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THEORETICAL/CRITICAL ESSAY ARTICLE

Religion and Patriarchy in Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*: An Intersectional Approach

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Abstract

This paper explores Taslima Nasrin's novel Lajja from the perspective of intersectionality through the portrayal of female characters as religion and patriarchy have subjugated them in Bangladesh. Intersectionality crystalizes the dynamics of female issues regarding the tutelage that society and other institutions create for them. In the novel, the author tries to reflect these issues of intersectionality regarding freedom of expression for both women and people in minorities and the problem of identity crises they suffer. Likewise, the religious as well as political conflicts impede the minorities group to feel liberate and find their identity. The reason behind this can be justified because the novel was banned and a fatwa was issued against Nasrin. Mainly, the focus is on how the religious and social confinements for the women and people from marginalized group made their voices unheard. This situation makes women rebel against male chauvinism and religious fanatics. As a qualitative review article, it reviews some articles relevant to Nasrin and her novel as secondary sources, her novel as primary source applying an intersectional approach, through the study of feminism and religious fanaticism as methodological tools.

Keywords: Discrimination, fanaticism, intersectionality, patriarchy, subjugation

Introduction

Lajja by Taslima Nasrin expounds the issue of multiple structures of subjugation of women either on the basis of gender or religion. It exposes that religion constructed by men uses the forms of various trapping to limit the boundary of female and minority groups. In this regard, this issue needs an exploration with a new perspective which is interactional. The characters in the novel have undergone multiple struggles, oppressions and suppressions caused by religious fanaticism and patriarchy. They are discriminated on the basis of manifold distinctions such as gender, race, religion and culture. It depicts the dilemma of a Hindu family in Dhaka after the demolition of the Babri Masjid as they are engulfed with terror and chaos of ethnic conflict. The Dutta family consists of four

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members, Sudhamoy, his wife Kironmoyee, Suranjan and Maya their son and daughter. Kironmoyee and her daughter, Maya want to migrate from Bangladesh for safety from the very beginning, but male characters ignore their requests. It mainly deals with the problems of female characters and Hindu people who are marginalized, living under the domination of male characters and religion. As Kothaikani and Sathurappasamy say that the novel reflects the tortures faced by women both by religion and male superiority (100). Including the traumatic situation of women, people in minority are constantly suffering from the impending terror caused by religious conflict. One day Muslim extremists kidnap Maya and they cannot find her at any cost and perhaps they might have raped and killed her. Suranjan wants to take vengeance against Muslims and is determined to rape a Muslim girl. He brings a Muslim girl in his room for this and attacks her, but she is a prostitute who demands money and leaves without any reaction.

Lajja is a controversial novel of Nasrin which gained international recognition after its publication in 1993. Although it was written in seven days concerning the events of thirteen days, it established as a bestseller in both Bangladesh and India. The main focus of the novel is on the aftermath of the destruction of the Babri Masjid in India by Hindu fanatics on December 1, 1992. It talks not only about male domination but also slaughter and rape of women as serious issues due to male chauvinism and religious anarchy. In this regard, it invites an intersectional approach to expose these issues. This resounds with the situation of black women as Crenshaw opines, "I want to suggest further that this single-axis framework erases Black women in the conceptualization, identification and remediation of race and sex discrimination by limiting inquiry to the experiences of otherwise-privileged members of the group." (140). Even in the novel, single layer of analysis diminishes the bitter experience of women as they suffered in many ways and this approach helps to dig out their experiences. Hindu people in Bangladesh are oppressed and suppressed due to their different culture, religion, language or groups. Similarly, Hindu women are suffering from domestic violence and religious fanaticism. The main focus of the novel is to reflect different kinds of discriminations existed in Bangladesh. This way by presenting horrendous and horrifying experience of Hindus in Bangladesh, the novel revolves around the themes multiple layers of intersectionality. Similarly, Yadav talks about how the writer opposed mistreatment of women and became the target of Islam as, "The writer has rejected out the different religions including Islam since it suppressed the central privileges of women. Thus, her novel "*Lajja*" is an apropos example of women suppression through which she raised her voice of feminism" (382). Yadav is also talking about manifold dominations faced by women in the novel. Modern world is guided by scientific ideas, logic and rationality and it is shameful to see oppression, bloodshed, crimes, segregation, subjugation and uproar in the name of religion. By showing the problems faced by women in each society and mainly in Muslim culture and the use of religion for subjecting others, the novel urges the entire humanity to think critically about the existing cultural practices.

