

ISSN : 2395-4132

# THE EXPRESSION

An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal

Bimonthly Refereed & Indexed Open Access e-Journal



Impact Factor 3.9

**Vol. 7 Issue 6 December 2021**

Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Bijender Singh

Email : [editor@expressionjournal.com](mailto:editor@expressionjournal.com)

[www.expressionjournal.com](http://www.expressionjournal.com)



## **WOMEN MARGINALIZATION IN NINA SIBOL'S *YATRA: THE JOURNEY***

**Dr. Sunil Kumar Dwivedi**

**Lecturer of English**

**Shri Rana Inter College, Dholna, Kasganj**

.....

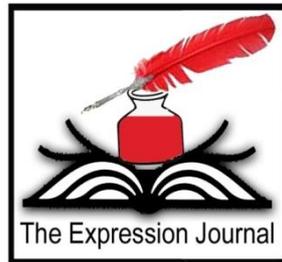
### **Abstract**

Marginalized people are often defined socially, politically, culturally and legally deprived of their 'rights' as human beings in every sphere of life and cultural society. These cultures and traditions are nothing in the absence of human understanding for the welfare of one and all. If they are studied abroad, it can be said that society must consider all people on the verge of socialization not marginalization which refers to the individual or group of people, living on the margin of society or surviving in the lowly status of human beings. Their situations may be upgraded or updated from the historical or cultural perspectives of life as they suspend between social community, caste, class, religion, region or any cultural groups, without being fully integrated to it which is not good for a society. In this way, the term of marginalization can be understood for various connotations and nuances in the modern era of post-colonial, post-modern, and post-structural world of anthropology. In this cultural anthropology, marginalization of human beings has been major subjects in the post-colonial or post-structural history of Indian English literature. Women have been on the verge of marginalization since a long period of History and the present paper is going to explore and examine the close concept of women marginalization in the novel, *Yatra: The Journey* (1987), written and published by Nina Sibal.

### **Keywords**

Marginalization, Connotations, Collateral, Contingent, Leveraged, Proliferation, Typology and Divergent Responses.

.....



## **WOMEN MARGINALIZATION IN NINA SIBOL'S *YATRA: THE JOURNEY***

**Dr. Sunil Kumar Dwivedi**

**Lecturer of English**

**Shri Rana Inter College, Dholna, Kasganj**

.....

The verbal form of the term, 'marginalize' is meant "to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group of society." ([www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)) The term, 'marginalization' is the noun form of marginalize which has been suggested as "an act of placing a person or thing in a position of lesser importance, influence, or power or the state of being placed in such a position." ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)) Thus, the term can be generalized in the meaning of powerful discourse for those people who are living under the status of powerless conditions and are misapplied by the society for their misfortunes. Various critics have tried to define and explain the concept and dimensions of marginalization through the various aspects of life for the people living on the margin of society. In the words of Robertson, the term marginalization is "often used very loosely and indeed, in contradictory ways, as a part of global consciousness or an aspect of remarkable proliferation of terms centred upon global." (Robertson, 8) Leimgruber studies the term into the various fields of studies and finally quotes four types of processual marginality in his book *Between Local and Global* 2004. These types marginality are contingent, systemic, collateral and leveraged. In his opinion, contingent marginality is "an outcome of market competitions" (Leimgruber, 61) where some actors are seen uncompetitive and thus marginalized while the systematic marginality is produced by hegemonic forces within political and economic system that generate inequities through the distribution of social, political and economic benefits. The very concept was studied by migrant philosopher and a sociologist from Chicago School of Sociology, Robert e. Park in the form of "marginal man" (Park, 881) while six decades later, there came Adam Weisberger who reconstructed the concept "in order to yield a more complex general theory of marginality" (Weisberger, 425) Weisberger's concept of typology was explained into four divergent responses: assimilation, return poise and transcendence. He was of the view that Park's marginal man "appears to be a bewildered foreigner who is on the road to a successful assimilation, joining the dominant culture and sacrificing his ethnic peculiarities to the melting pot." (Weisberger, 428)

