

Depiction of Substantial Radicalism and Women Enablement with Respect to Kiran Nagarkar's Selected Novels

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Abstract

In Indian English Literature, the place of Kiran Nagarkar is implausible and remarkable. Being a humanistic, he has represented the substantial feminist methodology for contemporary, profuse and liberated women. Though they encounter several peculiarities such as anguishes, deficiency, disorder, malnourishment, sorrow, bereavement, desperateness, estrangement, nervousness, unfairness, vehemence etc., still they fight with the catastrophes in a spirited manner. They never project themselves as repressed, troubled and downgraded characters. On the contrary, they convert their powerlessness, faintness and segregation into fitness, forte and annexation. Nagarkar demonstrates the social and copious womanlike aspects of female protagonists. It is noteworthy fact that the role of women is vivacious in society as well as in literature. In today's universe, a contemporary woman is not restricted only for performing household chores but as an emancipated woman, she can demonstrate her worth and can outshine at compelling position like men. She has proved that she can support to her family and can work like men in this masculine dominated society. The researcher has projected radicalism, feminism and women enablement through Kiran Nagarkar's some select novels such as: 'Ravan & Eddie' (1995), 'The Extras' (2012) and 'Rest in Peace' (2015). These fictional works depict the traits of feminine characters such as forte, individuality, consideration and audacity. Here the researcher has attempted to portray the genuine picture of the 'female' in radicalism and a 'female' in the contemporary world. In this research, the researcher has interpreted and analyzed the female characters and their traits and benefit them in the frame of resilient and contemporary female in the Indian framework.

Keywords: Kiran Nagarkar, radicalism, women enablement, feminism, modern women, emancipation, self-governance, female characters.

Kiran Nagarkar (1942-2019) was an experimentalist, novelist, screenwriter, playwright, storyteller, an eminent bilingual writer and film and drama critic. The readers envisage his

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entire writing method as post-modernistic and existentialist. He has set a milestone in post-independence Indian English literature. Nagarkar has written the well-known novels such as:

1. *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* (1974), written in Marathi and translated into English in 1978 as ‘Seven Sixes Are Forty Three’,
2. *Ravan & Eddie* (1994)
3. *Cuckold* (1997)
4. *God’s Little Soldier* (2006)
5. *The Extras* (2012), sequel to *Ravan & Eddie*
6. *Rest in Peace* (2015), last book in *Ravan & Eddie* trilogy,
7. *Jasoda: A Novel* (2017)
8. *The Arsonist* (2019).

Besides this, Nagarkar has written plays and screen plays such as:

‘Bedtime Story’ (Play)

‘Black Tulip’ (February 2015) Screen Play

Nagarkar won the prestigious Sahitya Akademi award for his novel ‘Cuckold’ and he was awarded the Order of Merit of the Centralized Democracy of Germany. The readers can visualize the translated version of Nagarkar’s novels in Portuguese, French, Italian, Spanish, Germany and Marathi.

Substantial Radicalism basically focuses on accomplishing gender neutrality through political and lawful amendment within the structure of restrained democratic system. The fact is that many of the liberal feminists have worked to bring women into the political mainstream. Profuse feminists support assenting action legislation involving employers and didactic institutions to make particular endeavours to comprise women in the group of applicants, on the statement that past and current nepotism may basically neglect many capable women. The movement Substantial Radicalism is initiated especially in 18th and 19th centuries. It left its impact and continued in this contemporary period. Women subjugation and suffering is the matter which is considered as the major aspect of literature which can be studied under the lens of feminism. These women are always viewed as marginal and exterminated from male dominating society. They were given inferior treatment in the society.

Women's Enablement means to reassure women's sense of self-worth, their capability to resolve their own choices, and their right to influence communal conversion for themselves and others. Empowering women means equipping them with the tools they require to have supremacy and supremacy over their own lives. Authorized women have dominion, equal chance, and the capacity to formulate premeditated choices in all areas of their lives.

The present research concentrates mainly on the liberal radicalism and women empowerment through Kiran Nagarkar's some select novels. In this globalized era, women are very watchful, accountable and of a great presence of mind. They do not want to involve themselves unadventurously in the frame of house wife who pampers in household works, takes care of her husband, children's and elders in the family. Being a liberated woman, they think out of the box and also make them skilled for shouldering the family accountability by catering the financial needs of the family like the male characters. It is the right time for male subjugated society to ponder over the fact that the women are not sidelined and mere objects. They need to give these female characters a robust weight age, gender equivalence and convincing position in the society. These women's now wish to work shoulder to shoulder with men. If we look at the literature and its standpoints, we have to keep in mind the fact that literature is a mirror and reflection to the society. It demonstrates the happenings of well-built male and female characters as well. Irrespective of their position, feminine characters act as the enthusiast of their family. Kiran Nagarkar creatively and expertly describes the authorial and enunciated picture of women characters. They are self-regulating, spirited, contemporary, strong, boundless and monetary supporter of their family.