Review of Literature

Despite having many controversial statements about Nasrin and her writings, many critics have delivered their ideas about her works and ideas. She seems to have been supported more in international forum than in her country. In this issue, Zaman writes as, "Her book, *Lajja*, represented more geo-politics in the subcontinent than feminist views in Bangladesh. Nasrin did break the structural silence of her society on various women's issues, but her writings and her remarks went beyond what feminist/women's groups could support, and may have jeopardized their gains" (52).

Zaman focuses that Nasrin's work introduced the paradigmatic shift to view the women's issues. Still, she overlooks the very minute issues like patriarchy, freedom of expression and the issues of religious fanaticism or intersectionality in the novel. Therefore, it remains justifiable to explore those issues which Nasrin has embarked in the novel. Another writer Thakur connects the events of the novel with the demolition of Babri Masjid in India by Hindu fanatics and women have become the victim. As he includes that female characters in the novel have suffered a lot due to traditional gender roles and the focus of Nasrin is on the condition of the women belonging to minority group during a difficult phase (61). Thakur mainly focuses passivity of women, but not about male chauvinism and religious dogmatism. Patriarchal mindset is the real cause of rape, domestic violence and subjugation of women. Her focus on minority community cannot cover the multiple structures of domination prevailing both in Hindu and Muslim communities.

The novel *Lajja*, talks about the dominant motif of religious anarchy and problem of existence of minority groups in communalism. As Rao clarifies, "Nasrin strives to show how communal violence has been generated by the lunatic fringe in all communities, how innocent persons are duped into serving the ulterior purpose of communalists, how extremist elements in the communities infuse tension and hatred for their own ends at the cost of inter-communal harmony" (93). Rao focuses more on social issue and in which there is always domination of powerful and majority groups upon inferior groups. This studies focuses on what causes women inferior and how religion becomes anarchic and forces people to become atheist. Showing the dreadful and horrifying experience of a minority family, the trials and abuse faced by Hindu communities in Bangladesh after the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and its aftermath Pathan and Jasrai opine, "*Lajja-Shame*— the most controversial novel by Taslima Nasrin is a bold attempt to redefine religion and humanism in the most dreadful manner. The spectre of communalism haunts the Duttas -Sudhamoy and Kironmoyee – the couple and their son, Suranjan and daughter, Maya" (62). Pathan and Jasrai focus more on religion and humanism but not the cause of how it converts into fanaticism and secular humanism. By showing male domination upon female and major religious groups upon minority groups, many issues can be focused. Next, Banashankari talks about the success of the novel which made her famous all over the world and it changed her life and career drastically. He writes as, "Her masterpiece *Lajja* (called *Shame* in English) was a breakthrough in 1993. The novel dealt with a controversial/ religious theme. It depicts the struggle of a patriotic Bangladeshi Hindu family in a Muslim environment" (44). Banashankari's emphasis is on religion and social problem including the domination of Muslims upon Hindus in Bangladesh but not on how patriarchal domination played role to make women victim of many attacks. By showing the evils of male domination, racial injustice, cultural differences and religious anarchy in the novel, the paper focuses on the direction of intersectionality for reflecting various types of discriminations functioning in societies.

Statement of Problem

Nasrin projects the theme of male supremacy in which female characters are passive, nurturing and the tools of taking vengeance for fulfilling interests of men. In such circumstances, religion proves to be a framework to dominate the people in minority in which their voice remains unnoticed. Next, religion is made by men and it promotes male values and women are polarized in many ways. Therefore, their problems need to be analyzed from a broader perspective. Religion instead of disseminating the values of humanity and hopes including all kinds of people has become a tool of

domination. The women and Hindu people in the novel have undergone manifold dominations and single perspective cannot reveal the problems of different kinds of people. The novel urges people for the change in status quo regarding women's position and religious anarchy. Thus, this paper answers the following research questions:

- a) What is intersectionality?
- b) How are women and Hindu people discriminated in *Lajja*?
- c) Why are women and minority groups have the same plight in all societies?

Objectives

The present study intends to show the position of female characters and people in minority as reflected in the novel *Lajja*. It also aims to show the dominance of these issues in the society analyzing from manifold perspectives.

