

Purana (पुराणम्)

(Print Only)

ISSN : 0555-7860

Certificate of Publication

This is to certify the paper Entitled

JOKER: REDEFINING THE PRAGMATICS OF VILLAINY

Authored By

Chasmi Maria Chacko

**Research Scholar, MGU UJR Fellow, St Thomas College, Pala.(Research Centre), MG
University**

Published in

Vol. LXV, Issue-1, No. 6, 2022

Purana (पुराणम्)

ISSN : 0555-7860

Impact Factor: 4.9


Editor-in-Chief



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

UGC Care Listed Group 1, Peer Reviewed and Referred Journal

पुराणम् Purana

Vol. LXV
Issue-1
No.6
2022



JOKER: REDEFINING THE PRAGMATICS OF VILLAINY**Chasmi Maria Chacko**¹Research Scholar, MGU UJR Fellow, St Thomas College, Pala (Research Centre), MG University**Dr Minu Mary Mathew**

HOD & Assistant Professor, Department of English, Assumption College, Changanacherry

Abstract:

As a character-experimental film, "Joker" brings the vengeful antagonist Joker from the DC Comics back to the big screen. Joker takes the lead for the first time in a DC film to tell his origin story as Arthur, a human, before taking on the criminal persona of Joker. From Christopher Nolan's renowned Batman trilogy, "The Dark Knight," we may find another notable Joker representation. In a realistic manner, "The Dark Knight" creates the despotic and antisocial mentality of the Joker. Both films successfully create the Joker image, which is an innovation. Joker was made into a recognisable villain with personality and depth in the films "Joker" and "The Dark Knight," but their success in creating a compelling figure also led to unanticipated Joker mania. Particularly, "Joker" sparked psychologists' concerns about societal stigmas associated with mental illness. Both movies establish the Joker as a figure with profound ramifications for how bad guys are portrayed in movies and on television. The purpose of this article is to examine what makes villains compelling as well as potential strategies for reducing their detrimental social effects. In order to accomplish these goals, the article will analyse the films "Joker" and "The Dark Knight" in order to evaluate the factors that led to the effective representation of the Joker and the controversy that figure had generated. Therefore, villains with complex personalities and great awareness of human nature are more harmful and realistic than simple baddies with strong superpower.

Paper type: Exploratory research paper.**Keywords:** Antisocial mentality, joker image, joker mania, mental illness**Introduction**

The Joker, one of the most recognisable antagonists in the DC superhero universe, has undergone numerous versions since making his debut in 1940's Batman comics. By utilising the Joker to stand in for some of the most serious social issues, these versions keep improving and turning the figure into a deep icon. Two exemplary representations of the character Joker are found in "The Dark Knight" and "Joker." They both brought the job to a higher level. The second film in Christopher Nolan's Batman trilogy, "The Dark Knight," was released in 2008. Nolan's interpretation of the Joker has made a significant impact on the history of villain characterization in film. The Joker is depicted in the movie not only as a crazy person on the surface, but also as a highly educated sociopathic killer who does not seek power or wealth. In this iteration, The Joker



Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research

An International Open Access Journal Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

www.jetir.org | editor@jetir.org **An International Scholarly Indexed Journal**

Certificate of Publication

The Board of

Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (ISSN : 2349-5162)

Is hereby awarding this certificate to

Chasmi Maria Chacko

In recognition of the publication of the paper entitled

Villainous Disability: Gazing the Deformed Bodies of Supervillains in Comics

Published In JETIR (www.jetir.org) ISSN UGC Approved (Journal No: 63975) & 7.95 Impact Factor

Published in Volume 8 Issue 6 , June-2021 | Date of Publication: 2021-06-09

Parisa P

EDITOR

JETIR2106138

[Signature]

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Research Paper Weblink <http://www.jetir.org/view?paper=JETIR2106138>

Registration ID : 310437



ROMANCING THE ROMANCES: REDEFINING THE PLEASURE DISCOURSE OF INDIAN WOMEN

Chasmi Maria Chacko¹ Dr Minu Mary Mathew² Dr Sunny Joseph³

¹ *Research Scholar, St Thomas College, Pala (Research Centre), MG University*

² *HOD & Assistant Professor, Department of English, Assumption College, Changanacherry*

³ *Research Guide & Assistant Professor, Department of English, St George College, Aruvithura*

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Anais Nin, famous essayist and diarist states that “We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospect.” That is especially true in historical romance, which allows readers to enter the thoughts of those who have moulded our world and envision the all-too humane side of history. Reading is a time-honored activity that is universally regarded as a form of escapism and creativity.