Let us study the liberal, modern, emancipated and all-round female characters in the novel 'Rest in Peace'. The prominent female characters are:

- a. Ravan's Mother Parvatibai
- b. Eddie's Mother Violet
- c. Eddie's Girlfriend Belle
- d. Ravan and Eddie's close friend Asmaan

a. Parvatibai:

Ravan Pawar's mother Parvatibai is a painstaking woman. She runs a mess and provides tiffin's to the customers. She cooks food, gets the tiffin's ready and delivered, earns a basis of revenue,

and takes care of the whole house. She performs the job of men and takes care of the entire family. She behaves like the head of the family and takes the accountability of her family. Parvatibai pays the fees of Ravan's school and attends the parent teacher meetings. The narrator claims that she did not have high or low prospects of life; she did not think of her lot as a good, bad or insensible hand that opulence had dealt her. At one stage, the question arises how Parvati can cater the needs of her family so efficiently in her great insufficiency. She buys food, pay the rent, sends Ravan to school and pay his school fees, pays electricity bills, offers clothes, snacks, tea, three meals daily, pocket money for the evening paper 'Bittambatmi', to betel nut to chew, two movies a month etc. While catering all these needs, she does it peacefully, i.e. without losing her patience. With a thoughtful frame of mind, Nagarkar asks: (RE: 38)

“How do you envisage Parvati feed her family?the suffering and privation of others.”¹

Parvati cooks and supplies lunch and dinner for fifty bachelors. Shankar also helps her in this work. He gathers the money from customers. He also takes assurance of those who cannot pay on time. In case of any disagreement with customers, Shankar tries to resolve it. She always blames to her good-for-nothing husband who is a preposterous and distressed individual. He is a like burden on the entire family. She often takes him for granted or overlooks that he is a component of her house. Because of this discrepancy, Parvati shrieks at him to work like a man. She contemplates that her husband is the root cause of skirmish and struggles. Because of him, the rattles create in the house. Parvatibai uninterruptedly tells him to work and earn something for the catering needs of family. But he does not pay any attention to her. Parvatibai handles the customers like a courageous woman.

Parvatibai works as a caring woman. She wishes that no one should offend her son. She communicates her husband that Ram is a good-looking baby. He has such a saccharine and blameless look in his eyes. God has protected the life of their son. She gets scare that someone will put nazar on him. In order to avoid him from an evil eye, she intentionally calls him a Ravan. Shankar-rao Pawar, her husband attempts to give up the idea of renaming Ram as Ravan. He tries to persuade her, (RE: 11)

“Have you lost your intelligence? Can't you discriminate between gods and malevolent spirits?.....From today his name is Ravan.”²

Parvatibai has a great uneasiness for her son Ravan. She reveals her declaration on Gods Khandoba, Saibaba and Lord Ganesh. She arranges Satyanarayana ceremonials for saving her child Ram from the oppression of death. She washes his clothes and puts them under his father's mattress. She takes care of Ravan that he should not fall in bad company. Parvati makes predictive pronouncements about her son's vocation. She takes care of mending his shoes. Being Ravan's mother, Parvatibai has a lot of concern for Ravan's study and career. She expects more from Ravan in all aspects. She wants to see Ravan as a successful person. She always thinks that Ravan should get a good salaried job and high status in the society. She takes too much care that Ravan should be aloof from all sorts of nonsensical and absurd things. She wishes that Ravan should always stay away from worldly sins and pleasures and behave like an obedient son. Knowing her limitations, she wants to give good protection and care to her home and her son Ravan.