Methodology

This paper applies explanatory and interpretative method to address the research questions. As a primary source, the novel provides the information of female domination. Similarly, it reflects how religion has become fanatics. Different books and articles written by different writers and critics about intersectionality, feminism, mistreatment of women and the techniques applied for bringing changes have been compared, explored, interpreted and expounded to analysis the novel from intersectional perspective. Similarly, articles written about religion, criticizing its weakness in terms of the domination of women and the people in minority have been also used as methodological texts. The issue focuses in them concerning how religion has become fanatics creating people to turn to atheist, secular and humanist being misogynist and intolerable. This article adopts a thematic analysis method to revisit these great works. In the same way, this article also reveals how the themes from these works match in the novel. Related secondary sources such as reviews and articles written about Nasrin and the novel have been considered as secondary sources to analyze the fact of patriarchy and religious dogma.

Intersectionality and Fanaticism

Intersectionality concerns with the discrimination existed in any society on the basis of sex, gender, identity, caste, class, origin, economic condition, ability, and many other forms. It is related with the issues of creating blockade to equal access of opportunities. It widens our understanding about divergent and complex ways of power exercise rather than focusing on simple binaries of oppression providing critical ideas how multiple identities overlap and intersect with them. Its main focus is to include different kinds of injustices together for preventing violence of many kinds women face. Kimberlé Crenshaw first propounded the concept of intersectionality in 1989 to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics intersect with one another and overlap in process of female marginalization. In this regard, Carbado et al mention that she introduced the term to reflect the discriminations faced by black women who became victim in many ways on the basis of colour, cast, gender, and age. (303). She coined the term to address the distinct problems of black women that time. Women experience many kinds of discriminations and by highlighting only gender distinction others fall in shadow. Some examples are of race, colour, age, disability, queer, migrant or refugee, heterosexuality and many more and intersectional approach help to show all kinds discrimination for the liberation of women.

In 1991 Crenshaw Crenshaw again employed intersectionality to highlight the ways in which social movement organization and advocacy around violence against

women. Carbado et al further opine that she has shown the vulnerabilities of women of color, particularly those from immigrant and socially disadvantaged communities who are always at margin and are surrounded by dominations (304). This way, she uses it to address multiple discriminations of women from different perspectives because they interact and overlap. With identity many complex structures are embedded and women of different parts undergo different obstacles and a single perspective cannot include the problems of all women. For example, the black women suffer not only being female but also being of different colour, migrant groups, and in many other ways. Weldon opines, “the concept originates in efforts of Black feminists in the United States to theorize about their experiences and social position, . . . confronts an important dimension of social complexity: the interaction between social structures such as race, class, and gender”(193). To address the complex experiences of black women, the concept was coined and it is applicable to analyze the problems of women in other communities. Applying the concept of intersectionality is important for critically evaluating social relations and dominations through multiple ways of understanding which functions between systems of oppression. It comes out of the notion that political life is shaped by race and gender as the problems of different women differ in many ways. Weldon further mentions, “Black women face many problems *as black women*, and their unique perspectives, identities, and experiences, cannot be derived from examination of the experiences and position of either black men or white women” (194). The problems of black and white women are different and from the experience of one the problems of other cannot be described and it is significant to apply intersectionality.

Fanaticism can be found in all religions either it is Hindu or Muslim or Christianity or Buddhism. Some cultures take change as sin and some others want to resist change due to fear of losing their position. Even in advanced country like America there existed it as Engineer opines, “The concept of 'fundamentalism' is in fact the product of modern American society. Some Christians believed during the 1930s in the literal truth of the Bible, and they were described as 'fundamentalists'. It is this borrowed western concept which is being applied to some religious movements in Asia” (703). Some religions are moderate and tolerant than others on the basis of their practices. Mainly at the time of radical, social and political upheavals problems like firmness, jealousy and fanaticism appear. Sometimes the firmness becomes good but they become risky when they are left uncontrolled. When people become totally blind in matter of social change and oppose introducing new ideas or emerging reality show fanaticism. In politics it may be simple but in the process of radical change and social disorders the blind faith can push the society in the grip of fanatics. Similarly, in the case of religion too, we find the same situation. When religious people resist change and want to maintain status quo same situation happens.