Methodology: This simple task becomes difficult when the readers are women, the reading environment is patriarchal, and the reading material is romance written by women. The women readers in India whose remarks this study is based on all agreed that reading these novels was a lot of fun. They did, however, admit to being embarrassed by their enthusiasm for these works, because their enthusiasm appeared to contradict the popular view of these novels, which is that they are ‘trash’. Before getting into the ideological underpinnings of this phenomenon, it's crucial to understand what Romance Fiction is and what it comprises.

Findings/Result: These historical romances are classified as popular fiction, which leads to the study of popular culture, of which they are a part. 'The art of romance' is an essential and logical reaction to a lot of great constraints in India, where culture denies women the choice to discover themselves and their own desire. Women can cognitively prepare to protect themselves against the atrocities of male domination by consuming romance novels.

Paper type: Exploratory research paper.

Keywords: Historical romance/ romance fiction, escapism, Indian women, trash, popular fiction

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a time-honored practice that is universally acknowledged as a source of delight and productivity. When the readers are women, the reading atmosphere is patriarchal, and the reading material is romance authored by women, this simple act becomes challenging. The women readers in India whose comments this study is based on all admitted to getting a lot of enjoyment from reading these novels. However, they admitted to being embarrassed by their liking of these works, because their appreciation evidently ran opposite to the popular perception of these books, which is that they are ‘trash’. This complex, ambiguous reaction to romance fiction — the friction between what women readers genuinely feel and their acute knowledge of what they're supposed to feel is a bizarre and troubling phenomenon that has gone unstudied. Before delving into the ideological basis of this phenomenon, it's important to grasp what Romance Fiction entails and what the genre's characteristics are.

The romance novel revolves around the theme of love and the plot is woven around events and situations that make the protagonist and the heroine feel attractive to each other and ultimately recognize each other's needs. All romance novels are about love and marriage, and the predictability of the results is characteristic of this genre. The romances' fantasy-laden nature leads to accusations that reading them is a wish fulfilment, an escape from reality, and so on.

The popularity of romance novels is enormous, and it sells 'by the truckload.' The huge readership of romance novels, on the other hand, has not earned the genre any respect. In truth, the literary elite has long held the genre and its adherents in disdain, deeming only novels produced in the realistic style or bearing the stamp of modernity to be accessible fiction. These historical romances belong within the category of popular fiction, which leads us to the study of popular culture, of which they are a part. Since popular culture studies has risen to prominence as a topic of study deserving of attention, it is reasonable to look for a position in that discipline for the genre that delights millions of women around the world. The assumptions involved in terms like 'elite' and 'high-brow' are challenged by Popular Culture studies.

2. DEFINING POPULAR CULTURE

The term 'popular culture' is so broad that it encompasses everything. It appears that one of the challenges in studying it is identifying and limiting the field. It is a broad, all-encompassing, and ever-expanding field. It is known as the 'New Humanities,' and it is concerned with the everyday use of language and symbols. The range includes novels, publications, cartoons, movies, conventions, road signs, and dress rules, among other things.

The ease with which popular culture can cross national and cultural boundaries is a remarkable trait. It can be defined as a highly adaptable super culture in that way. This explains why very popular artefacts such as television shows, soft beverages, and trendy clothing, all of which are essentially American in spirit and content, have permeated other parts of the globe. Since popular books are an essential and vital reflection of this extremely mobile and impactful pop culture, romance novels have readily made their way from America and England to other nations throughout the world, particularly India, where we are studying the genre. When we consider romance novels and other popular publications as the most powerful media of popular culture, or, as one critic described it, as "the people's voice and ears," we must acknowledge their enormous popularity and lasting appeal.

