



# The Role of Women in the Plays of Chandrashekar Kambar's Jokumarswami and Wole Soyinka's Death and the Kings Horse Men

**Sangamesh Muttagi**

Research Scholar

Kannada University, Hampi

**Dr.Gurunath K. Badiger**

Professor & HOD, Department of English

Government First Grade College and P.G Centre

Dharwad-580 008.

## **Abstract-**

This research paper is focused on the exploration of female exploitation and oppression in the plays of Chandrashekar Kambar and Wole Soyinka. This paper tries to explore how Chandrashekar Kambar and Wole Soyinka posit postcolonial and feminist sufferings in both play writers. It explores female defeat and also depicts the failure of postcolonial and feminist resistance to colonial principles. Like colonialists, post colonialists and feminists overlook the different kinds of injustice and harassments women undergo. The poem also demonstrates how, even in the wake of colonial rule's end, women are still exploited and suppressed. For the qualitative study, the researcher used the book Death and the Kings Horse Man and Jokumarswami by Kambar and Soyinka as primary sources of data. Postcolonial feminism was employed as a theoretical framework to analyze the text.

**Key words-** Women, Tradition, Oppression and Patriarchy

## **Introduction**

Women have been denied equality and identity throughout history. The patriarchal society has consistently reduced women to passive and malleable objects of oppression. They have been allocated distinct duties and qualities, resulting in a stereotypical gendered identity. "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman," writes Simone de Beauvoir in the introduction to her renowned work 'The Second Sex'. Gender identity is an acquired rather than a natural construct. Patriarchy has reduced women to the status of the second sex, robbing them of their subjectivity and independence. To some extent, myth, literature, and even religion have all played a part in lowering women to the status of "the other." Myths can be utilized to

either sublimate or humiliate women. As a result, women become one of two sorts described by antonyms in pairs, such as the Madonna and the temptress.

Kambar and Soyinka are two post-colonial dramatists who are acutely aware of current socioeconomic challenges. The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the tactics used by dramatists to replace male-centered, stereotypical views of women with more positive and realistic representations of women. Through flexible and full-fledged female characters that strive to transcend abstractions and essentialism, Kambar and Soyinka joint vision highlights the gap between idealized myth and discordant reality.

In a male-dominated society, Kambar succeeds in capturing the paradox of the Indian woman's experience. Most of Kambar's plays include powerful female characters that disrupt the notion of ideal womanhood constrained by the patriarchal social system's moral rules. Kambar's female characters come across as real-life women who refuse to conform. Often, it is the female characters that take centre stage, and Kambar hints at a future growth through them. Kambar re-enacts ancient myths in order to make remarks in the present, as well as adding a female perspective. Goudati, Shari and Kamal aren't just fictional characters; they're actual women who carry the legacy of Indian womanhood with them.

Soyinka shows the women character in different roles like mother, sister, wife, tribal women and prostitutes. To reclaim the ignored female heritage the women characters are made to assert their individuality. The strategy used is non-conformity. Women like in the plays of Soyinka *Lyaloja*, *Agave*, *Segi Women* are treated just like commodities to satisfy the need of the males.

Kambar illustrates how patriarchal society constructs religion and culture by separating them from women and environment in '*Jokumaraswami*.' Only the male gods are given virility in the drama, and they are portrayed as symbols of male power. Men keep all of the acts that their culture considers active in the name of religion. They regard all men as virulent and blame women for their infertility. Barrenness affects both men and women, but *Sutradhara* identifies it with women in the play, claiming that if barren women worship *Jokumaraswami* and then make a curry out of him to serve their husbands, 'dozens of children will be produced in a jiffy.' Furthermore, unproductive males are not referred to as barren in the play are allowed to throw the blame on their wives.

The majority of the women in the drama suffer from the shame of barrenness. Their exchanges reveal that they are not to blame for their predicament, while *Mand* exposes their husbands for failing to provide them with a child. These ladies talk amongst themselves about their husbands' flaws, but they act subservient in front of their spouses. They lack the courage to confront their husbands about their bogus charges. Rather, patriarchal structures govern them, limiting their authority in comparison to their male counterparts.

Because men are deemed meek and feminine in patriarchal culture, they will go to any length to disguise their own weakness or incompetence. They, on the other hand, deal with the permission given by their male-dominated regimes to use women as scapegoats. It is because of this thinking that they identify barrenness

with land, ignoring their own role in the cause of barrenness. Men are responsible for both women's barrenness and nature's lack of productivity. They refuse to accept responsibility because they are protected by the patriarchal system. Furthermore, they regard all of their mistakes as rational and correct.

Wole Soyinka's play *Death and the King's Horseman* demonstrates that women in old Yoruba society played significant and recognised responsibilities. As mothers, enforcers of discipline, and community leaders, women fulfil their social, moral, and spiritual obligations. Politically and spiritually, Iyaloja, the Mother of the Market, is pivotal. Her towering image in terms of influence is a huge source of sustenance for the entire society, in addition to being the enforcer of discipline. Market women are also capable of gaining positions of power in the game, lowering man's superiority. Wole Soyinka demonstrates several perspectives on power, influence, and accountability.

The king has died, and by law and custom, his chief horseman is required to commit suicide and accompany his ruler to paradise. Elesin declares, "This market is my roost," as she walks around the local market with an entourage of drummers and a praise-singer. I'm a chicken with a hundred mothers when I'm among the women. I become a ruler with a castle that is delicate and beautiful." Elesin refers to women as mothers in general. There is no other place that could provide him with the same level of comfort. Women are seen here acting out their historic duties as mothers, not as moms who give birth, but as mothers who nurture and support morally and spiritually. The market ladies dance around him, cover Elesin in the finest clothing, and sing him praises. The women love to spoil their children, just like they love spoiling Elesin.

## Conclusion

Chandrashekar Kambar and Wole Soyinka both are different continent writers but writing same aspects like myth, post colonial point of views and country life. Used in their plays women as under the patriarchy subordinate of men and second class, women treats for works and full fill men's sexual desires. Men practice all means to hide their own weakness or inability as they are considered passive and feminine in the patriarchal culture. On the other hand, they handle the license granted by their male governed systems to use women as scapegoat.

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