



**WAKING SPECTRUM : A CRITICAL APPROACH TO SARALA
BARNABAS' NOVEL "DREAM SEQUENCE"**



Late Dr. Sarala Barnabas (1934-2019)
Research Guide



Dr. Markas Laxman Sonawane
Associate Professor and Head,
English Department
Vinayakrao Patil College, Vaijapur,
Dist. Aurangabad

ABSTRACT

This article examines Dream Sequence, a novel written by the famous Indian novelist Sarala Barnabas from Ahmednagar, (M.S) is a prolific creative writer and has published several works of distinction. Sarala Barnabas is a novelist of modern society where love, hate, superiority and possessiveness of the past and present give birth to conflict, controlling the present. The past has control over the present and sometimes it comes to haunt it. Her novels are centred on the society where every individual needs his or her space. When this doesn't happen in reality, it

results into conflict and conflict results into crisis and crisis tests the inner strength of an individual.

Literature reflects the society in which we are dealing with innumerable situations of conflict against a variety of backgrounds; the conflict may take many forms and evolve in a very different ways. Confrontation results into crisis which influences our day today life and it is obligatory to find reconciliation to lead better life.

KEYWORDS

Waking Spectrum, Discrimination, Ennui, Conflict, Crisis, Reconciliation and Bridging the Gulf.

RESEARCH PAPER

The word spectrum was first used scientifically in optics to describe the rainbow of colors in visible light after passing through a prism. Spectrum is a condition that is not limited to a specific set of values but can vary, without steps, across a continuum. It also refers to a range of different positions, opinions between two extreme points. Here in the research paper spectrum symbolizes the dreams of Freya, who wants to lead a simple life with her boyfriend and when she wakes up from the imaginative world jolted by a practical business tycoon, her life appears colorless as if the spectrum of reality separated all colors from her life.

Oxford English Dictionary defines spectrum as “The set of colors into which a beam of light can be separated”. In the dictionary it also means range of opinions, feelings. (Oxford English Dictionary, P1390) It also represents both positive and negative aspects of all colors.

After the Independence, human relationships, individuality, social issues, power politics, gender equations and discriminations and human psyche and a lot more have become the major concerns of contemporary novelists.

The contribution of the Indian writers is so substantial that the prestigious awards like the Nobel, Man Booker and Pulitzer have been conferred on them time and again. Indian English literature as M.K. Naik points out in his book, A History of Indian English Literature

“It is defined as literature written originally in English by authors Indian by birth, ancestry or nationality.” (The History of Indian English Literature’ p.2)

Sarala Barnabas is an eminent writer in Indian literature in English. She was Vice Principal, Emeritus Professor and former Head of the English Department at Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra. She was named ‘Woman of the Year’ by The American Society for Biographical and International Research in 2002 and awarded the American Medal of Honor in 2003. She is the product of three universities - Mumbai, Pune and Yale University (USA). She has written novels with different themes which glorify the invulnerable qualities of woman.

Her fictional corpus includes:

1. The Wings of the Morning (1984), (Bombay: Bombay Tract and Book Society, A Translation of Aamche Kritharth Sahjeevan by Ruth Hiwale
2. The Promise of the Spring (1989),
3. Sakshi (1993),
4. Anjolie (1993),
5. Nayantara (1993),
6. Dark Passion (1997),

7. The Rainbow and the Covenant (2001),
8. The Wake of Kingfisher(2005),
9. Dream Sequence (2006),
10. A Memoir- Such Precious Things (Bhaskar Pandurang Hiwale Education Society,2006),
11. Brief Madness (2011),
12. Song of Innocence (2011),
13. The Crook and The Sceptre (2011),
14. After Long Years (2015),
15. Incident at Waverley (2013),
16. A Bright Particular Star
17. The Sheltering Tree
18. Saga (2017)

Dream Sequence centers around a woman character like Sakshi Nayantara, Anjolie, and Incident at Waverley. These novels encompass the stories of various women belonged to different layers of society. The wake of the Kingfisher, The Promise of the Spring and The Rainbow and the Covenant.

As the title suggests, the story begins with dreams, those of young untried girl, Freya Charles, who lost her mother when she was only five years old. Freya is brilliant independent by nature, bold and self-confident. She has goals, which she strives to attain. Given her by nature, one does not doubt that she will reach great heights. Having destroyed her happiness, Jatin sets about rebuilding their relationship, which started off disastrously. But in a single moment they are shattered. In order to save her father from imprisonment for embezzlement, she must give up the man she loves in order to fulfill bargain she has to make with young industrialist, Jatin Vishwadeep. Hating him, she marries him as a part of the bargain. The novel reminds us Thomas Hardy's novel The Mayor of Casterbridge, where the protagonist, Michael Henchard, hay trusser gets drunk and auctions off his wife. In the novel Thomas Hardy pints out that man is just a puppet pulled to and fro by the unseen hands of fate. Similarly in the novel, Dream Sequence, Freya becomes a puppet in the hands of Jatin, who would control her future.