We must turn to the nature of fiction in general in order to find an answer to the question of why romance offers pleasure to readers, particularly Indian women readers, with whom this study is concerned. Fiction is the most frequently read and popular of all types of literature. Though a small minority may regard fiction reading as a "fun pastime" or even a sinful activity that is harmful to one's health, the vast majority of readers worldwide readily accept the pleasure of reading a work of fiction. Some attribute this pleasure to fiction's escapist role. For the duration of the reading experience, fiction moves the reader to a new level, giving an escape from the stresses and problems of everyday life. This isn't all, though. Fiction, more than any other kind of writing, is the most closely linked to personal experience. It is set in a recognized social environment, and its topic is human life in all of its intricacies and challenges. In his book *Fiction and the Unconscious*, Simon O'Lesser delves into this topic. The story, he claims, essentially satisfies the individual's dark thoughts and desires. Every type of fiction contains actual issues cloaked as uncertainties, challenges, worries, and so on. These are the functions of the Ego being acknowledged. Additionally, literary justice is served to appease the super-ego. Simon O'Lesser states,

While it is primarily through form that narrative art seeks to conciliate and satisfy the superego, content, too, makes an important contribution. It has already been mentioned that fiction is more rigorous than life itself in insisting that misdeeds be punished. In this and other aspects fiction behaves much more like the superego itself . . . unlike the police, for e.g., it insists that even psychic offenses be punished (103).

As a result, the fiction depicts the ongoing fight between psychic thoughts and urges and realistic super-ego demands. Any fiction will have a contradiction between the pleasure principle and the reality principle. This conflict between the pleasure and reality principles is not limited to fiction; rather, as Freud hypothesized, it pervades everything of human cognition. In all of his endeavors, man tends to seek pleasure. This is a natural trait with which man must continually contend. The 'reality principle,' as Freud called it, is at the root of the conflict. He believes that the reality principle is something that is taught via life experience rather than something that is innate in human nature. In order for man to reach specific life goals, he must overcome his want to play and have fun by pursuing his desire to work. According to Freud,

Under the influence of the ego's instincts of self-preservation, the pleasure principle is replaced by the 'reality principle'. This latter does not abandon the intention of ultimately obtaining pleasure, but it nevertheless demands and carries into effect the postponement of satisfaction, the abandonment of a number of possibilities of gaining satisfaction, the temporary toleration of unpleasure as a step on the long indirect road to pleasure (204).

What's fascinating is how the reality principle isn't a denial of pleasure seeking, but rather a 'postponement' of pleasure seeking till a later time. As a result, it can be said that pleasure and the pursuit of pleasure is a core human motivation. The production of literature, as well as other major creative forms, is solid evidence of the human need for pleasure.

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPONENTS

Let's look at the numerous psychological components that have a role in the experience of pleasure. It's crucial to remember that romance fiction is created for women and is almost always written from their perspective. Herein lies a significant distinction between romantic fiction and the world of male-dominated fiction. In a manner that other types of fiction do not, romance fiction appeals to women by addressing them and emphasizing their experiences. Despite the academic elite's criticism and mockery, it is this type of literature that directly confronts a

woman's reality and related difficulties. Although high priestesses of the Women's Liberation Movement such as Germaine Greer and Betty Freidan scorned marriage and coined words like "the female eunuch," Indian women continue to fantasize about marrying and having a family. This deep-seated yearning may be purely cultural or inherent in a woman's nature; in either case, romance fiction taps into the deepest wells of feminine longing and provides a form of vicarious pleasure. While India's culture is still traditional and tradition-bound, a woman's chances of finding love in the real world are slim.

A typical Indian woman's life differs significantly from that of a Western woman in terms of freedom and restrictions. As a result, the vicarious idea of living the character's life provides a great deal of pleasure. The average Indian woman reader must find ways to work around gender disparity and cope with its severity, as she is regulated and restricted by patriarchy of a particularly strict form. In such a setting, romances open up a utopian world to her, particularly one where women are at the centre. These books provide her with a mirror that reflects a fictionalized version of oneself, a portrait of the character with whom the reader intuitively relates. As a result, this act of idealizing oneself is expanded to everyday life, where even tiny details are glorified and lionized. There are many things to enjoy in this glorification of women's domestic life. It starts with concentrating the woman's self and bringing all attention to her every gesture as vibrant and dormant desire.

