers which, as Alexander argues in her seminal work.

"The act of writing, it seems to me, makes up a shelter, allows space to what would otherwise be hidden, crossed out, mutilated. Sometimes writing can work toward reparation, making a sheltering space for the mind. Yet it feeds off rupture, tears in what might otherwise seem a faultless, oppressive structure."(NR-3)

If the creative process is always cruel and painful, writing becomes especially difficult for a diasporic woman who has been brought up in a traditional Christian Indian environment. As Alexander has very often claimed, her home was ruled by the most firm and hierarchal norms of patriarchy and social decorum, and was also subject of the colonialism and the imposition of the colonizers culture and language. For a diasporic writer, the habitations that language can offer are nothing but imaginary and transient shelters. The diasporic subject was in that other life is split open, and the new world she now inhabits speaks of the need for invention, but also of intimates of tradition.

"In my quest for an imaginative source sufficient to with stand the pressures of life in a new world. These made up a grandmother figure, it needed her ancestral power in a world where so much of what it knew myself to be was hidden, veiled, could not appear."(NR-35)

The combination of different common garments, worn by different women living in different places, can be said to point to diasporic women's difficult lot in a world of shifting and fluid borders and allegiance, but also to their potential to get together and turn this common sisterhood or multicultural feminism into a site of resistance against patriarchal and colonial power, and all kinds of political and religious extremists.

"The fraught reflections of a multicultural feminism offer. If to be female and face conditions of violent upheavals. The fragmentations both of the dominant patriarchal mold and of the marginality of female existence. Indeed, such fragmentation can work powerfully into the knowledge necessary for the diasporic life, for the struggle for a multicultural existence and for feminism it is crucial to embrace the secular multiculturalism that is threatened by political extremists."(NR-83)

The female diasporic self in an ever changing globalised world. On the other hand, one's

cultural roots should never forget, since they constitute such as important part of one's identity. All the more so in the case of the diasporic subject. The hidden bit from Meena's grandmother's wedding sari makes it clear that tradition must be reconsidered, reinvented, not destroyed, since it is only by combining and integrating the good side of tradition and modernity that this garment can have magic powers that is some kind of empowering change can be possible.

Meena Alexander opposes any kind of unjustified censorship. For her, to kill a writer is to prevent stop up his or her speech, censor, and shred ban. It also implies the literal from which they try to avert our eyes. This is according to Alexander the dark woman's burden. She has no ready shape; it is all still to be invented. She has to make up memory, to constantly reinvent herself by simultaneously creating and recreating her on body, systematically marked as other and her own discourse since it is only as her body enters into coasts through, lives in language that she can make sense.

"In their struggle to reach the sources of creative power, Indian women writers had to feminine, fracture and reform it. This confrontation took on added complexity when the struggle was part of the effort to decolonize. The effort to cut through that subtle, often infinitely valuable fabric is part and parcel of the reaching out for form that does not buy into the previously sanctioned ideologies of poetry or prose. She is forced, then to forget what he might call, for want of a better phrase, a back against the wall aesthetic."(NR-169)

Diaspora people cannot possibly have a singular and unified vision, which in turn implies, to quote Mira's own words, that the self is always two. Always broken given the world as it is, there's nowhere people like us can be whole. The best he can do is leapfrog over the cracks in the earth, over the black fissures. Yet this lack of unity does not leave the narrator empty and helpless. It is the infinitely layered identity that all diasporas people, and diasporas women in particular, have that allows Mira to have several visions through visions pairs of eyes, and become part, at least deep down in her heart, of a female communal project worth fighting for.

Like the female continuum that put different women together in Nampally Road Mira's leap is no longer a leap into the dark, but her fusion and transition from one woman's body into another. From this Mira that you know into little mother, into rameeza, into the woman in the truck on the way to the public gardens. A served head, a heart, a nostril with a breathing hole, a breast, a bloodied womb. In the end, a community of women bound together by

shared visions and dream imagery becomes a metaphor for the diasporic layered as identity.

The three women symbolically fuse so as to become one and the same, but also ultimately complex, thing. It is this notional collective identity that will enable Mira to write in the future. At the end of the novel, Mira identifies with rameeza. Just as rameeza's mouth is beginning to heal, Mira's ability to write her into existence is now seen as being ultimately possible;

"As he moved forward the figure advanced. A woman she knew her from real life and from my dreams. A young woman, almost my age, her head covered in an old sari. Her eyes were dark as the soot that fell from the city of card board. Her touched he hurt hand. He looked at rameeza. She edged closer to me. Her mouth was healing slowly."(NR-106)

The origin of the modern or new Indian women can be traced back to the anti-colonial attempt to delimit an area of self determination. This troublesome line of demarcation was achieved by clearly splitting the spiritual and material domains, the inner and the outer worlds. In the difficult transition from imperial colony to post-colonial state, from diasporic condition. It is the woman who systematically becomes the recipient of traditional values, since she is made to integrate within herself the virtues of traditional Indian womanhood and the practical advantages of diasporic while remaining immune to the attractions of westernization.

The new Indian woman enjoys a greater degree of autonomy and freedom, it is true, but this freedom is more, often than not illusory, since it can only be exerted within a demarcated space and in certain circumstances, and it greatly depends on self-regulation often relies on coercion and complicity when women are spoken for by a patriarchal society, the main aim of which is to keep them silent and under control. As durgabai at one point in the novel exclaims when referring to the poor women she tries to help, it's terrible, the fate of some of our young girls. The new Indian women like Mira have to find their own voices, their own language, their own discourse and representation.

They have to forge a back against the wall aesthetic, because the images of them that are in circulation keep on reiterating and enforcing the nationalist appropriation of women's identity. In short, what culture circulates are often illusions of happiness which, should they remain uncontested, will prevent women from being the masters of their own lives. However much she loves ramu and respects his political project, Mira feels rather more closely linked and attached to the women who, like herself, care and are risking their peace and physical well-being in order to fight for their dignity and freedom.

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