The present novelist has been known as the chaired person for the U. N. Group which drafted the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Nina Sibal, who

joined the Indian Foreign Services and became the First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York between 1976 and 1980, has written her novel, *Yatra: The Journey* in 1987. It is a novel of various journeys and transitions of the protagonist of the novel on the vast stage of Indian History which centres on Krishna Chahal, the female child of Sonia, the Greek mother and an unknown father who was a fair-skinned lover of Sonia. Just like of her father, Krishna's skin was darkened gradually in the absence and concerns of her father. She tries to seek her father on the various places by transforming herself into various identities but her effort has been failed. She also absorbs the passionate and bloody histories of her ancestors like Kailash Kaur, the doomed figure in love with her nephew, Paramjit who was framed for murder in the turbulent of Bengal and Satinder, man of nonviolence, inexorably drawn into violent events and also her poet ancestor, Swaranjit Kaur whose youthful courage is rewarded with improbable gift of salt mine. In this novel, there are many lessons of the ancestors for Krishna and the most of them who are looking for the sources of her influences. Her culmination of the influences can be seen in her Padyatra or the pilgrimage through the various parts of the Himalayas in the search of her original identity with her parents. In her pilgrimage, she finds the mountains threatening with deforestation and becomes a leader by helping people in saving the trees and vegetations for the beauty of earth as well as of the universe. From the very beginning of her life, she was found propertiless and countryless but with her leading activities she gains paradoxically the possession of India and position of her Indian identity. By reading and examining the various innovations of the author, one can place the novel in the list of the immense work of the imaginative ideas of the novelist. The novel has been published by The Women's Press in three hundred thirteen pages with the remark of extraordinary first novel of Nina Sibal.

The title of the novel is *The Journey* but it has been entitled with *Yatra* because the motif of Padyatra in the sense and sensibilities of Indian concept of pilgrimage, beginning with the journey of two children from Sialkot to Kohat in 1849 and ending with a sojourn of their descendants undertaking through a troubled description of Punjab in 1984. In this novel, Krishna Chahal like many women have been presented as the women of courage who appear at different times with the formative motifs of seeking and merging with, because all of them assert their passionate feelings and emotions and try to reclaim their patrimony in a society that has dispossessed them of such claims and reclaims. Furthermore, one can reflect the use of continuing metaphor for Krishna's darkening skin which charts her progress from the periphery of India to its centre. At the core of the novel, there is Krishna's padayatra in which she, finally, comes out of her skin to elaborate her skin with the colour of all the Indians and she declares herself with each and every Indian citizen for her colour and beauty by saying all of India belongs to me. Yet, it was not easy to practice than to preach for her belongingness to all of the Indians in her colour and beauty that's why soon after this ecstatic outburst, Krishna, is looking capable of speaking in the stilted language of a bad newspaper that's why she asserts that The Himalayan crisis is not an isolated event. It has its roots in our materialistic civilization of today. The ecological imbalance is the result of the spiral of demands, ever increasing and never satisfied. In this way, the problematic texture of the novel does not match the structural ambitions of the characters and their settings. One can also observe that the constant straining after the various metaphors for Krishna; a harmonium, opening and closing to her mother, a flower of fire danced inside his chest, are seen creating jarring effects on the purple patches of the following kind like a dark transparent veil, a diaphanous funnel of misty

excitement, the dismal, disappointed, silent heart of Satinder moved like the sick tail of a cat up and down the streets of Lahore. The articulation of the novel is constructed so powerfully that it need not appear so painfully contrived in the light concern of its readers.