In his schooling, Ravan's rank came 43rd. This was the worst performance by Ravan, according to his mother Parvatibai. She always considers that her son should come in first ten toppers. By seeing his academic decline, she gave him a piece of advice in the form of hard work and focusing on his career rather than all worldly things. Parvatibai is the main media through which Nagarkar has imbibed the truth of Hindu nation in Ravan's mind. She has a great fanaticism and interest for Hinduism. She asks Ravan to register his name in Sabha brigade (RSS). She insists Lele Guruji, the head of the Mazgaon branch of the Sabha, to admit Ravan in his group. Parvati is extremely unaccustomed about the prejudiced understandings of the Sabha. With sensible objectives, Parvati wants to keep the Ravan out of trouble. She instructs Ravan to join RSS and help in edifying a great Hindu nation. Nagarkar establishes the dominance of Parvatibai and her female centred existence on her husband Shankar rao Pawar. He complains Parvatibai that that she doesn't treat him like her husband. Besides this, Parvati bai, being a courageous woman, gives free advice to the people in Byculla market like a specialized counsellor. Parvatibai exercises her authority in the form of scolding, promising, uplifting and sharing happiness among the people. She is called as the mother and superintendent of fishermen at the vegetable market. She unconsciously knows how to give in on diminutive matters and get the big advantage. Shankar rao, an unemployed man, repeatedly asks ten rupees a day to Parvati. In return of this, she lectures him in an undoubted and unsatisfying tone.

Parvati has too much apprehension about Ravan's prospect. Ravan is not good at studies. He appears for the finals for the second time but fails. His mother constantly reminds him to pursue his education, but he wants to give up. Parvati behaves like a personality of strict discipline. She reprimands Ravan that he would not get food unless he earns his bread and butter and her making him understand that he is a mature person and should not be a spendthrift. She doesn't want him to lead a wretched and purposeless life like her husband. Parvati's husband Shankar Rao Pawar is meaningless and good for nothing. She rebukes him angrily for doing hopeless things such as reading the rag like Bittambatmi, lying in bed and ordering his wife to give him tea and tasty snacks and spending the money his wife earned. Nagarkar uncovers Parvati as a stern tyrant. Unlike other mothers, she would not defend her son if he is in the wrong. If she finds that Ravan speaks with the whores, she keeps him out of the house for whole night or strikes heavily his head with cricket bat. She never wishes her son to be a characterless child. In his early days, especially when he is ten years old, Ravan steals an eight Anna coin to see Dil Deke Dekho. Out of infuriation, she heartlessly beats him.

Parvati, being a respectable mother, has better plans for her son. She always ponders about the better vocation of her sons. With a great love, she hands over him learner's driving license and receipt of fees paid in advance to the Bombay Scientific Driving School. She makes this endowment so that Ravan can start his career as a taxi driver. While doing his job, he used to keep two hundred rupees for himself for meals and tea daily and gives his mother rest of the money. Being a good supervisor, she takes care of the family and their future. She plans to deposit money in a monthly frequent deposit scheme in postal savings bank. It was the immense desire of Ravan's mother Parvatibai that his son should focus on his career. He should be ambitious enough so that he would transform him from a taxi driver to an actor in film industry. She takes the control of the situation and behaves as a courageous woman. She reveals too much care for her family. After couple of days, Ravan becomes a popular music composer. She becomes very contented and happy. She completes the hospitality part and welcomes Bollywood people who visits their house. When she realizes that Ravan fell in love with Pieta, a Roman Catholic girl, she takes the decision of their marriage. She keeps her ego aside and quickly meets to Pieta's mother Violet and asks Pieta's hand for his son Ravan. Later, we see that Ravan, a successful music composer, requests his mother Parvatibai to shift into new house at Pali Hill along with him. But Parvatibai, knowing Ravan and Pieta in live in relationship, politely refused to go there. In an obstinate tone, she responds,

‘No, never, I will proceed this life of boredom there. I will die of tediousness there.’³ (RIP: 110)

violet:

Violet, a mother of Eddie, was a housewife. She is projected by Kiran Nagarkar as a great sufferer, compassionate and self-sacrificing woman. At home, she stitches clothes of others and caters the needs of her family. She has lot of concern for Eddie. She was also worried about the career of her son Eddie, like Ravan’s mother. She wants to correct her mischievous, impractical, nonsensical and absurd son. Being a humanist, she was always in a non-comfort zone for both Pieta and Eddie. Especially at night before going to bed, she used to narrate them bedtime stories. She goes regularly to Mahim Church for the well-being of her kids. She takes care of them. As a responsible and caring woman, she works hard for her family. She hides her physical problems from her kids. Every day she prays to Lord Jesus Christ for the betterment of her kids. She demonstrates her thanksgiving spirit to the lord for giving her kids abundant wisdom. She reveals her intense desire for her son Eddie that he should become a successful doctor like other eminent doctors in the city.