Subjugation in *Lajja*

The novel portrays the discrimination of female characters and shows how the religion has become the laws and created division between people in majority and minority. It mainly deals with the theme of slaughter of men towards women by the projection of inferior condition of women. It depicts how supremacy of male has challenged self-respect of women segregating them in many ways. Regarding the status of women, the novel shows the pathetic situation of Hindu women in Bangladesh after the demolition of Babri Masjid. The Dutta family which belongs to Hindu minority in Bangladesh consisting four members becomes the victim of the incident. Females are horrified by the growing unrest but males are unaware. Due to male supremacy in the family, their daughter became the victim. She was abducted by Muslims and perhaps she

was raped and killed. As Datta writes, "The plot narrates the victimisation of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh, focusing on the persecuted family of Suranjan Dutta, which is finally compelled to migrate to India" (48). In the novel, Kironmoyee, the mother and their daughter, Maya want to leave Bangladesh immediately after demolition of the masjid but Sudhamoy, the father and their son, Suranjan do not want and make them live there. As Nasrin writes in the novel, "Suranjan knew that Maya wanted him to look for a place where they could go for temporary hiding from the danger that threatened them" (1). They had already faced such challenges and had hidden in the house of a Muslim friend, Kamal. Only after losing Maya, they move to India which is a matter of same for males.

The novel, *Lajja* begins with the expression of fear of females which is clearly reflected by frequent remark of Maya urging her brother to do something before getting late as, "Dada, aren't you going to wake up and do something before it is too late" (1)? If the male had taken decision on the right time analyzing the situation, Maya would have been saved. Here the domination of male is clearly reflected. Next, Maya became the victim of religious fanaticism. In the name of taking revenge innocent women become victim. Similarly, towards the end of the novel, Suranjan rapes a Muslim girl, Shamima in the name of revenge, but the girl is a prostitute. She reports the scene, "As Suranjan attacked her naked body, the girl moaned with pain, screaming occasionally, 'O my God! I am dying of pain....' Suranjan laughed with savage satisfaction. He continued to hurt her till he could do no more and then he raped her" (201). This is also subjugation of women. The two girls Maya and Shamima do not have any connection of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims and demolition of masjids and temples but they have to face two sides of domination. At the same time, male characters do not face such torture as female face. It clearly depicts the two sides of oppression women have faced in Bangladesh. They have to follow the order of males at home and outside they become the victim of kidnap, rape and even murder.

The novel reflects that the Hindu women become the victim of not only patriarchal domination but also racial conflict that takes place between Hindus and Muslims. In this regard, Kothaikani and Sathurappasamy clarify as "The double marginalization of women on religious grounds on the one hand and their gender identity on the other is an additional crucial aspect of this novel" (100). The issue of gender identity is mostly seen in many societies how far they are advanced or conservative. The level of domination varies on the basis of how educated women are. Even on the basis of religion also women are marginalized in all cultures either it is Hindu or Muslim or Christian to name a few. All of them formulate tutelages. Nasrin opposes all religions supporting people in minority either of any caste, culture, gender or religion. In a speech concerning male domination in all religions, she says, "I criticize Islam also I criticize Christianity, Judaism. I criticize Hinduism because women are oppressed by all religions. All religions are anti-women. Religions are made by men. And men made religion for their own fun, for their own interest ("itvindia," 00:03:46 -00:04:09)." In this sense, it is clear that women are dominated in all religions, but the level of domination is different in many countries. Some are more rigid and some are a bit more democratic.

In the novel the Hindu family constantly has the feeling of isolation, terror and threats as their daughter was kidnapped when she was six. They also receive many anonymous letters threatening to kidnap her for ransom. Demanding security, "Sudhamoy had gone to the police. The men on duty at the police station had made a routine record of the complaint and had taken no further action" (15). Many incidents have suffered them and they can do nothing. They also realize it futile to complain. The novel has exposed the rise of religious extremism including with the existing patriarchal

system in terms of subjugation. This resonates with the idea of Crenshaw with reference to the situation of black women who are victimized by two types of male violence either being raped or battered and their experiences are not included in the discourses of feminism and antiracism. In this connection, she writes, "Because of their intersectional identity as both women *and* of colour within discourses that are shaped to respond to one *or* the other, women of colour are marginalized within both" (1244). Similarly, Hindu women in Bangladesh have multiple identities and are also discriminated by both male domination and culture. The social norms, cultural values, rituals and traditions have been oppressive due to the promotion of male supremacy and religious fanaticism.