Sonia, the mother of Krishna Chahal, had come India from Greek and once when India was colonized there were a lot of British who made their business and enjoyed the beauty of nature as well as of women for their kindness and devoted self but after the Independence of India, they have to pack off because there was the demand of seeing them off from the country. She had come to India through the ship by crossing seven seas like concept of love and affection to get married with Paramjit but when she reached India: "Sonia had been completely bewildered and stupefied by what she had learned to recognize later her typical Indian chaos, passengers and porters rushing in all directions, seemingly without objective." (*Yatra*, 7) She was so confused that only she can remember the name of the hotel, Wilson House where she had left her heavy luggage. Her silence and loneliness had returned in a great rush and she had none but Paramjit in India to hid her face in his shoulders and when Paramjit "fondled her arm, put his strong, muscled shoulder firmly against her, she had sensed a pride and possession" (*Yatra*, 8) in the realization of the combination of white and black and soon she felt that in India her whiteness gave her an automatic advantage. What surprises her most, was the attitude of Paramjit who "had not made love to her in Wilson House; he had been waiting for the wedding. She had crossed the seas to him: there was no going back." (*Yatra*, 9) In this way, she has only option to wait and be merged up with the only concept of Pramjit's relationship in the absence of her own. She has to make compromises with the smell of Bombay: "Every smell in Bombay, sweet or foul, had been strong like unstopped scent bottles... she had been alone with the smells" (*Yatra*, 9) of sewage, sandalwood, spices, a dead pariah dog, burning gnats, and fish manure under the groves and she could miss the startled turn of pale blue British eyes as they had spotted her, a treacherous patch of white among a sea of brown faces. In such conditions, an edge of irritation had attached itself to Sonia's voice and the heat of the Delhi wedding had almost suffocated her by dressing "an orange satin Salwar Kameej which had belonged first to Paramjit's sister Lajwanti... six inches shorter than Sonia and the hem of the shirt had come half way down her thighs instead of below her knees" (*Yatra*, 9) What had bothered her most in this dressing was wearing second hand clothes for her wedding but she could not oppose it.

Furthermore, one can see that it was the last time the family of Paramjit had assembled in the presence of the holy heirloom which was acquired a century ago by an ancestor. Then, there is another meeting of Meera Auntie and her husband and Pramjit's elder brother, Sardar Satinder Singh Chahal who was a politician in his long black khaddar achkan, white churidaars, and saffron turban a red rose twirling jauntily in his button hole. He is introduced with Sonia as the "Minister in the North West Frontier Province government" (*Yatra*, 10) He addressed her as 'madam' and became belligerent and chafing like an injured bull as if he carried a long standing grudge of neglect against him. In such critical situations of a typical Indian Sardar family, she had to survive which looked very bewildering but now she could do nothing for the sake of her old identity as she left her house in Greek and her brother died due to her strict decision. So she seeks pleasure in the satisfaction of Paramjit whose albums were full of photos of those ten days: "the bridal couple had posed on either side of cannon outside the Vice Regal Lodge, in Connaught Place, in nameless gardens against fountains and fruit trees that appeared to be in bloom." (*Yatra*, 11) The readers can see here, each photo with each movement of bridal

couple but there had been no picture of the only time she had worn a sari during that period which indicates that Paramjit, himself did not like her such dressing or the sari yet it was worn by Sonia for the sake of family reputation.

Other domination can be read in the novel at her wedding night. Paramjit was a strong person with heavy muscles in his body which was so hard that she feared he would strike her and there was none of her to be called out for protection. So her voice was rising even higher than his: "The pain of the first night he had climbed her, mixed with the heat in the stifling room which Lajwanti had given them as their wedding chamber, had risen in her mind... again from the times he had rubbed dryly inside her." (*Yatra*, 11) It was unbearable pain for her, which had closed around her heart as, "He had pushed higher and higher, yet so tentatively, into her, his hand and his mouth like individual creatures which could not touch her, and must stay forever outside her." (*Yatra*, 11) She could persuade herself with this pain and make herself compromise another upset of her transformation for new identity was waiting for her: "You're Indian now; you have to bear saris" (*Yatra*, 12) and this confused transformation made her disturbed and she has to say, "I'm not Indian" (*Yatra*, 12) but how she can raise her voice against the man made rule which is dealt with patriarchy in which woman is known with the caste and code of men's conduct. Consequently, her voice had been rising in hysteria but he had not seemed to hear or care. Contrary to her voice, with male domination psychology, Paramjit stated, "The moment you married me, you automatically became an Indian citizen" (*Yatra*, 12) as it is assigned in a patriarchy. Having been distressed enough, Sonia has to think "No more British crowns for us" (*Yatra*, 12) and thus, a vast empty loneliness had opened inside her and was spreading rapidly, like something sick.