In one of the incidences, Nagarkar reveals the self-esteem of Violet. One of the neighbour showed pity on fatherless children Pieta and Eddie and gave Eddie some cloths, pair of shoes and some sweet. When Violet learns this, she strongly rebuked to Eddie for accepting such things from strangers. She asked him to throw all the things out of the house. She advised him not to take such things from others like a beggar. She encourages him to trust in the lord and ask whatever he wants from God as she believes that lord is the best provider.

Here the readers see crystal clear vision of Violet for her children. She is very watchful for her children. Being a self-governing woman, she teaches them lessons of management. Violet believes in strict discipline. She never tolerates Eddie’s misbehaviours. She scolds him for his bad habit of telling lie. In his schooling days, Eddie, out of eight subjects, failed in three. Violet asked him the reason for failing in three subjects. Eddie answers that he is suffering from brain haemorrhoids. He also makes a complaint to her that he is unable to see clearly during his examination. After hearing these nonsensical excuses, she beats him with a cane. This incidence created a blot on her mind, soul and body. She is too much possessive for Eddie’s career. Violet also tries to imbibe the roots of Christianity in Eddie’s mind. She tells him about the wrongdoing and spirituality and explains about the implication of prayers. But due to Eddie’s hypocrite nature and an insider and outsider character, she fails in restructuring Eddie.

When Violet becomes aware of a fact that Eddie is delivering speech in RSS Sabha, she thrusts the people away and pulls apart her reckless son down the dais. She holds his wrist and drags him to St. Sebastian church to get him expelled. She holds answerable to Ravan's mother Parvati for performing black magic on Eddie and sold his soul to Satan. She takes Eddie at the foot of the altar and appeals Father D'Souza to discharge him as he has connected the people downstairs and become an idol adorer. Violet doesn't want that Eddie's soul should be abandoned. She reprimands Eddie for selling his soul to nonbelievers. She always wishes to set him free from the sense of embarrassment.

Violet dreams a good job for Eddie. To accommodate family needs, she antagonistically asks him to look for a job. She becomes delighted when she hears that Eddie gets a job of 'an apprentice car mechanic' at a garage in Wadala. With an optimistic spirit, she envisages the development of his son from junior car mechanic- senior car mechanic-supervisor to the owner of the auto repair shop. She questions him the reason of coming late at night. Eddie considerably makes her believe that he is working for a big auto repair company and there is always an accumulation of work and anyway apprentices are anticipated to work odd hours and not ask questions because there is a long wait in line of unemployed youngsters waiting to take hold of his job. Violet dislike the arrival of film directors and producers to her house. She prohibits Eddie to bring them at home. She also pays attention to Pieta's behaviour. She wishes that Pieta should take a good education and get a highest paid job in the city. She never imposed limitations on Pieta. When she realizes that Pieta and Ravan are in love with one another and are very soon getting married, she approaches to Ravan's mother and asks Ravan's hand for Pieta. After their marriage, she anxiously cautions Ravan:

'You better sort that out with her. Listen carefully, young man. All I know is that she's a goodI think you're aware that I don't overlook and I don't exonerate.'4 (RIP: 115)

When Eddie asks her to relocate with him in his new house, she refuses him by saying:

'Your home I'm so contented for you, Eddie. But my home is here.'5 (RIP: 87)

She takes a firm decision not to shift and sticks with it. She asserts that both Granna and he could transport to Pali Hill while Pieta and she would remain in the CWD chawl. Further she says:

'I've consumed all my lifetime in this room. I would be misplaced anywhere else.'6 (RIP: 87)

When Eddie requests his Granna and Violet to attend the award function, she declines it by saying,

‘Violet, as her lad had expected, had chosen out by imploring that she would not be film melody was not her cup of tea.’7 (RIP: 108)

c. Belle:

Nagarkar has exhibited feminine reality and dominance through Anglo Indian lady Belle. She is the daughter of William Kingsley McIntyre’s. Nagarkar’s women easily excel their male counterparts. The males are self-possessed by self-reliant females. He creates a room for female certainty. He emphasizes the importance of women characters like Belle that supports and encourages the men in their oddity. She provides money to Eddie in order to fulfil his dream. She creates a hope in Eddie and escalates him for his musical endowment. She gives him full support in uplifting his film career. She gives birthday present to him. She promises him to give him a break in band in America. Eddie thanks Belle for her charitable help and inspiration. By seeing his obsession for music, Belle calls him ‘note perfect’, ‘pitch perfect’ and ‘a perfect pain’ in the arse. Belle is a brilliant and strong-headed girl. She is the girlfriend of Eddie. Belle’s parents dislike Eddie. But Belle audaciously proclaims her parents that Eddie would stay in her household. She offers a full support to Eddie in his profession. She is a perfectionist at her work. She works as the lead singer in Eddie’s band ‘Bombay Bombshells’. During her stay at abroad, she successively sends letters to Eddie and supports the association. For example, when Eddie calls her to record a song for them, she practiced the song for twenty-four hours. She comprehends the flimsiness of upholding her linking with her new fiancé Veerendra Malaviya. In between the recording, she talked to him as he was waiting for her to get home. When he comes to the recording to take her home, he told her that she was an international start and there was no prerequisite for her to record a melody in Bollywood as:

‘Bollywood only produces rubbish and nonsense things. Everyone in the West giggles at the crap they dish out.’13 (RIP: 54)

She tells her friend Veer that they are her good friends.

‘They’re my friends, Veer, good friends.’14 (RIP: 55)

Here Nagarkar reflects mindset of Belle for the breakup of Belle with Veerendra, she tells him that she has no objective of coming back.

‘Where are you going? Veer exasperated to sojourn Belle. ‘You leave now and you will not certainly come back.’ ‘I don’t anticipate to.’15 (RIP: 149)

After their break-up she doesn’t mind taking the first step and tackling Eddie.

d. Asmaan:

Nagarkar reveals the authenticity that in film industry, film stars incessantly under stress that someone will leave behind and take hold of number one position. It is intolerable to get entry into Bollywood without a godfather or anyone's support. Asmaan is a sturdy and self-determining girl. She is Ravan & Eddie's comrade and a rhymester. She wrote the lyrics of the songs, which Ravan & Eddie directed. She is a modernist in her approach towards life. All the lyrics of her songs were also comments of life. She never lets her friends down. Asmaan being a god father to Ravan and Eddie, is the well-known dancer who contributes in the career of Ravan. She gives him the breakthrough in film industry. She helps Ravan out of his miserable state. She writes all songs and screenplays for the sake of Ravan and Eddie. They both meet at Mauritius on the occasion of shooting of 'Zameen Asmaan'. Asmaan provides the procedures to Ravan how to get several roles in movies. She advises him to present a bribe to the boss of extras' union and to his assistant. Ravan followed her advice. Since the time, Ravan had become an extra; he had been troubled by the nature of film industry people.

Asmaan takes care of both Ravan and Eddie. They all gathered at Prajapati Sehgal. She asked him to clear the payment of Ravan and Eddie. He utters:

'One-and-a-half lakhs between the two music directors and seventy-five thousand for you.'¹⁷ (RIP: 34)

After this incidence, these trio purchased their own flats. Eddie, being an adamant personality, insists that they all will stay in one common apartment. Asmaan tells him,

'You've got it incorrect, Coutinho. I want to be left unaccompanied; I want to breathe my own air and not respire in the terrible farts and sweat and halitosis of the five hundred andbut I would rather hangout from the promenade of my new flat than go back to my chawl.'¹⁸ (RIP: 67)

Asmaan, being a liberated woman, doesn't disclose her dwelling place to Eddie. Here Eddie proclaims:

'O darling, I will be there for you. All you have to do is call and I will take the next ride down in thetheir own pockets and I will never perceive the end of how egotistical I am.'¹⁹ (RIP: 67)

Even she does not want her mother and brother Yaqub disturbs her. She tells her mother,

'Good. Now I have something to communicate you. If you and your son or anybody else so much asDon't ever, ever take me for granted again.'²⁰ (RIP: 99)

Asmaan inscribed a screen play called ‘Jaan se pyara dushman’ when Eddie and Ravan started their own production company. Finally, Ravan and Asmaan lived their life happily. Pieta lost in her own universe.

Conclusion:

While concluding the research paper, it can be aptly said that Kiran Nagarkar’s select novels depicts the substantial radicalism and women empowerment. They appeal to the readers about the authority and supremacy of true nature of emancipated women. His novels display the culmination to the trilogy attributing Indian fiction’s most impressive characters. It straightforwardly recounts the demonstration of forward-thinking, modern and enlightened women and women enablement. The novel highlights the contemporary and spirited women in the Indian context. These contemporary female protagonists contributed to supporting the male characters in edging their providence, fluctuating their lives, going against their families, moving their names etc.

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