The novel reflects the loyalty, passivity and nurturing behavior of women in many ways which are in fact the cause of their suffering. Kironmoyee is ready to face any kind of difficulties to make her family happy but her husband is so indifferent. He expects everything from his wife and uses his wife as a means of fulfilling his desires. She always remains submissive and her desire to move to India is unheard. She has no alternative except following the decision of the males unwillingly. In the novel, she is ready to sell her ornaments for the happiness of her family as, "Her latest sacrifice had involved selling a pair of her gold bangles to Dr. Haripada's wife. She had not of course discussed the matter with anyone in the family. After all, gold was not so precious that it could not be sold if the need arose" (113). Mainly, the female characters do not have their identity and they are compelled to shed tears secretly due to dominating behaviour of males. Sudhamoy and Suranjan are free, but mother and daughter are not free in term of decision making process, identity and confidence level. This resounds with the idea of Tyson when he says that the promotion of culturally constructed traditional gender roles privilege men and women are oppressed reflecting them as inferior, submissive, nurturing and emotional whereas males are referred as strong, decisive, strong and rational (81). This way, the decision of female characters is not valued and males are reflected as decisive in the novel. Males influence the society and extend their act of domination due to their decision making power leaving women behind.

The Bangladeshi society is shifting from secularism to fundamentalism which is seen by the incidents of the novel. Nasrin opines, "The state of Bangladesh was founded on the basis of four major principles: nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism" (42). After independence there is manipulation and constitution is changed to exercise power. She advocates for the need of secularism, atheism and freedom of expression to tackle with the challenges. The unity among people has been weakened due to loss of cultural diversity and promotion of self-centred ideology. She says, "Religion was used as a political weapon and a large number of people were forced to follow the dictates of Islam. Thus, unlawfully and unconstitutionally, Islam became the national religion of Bangladesh. As a result, communalism and religious fanaticism exploded out of control" (43). Many incidents like capture, kidnap, torture of Hindu women, attack over Hindu sages, capture of property, destruction of houses and temples have engulfed. Many inhuman activities done against Hindu people in many villages have frightened the Dutta family. Increase in such incidents shows the impact of communalism and fundamentalism. Then the people in minority and women become the victim in Bangladesh and are constantly living under the domination of those powerful groups.

Revelation of Intersectionality in *Lajja*

Lajja shows the brutal behavior and torture of Muslims under the Hindu family, minority groups and women. Kironmoyee and Maya become the victim of double oppression one of domestic violence and of Muslim fanatics. Being a Hindu married woman, Kironmoyee has to hide her cultural practices due to fear of Muslims. In this

regard, the novel says, "Kironmoyee had stopped using sindur in the parting in her hair and loha and sankha on her wrist as was expected of every married Hindu woman" (97). This shows the life of women in Muslim community is conditioned that they are always worried about impending attack of being at margin. Showing the subjugation of women in the novel by both groups of fanatics, Mookerjea-Leonard writes, "Suranjan on the one hand, and Maya's captors on the other — although with different religious affiliations and social locations, subscribe to a mutually comprehensible semiotic system of patriarchal violence. Women's bodies, like those of minority men, constitute the material on which the discourses of nation, community, and sexuality intersect and get played out" (43). Males in any culture or in any context try to dominate women and then they become the victim of any kind. Minority men even being themselves the victims of religion dominate women because women's bodies have become the platforms for all to practice their role of dominance. This way, it portrays two kinds of domination and the main target is women.

Female characters in the novel act in many ways for the happiness of their family though they are dominated by both their family and society. For example, Kironmoyee becomes so submissive upon the demand of the community as well as her family. This is quite similar with the idea of Simone de Beauvoir, "Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but in relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being ... she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute- she is the Other" (cited in Habib 683). The behaviors of the male characters in the novel show that they never co-operate women and behaved them as indecisive, dependent and the other. From the very beginning both mother and daughter are worried about the possible attack that might befall, but father and son remain indifferent. The pain felt by Kironmoyee is difficult to relieve. Due to fear, she behaves abnormally as, "Suddenly, in the middle of the night, she would wake up crying. Why she cried, or for whom she cried, were secrets she would not divulge. The tears would eventually dry up and she would silently carry on with the household chores- cooking, cleaning, seeing to her husband's ablutions" (97). This way, women are full of agony living during the time of turmoil. The situation of the Muslim women is more miserable than the Hindu women as they are treated more unfairly as other, inferior and dependent. Similarly, Hindu women are discriminated on the basis of religion in Bangladesh.