In this way, her *Yatra* of love and affection came to be conflicted with the concept whether she in an Indian or a Greek and this conflict of Nina Sibal is much more considerable for why the women have to lose their identities in the formulation of marital life while the men have the same. So, here, one can see that the novel creates the sense of mismatched marriage in his voice cheerful and sneering and her voice rising in hysteria that he would have told her. She has not only to bear the atrocities but also to compromise with likes and dislikes of the men like Paramjit who had perhaps imposed on her the charge of pregnancy with him. Parmjit had needed a little more convincing with Michael who was also in the term and conditions of Sonia, trailing after the men and stopping to look from the windows at the traffic piling up below. She had also seen the city's big banks and offices and its fancy shopping centres with the help of Michael who was looking closely in her love: "I return here year after year and now, I have an additional reason, a beautiful Greek woman in India." (*Yatra*, 14) Thus, Sonia's journey of seeking comfort is looking to be indulged in Michael who "had caressed her to the peak of pleasure with his hands and lips and tongue, opened her to a passion she had never imagined" (*Yatra*, 14) and she had no longer been dry and sore as she had been with Paramjit and she could flow like the river into the sheets of the hotels yet she had felt it had been she who had brought Michael unspecified treasures. On the special occasion of Indian Independence, Michael and his friends were invited to their suit in Wilson House for a drink and when they visited the place, the procession of Oval was started because Sonia had wanted to go out and be among them, to forget in their noise and gaiety the new fact in her life and this new fact had been celebrated by Paramjit: "Independence Day and Sonia expecting a baby." (*Yatra*, 15)

Men are men. They have nothing to do with the sufferings of women if they are in the mood of their pleasure and it can be seen in the novel. Sonia is pregnant but Pramjit or Michael

like men have no concern of care when they are in the mood of romance and so it can be cited with Michael, who “sucked her two nipples so that they had risen high and crimson from her milky white skin; he had hidden his face in her wide, spreading hips and had nibbled the soft insides of her thighs. His tongue had gone over her body with infinite passion...” (*Yatra*, 16) Michael and Sonia had heard a heartbeat growing inside Sonia’s stomach. When they left Bombay for Hyderabad, Michael had sent a huge basket of fruit and a bouquet of flowers which could be sensed and felt the attachment between the two. In this way, Sonia’s journey of relationship came to Dr. Hassanwalia, the chief Medical Officer and his Anglo Indian wife, Susan White, known as Mrs. Hassanwalia who was introduced as a nurse. Sonia’s interest lies in “Ely, their plump, pretty two years old daughter whose hair had been black and had fallen in tight ringlets to her shoulders.” (*Yatra*, 17) She was looking an Indian child and the colour of that skin pull Sonia firmly to the earth of India; she would never be able to leave or to return to Paros but she gets hope for the child might be Michael’s: “Then it would have a clear, rosy complexion, no burnishing from centuries of Indian sun.” (*Yatra*, 17) Sonia did not hate darkening of the colour because there “were plenty of dark eyed, dark haired Greeks in Paros. But it had been the colour of the child’s skin that mattered.” (*Yatra*, 17)

Furthermore, one can find Sardar Sobha Singh Palji, a very important landowner of Bhimbar district in Kashmir who had left his beloved wife, Kailash Kaur and daughter, Gulshan in the care of his nephew, Prakash Kaur. All of them had been overtaken first by Independence and then by the raiders en route to their orchards in Poonch and Srinagar. After a great study and focus of the novel, Nina Sibol has clarified the concept of marginalization: “Loot and women had been the raiders’ chief prizes” (*Yatra*, 19) which means to say that under the concept of marginalization, men were looted and murdered in Kashmir and women were abducted and raped openly so that their identity and dignity can be marginalized. In this regard of concern, Nina has given her readers the glimpse of social as well as women marginalization at the par of excellences. To conclude, one can say that the novel is full of women marginalization.

## Works Cited

- Leimgruber, W. *Between Global and Local: Marginality and Marginal Regions in the Context of Globalization and Deregulation*. Ashgate Publishers, 2004.
- Leonard, P. *Personality and Ideology: Towards a Materialist Understanding of the Individual*. Macmillan, 1984.
- Oxford English Dictionary*. OUP. 2005. p. 938.
- Park, R. E. “Human Migration and A Marginal Man”. *The American Journal of Sociology*. vol. 33, no. 6, 1928.
- Robertson, R. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. Sage Publication, 1992.
- Sibal, Nina. *Yatra: The Journey*. The Women’s Press Ltd., 1987.
- Weisberger, A. “Marginality and Its Directions” *Sociological Forums*. vol. 7, no 3, 1992.
- [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)
- [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)