At the opening of the novel Sarala Barnabas talks about the most important factor of every human being which shapes the later life of every individual. She says "A young girl dreams dreams." Great men and women who have achieved impossible heights surely had dreams. Freya the protagonist of the story dreams her life with her friend Michael. It was her last year of the college and had participated in the college festival. Her friend Bharti helped her to conceptualize the puppet show

based on the story of a henpecked husband and a nagging wife. The audience loved it and they got the first prize. After the show Freya and Bharti were invited by Vishwadeep family to perform the same show. When Bharti saw Jatin for the first time. She exclaimed,

“Wow! Look at that dreamboat.” (Dream Sequence, 5)

Jatin was certainly worth looking at twice. But the discrimination and comparison between Freya and Jatin becomes a controlling factor which divides them on the basis of economic and social status again. Freya felt alienated like Eugene O’Neill’s protagonist Yank in *Hairy Ape* who searches for a sense of belonging in a world controlled by the rich.

In the puppet show, the non-living wooden effigies are controlled by other people. In the novel Freya becomes a puppet because of the embezzlement done by her father. Her life appears straightforward; she dreams of getting married to a man who is simple like her. But there comes a storm in her life as Jatin enters into her life shaking the foundation of her little world. The self-realization that she could be pulled to and fro by the unseen hands of her husband becomes a driving force in her life. She herself is going to be a puppet in the hands of her husband. The ennui she felt, the loneliness she experienced after the proposal is like stabbing herself with a sharp knife. Money plays a vital role in her later life, has to make adjustment in her life for the sake of her father. She has to forget her love for Michael which is not easy for her. But life is full of contradictions and surprises no matter how far they will affect on her life as well as on the people around her. Freya gets married to Jatin Vishwadeep for saving the honor of her father. The marriage was a kind of a contract for her, a contract of producing a male child for the Vishwadeep family -a suitable heir to carry on their family business. Freya unwillingly gets married but cannot forget her first love. She dreamt of getting married to Michael a simple young man who also loved her whole heartedly and his family members were ready to accept her as their daughter in law. But the dreams of Jatin destroyed the dreams of Michael and Freya. She had deeply loved Michel and that may be one of the reasons that after marriage she couldn’t forget her first love. All her dreams were centered on the world of Michael and that is why she saw Michael jumping off the cliff in a dream. One night Freya saw a nightmare in which Michael and Freya were standing on cliffs and suddenly Michael jumped off the cliff. In her sleep Freya said,

“I cannot build a bridge for him to cross over. Oh, why cannot I build a bridge?” (Dream Sequence, 57)

Freya saw Michael falling in an abyss, she was weeping in her sleep, and she said that Michael would fall in abyss. Jatin comforted her and said,

“He won’t fall. He will be alright.”

(Dream Sequence, 57)

In the course of time Freya could see the good side of Jatin's nature and she also fell in love with him and started caring for him. Jatin as he fell in love with her decided to help her and Michael as well. So he said,

“Freya you asked me to build a bridge for him.”

(Dream Sequence, 181)

In the closing of the novel Jatin says

“You are my wife. Fry...I love you, Frey ... only you.”

The novel is about building the bridge in the life of the suffering estranged people. Freya builds a bridge between Mahesh and her mother in law. Jatin, as he is a business tycoon keeps himself aloof from his wife because he thinks that he was deceived by his mother keeping the illness of his first wife. At the time of marriage a girl named Dhanwanti was selected by her as a bride for Jatin. She was the daughter of a distant family connection of hers. But later on it was discovered that she had sickle anemia- a condition about which they had been kept completely in the dark. There was nothing common between Jatin and her; they were miles apart in every way. Due to her illness she died young, on this basis there was a conflict between Vishwadeep and his wife Kamalini and it resulted into their long life separation. When Freya came to know about their relationship, she decided to bridge the gulf between the two and becomes successful the family becomes complete after the arrival of Kamalini. Freya becomes successful in making a compromise between Vishwadeep and Kamalini. Jatin also builds the bridge for Michael by offering job in his company because he loved Freya. In Dream Sequence we find cultural synthesis, Freya is a common girl with common dreams, her culture is different than the culture of Jatin. He is extremely rich after graduation he left for the United States. After his education in America, he came back and joined the business got married to Freya on a conditional marriage but in the process of time both fell in love with each other. Both accept the culture of each other and the problems which they face are sorted out through resolution and compromise. Jatin's sister Uma has fallen in love with a Chinese American Jonathan Leong Marshall who was completing a doctorate in Political Science. His father was a doctor who operated Ketan Samarth's leg and stayed in their home in Pune. His home was in Philadelphia not far from Washington DC in America. When Freya learnt about this relationship she convinced Jatin, and his family members to approve their marriage. So here we find a cultural synthesis an Indian girl getting married to a person who is living in America. Cultural synthesis has become one of the traits of modern times, it has become very common nowadays that a young man from India gets married to girl from China or Japan or America or a young man from America gets

married to a girl from India. The cultural synthesis takes place only when one gets adjusted with the new life, new culture and the new ideas. Sarala Barnabas has discussed the issue of cultural crisis in her novels as well as she has also pointed out how to face the new culture how to get adjusted in new country. She has also pointed out that in life constant adjustment is very necessary to lead better life. In life option is open but we are stuck to our ego and pride and relationships are broken affecting the innocent individuals, with no fault of their own. Sarala Barnabas is a modern writer because she has discussed the problems of modern society such as alienation, breakup in marriages, identity crises, cultural crises and reasons of conversion. She discusses the problems of the modern world but at the same time she also provides solution which makes her a great modern writer.

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