Hindu people cannot observe their ritual practices in Bangladesh as openly as Muslims do. Many Hindu girls are abducted, tortured, raped and even killed by Muslims but nobody is arrested and punished. The practice of domination and discrimination of Muslims began long ago and it became intense after the demolition of the masjid. In this regard, Nasrin writes as, "It was no secret that the victimization of the Hindus had begun long before the riots in 1990 and the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992" (56). The novel is full of the incidents of related to destruction of temples and tortures against Hindus. There are some examples of such cases in the novel even a teacher is reported to have been involved in abduction and rape of his student with others but no one is arrested. Maya was also kidnapped when she was six. All the incidents show that the laws based on religion cannot maintain peace and reformation is needed in such practices. In fact, the novel is an indication of confrontation which raised voice against traumatic situation caused by male supremacy and Islamic fanatics.

In Nasrin's *Lajja* many examples of religious fanaticism can be traced because it shows how women and people in minority have become the victim due to their Hindu identity. Begum says, "*Lajja* by Taslima Nasrin tackles the universal issue of fanaticism and fundamentalism. The issue does, in fact, necessitate immediate attention" (283). The

issue portrayed in it is applicable all over the world and appeals our urgent attention and actions. Women and minority people have become the victim of such faith so far today in every society. The novel shows the expression of the fear of Hindus as, "I know that you don't pray, and that you eat beef as well. Why don't you tell them you are not a pure Hindu, that you are half Muslim?" (111). The Hindus have partly accommodated with Muslims, but are still terrified by Muslim fundamentalists. Sometimes, even people in power are marginalized. This resonates with the concept of Weldon that intersectionality applies to various groups in society who are advantaged or disadvantaged that in complex social relations person privileged in some ways is disadvantaged in others not being equal (195). This way, the discriminations of all people either Hindus or Muslims or males or females upper class or lower class can be reflected. Intersectional approach helps to reveal various forms of dominations existed in societies. Then the problems of all either of Muslim women or of Hindu women, minor groups or many others are reflected from this perspective.

Unlike Christian and Islam, Hindu people are regarded as more tolerant but could escape from being fanatics. Engineer writes, "It produced fanatics who considered it their religious duty to demolish Babri masjid. Their tolerance was at its lowest and their behaviour totally irrational. In fact their fanaticism brought great shame to India" (703). Similarly, showing the novel as a criticism of both fanaticism and fundamentalism, S. P. Swain says, "*Lajja* is a moving story of protest, passion, principle and persecution. It is the story of humanity's struggle to assert its innate and inherent rights in a society torn asunder by the forces of religious fundamentalism and blind fanaticism" (cited in Begum 284). Even in the preface of the novel, Nasrin has said that she dislikes communalism and fundamentalism which has grown in Bangladesh after the case of Babri Masjid and it is shameful for all to happen such terrible thing in their beautiful country being the document their collective defeat (ix). By this, she urges all the people of the world for the reformation of their cultural, social, political and ritual practices with the rapidly changing modern world. Similarly, multiple perspectives help to examine the problems of people of various facets who are discriminated and marginalized in many ways.

Conclusion

Nasrin's *Lajja* was written in seven days concerning the events of thirteen days showing the pathetic condition of women and minority people in Bangladesh after the demolition of Babri Masjid. Analyzing the novel from the perspective of intersectionality to find many kinds of dominations made against women and people in minority, there is revelation of many kinds of discriminations. There are restrictions of many kinds constructed by culture to subjugate power. They have been suffering from identity crisis living in such dominated state and sometimes they have to hide their identity. Female characters in the novel are dominated in many ways either inside their homes, outside their homes by male characters and also by religious fanatics who abduct, rape and murder women but the society remains silent. Kironmoyee, Maya and Shamima have undergone sufferings of any kind caused either by male or by religion, politics, culture, rituals or tradition. Intersectional approach helped to reflect the various difficulties of the characters and a single perspective cannot cover all the problems. The women and the people in minority are always compelled to live in terror and their life is full of chaos while living in minority. It is also noted that communalism is dangerous for minor groups for their existence. Next, religion has provided ground for people to be fanatics and then they begin to dominate minority people, kidnap, torture, and kill women. The intersectional approach helped to show how people of many facets have been

discriminated or marginalized as no one is equal. Female characters in the novel have become not only the victim of patriarchy but also of religion. Further research can be made about the need of reforming religious practices for preserving minority people in communalism.

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