Patriarchy has succeeded in dampening, if not completely eliminating, women's uniqueness. This is especially clear when considering Indian society and the status of women in it. Despite their personal successes, Indian women are denied agency. Due to the social restraints placed on them, 'what they would really like to be' is a very powerful but unreachable dream for such women. Within this societal setting, romances with female leads who have more autonomy and personality are produced. The stereotyping of gender roles in such works has been a source of concern for Western feminist critics. The gender attribution in such works, on the other hand, is not conventional for Indian women. Within the fictitious universe, the books feature women who are self-sufficient and fulfilled. Crucial decisions on female sexuality, parenthood, employment, courting, marriage, and other topics are made by the women themselves (even if they are merely fictitious characters). A tremendous deal of enjoyment is involved when an Indian woman reads these works because she can identify with the characters. The narcissistic portrait seen in the writings is a key cause of enjoyment. Nowhere else does the common Indian woman reader have exposure to such sensationalized female protagonists. Women are always seen as glamorized in romance. As a result, it is possible to argue that reading these books satisfies women's narcissistic aspirations.

In addition, the novels' exaltation of heterosexual marriage assures that any anxiety they may have about finding the perfect partner is alleviated. It's important to keep in mind that Indian women have internalized cultural standards. These books are ideal for them since they depict not only glamour, economic freedom, and individualism, but also a heterosexual marriage with a partner who does not have androcentric attitudes. In reality, one of the reasons for romance fiction's lasting success is the characterization of the hero. He may appear gruff, arrogant, and aggressive on the surface, but this is all a ruse, and the perfect lady in his life may tap into a well of affection.

It's time to move on from psychoanalytical explorations of pleasure to a study of specific literary elements seen in romance novels. It's worth remembering that the growth and development of a male protagonist from childhood through adolescence to maturity is a common theme in popular literature. Many great authors have written what is referred to as a bildungsroman novel. Unfortunately, there aren't many female protagonists in these stories. The stages of a girl's development, from adolescence to full-fledged womanhood, are no less spectacular, exciting, or distressing than the stages of a boy's development. However, the idea of following a woman's experience in the outside or inner world of her awareness through fiction was revolutionary in international literature at the time. Romance novels, to some extent, bridge this divide. We picture the female protagonists in these works as innocent and naive at first, but as they go through adventures that resemble initiatory patterns, eventually realizing their womanhood with all its awareness of authority and influence.

The restriction of female sexuality by men in patriarchal settings has long been a source of concern for feminists around the world. The manner in which this control and suppression is exercised differs by culture. We have the most famous example of Medieval Europe's chastity belts, as well as the present practice of female circumcision or genital mutilation among various groups of people, such as Africans and Arabs. Female sexuality is feared in India, and many tactics are used to subdue it. The need to regulate and restrict female sexuality motivates the burning of the young widow at her husband's funeral pyre under the lofty philosophy of Sati, or the condemnation of the young widow to a strict, ascetic manner of living and innumerable taboos.

The Yakshi tale is a popular folk-art motif in Kerala. In truth, it's an attempt to subjugate feminine sexuality by casting it as demonic. Sex is never brought up, and no good woman should be interested in it. The civilization that

gave birth to Kamasutra has made it quite obvious that sexual gratification is reserved for men, and women exist solely to bring that pleasure to men. Young women who want to learn more about the delights of heterosexual love inevitably find romances satisfactory or appealing in this culture. Adolescent Indian girls have little understanding of their physique and how they work.

4. CONCLUSION

‘The art of romance’ is an essential and logical reaction to a lot of great constraints in India, where culture denies women the choice to discover themselves and their own desire. Women can cognitively prepare to protect themselves against the atrocities of male domination by consuming romance novels. Valerie Hey states that “Romance culture is . . . given the circumstances a brave effort to hold on to some semblance of control over the terms of exchange of female sexuality in a market place dominated by an equation; female equals sexuality equals debasement” (15). Romance has a fascinating role to play in a system where female libido is seen as diabolical and linked with all negativity.

5. REFERENCES

1. Freud, Sigmund, and James Strachey. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Norton, 1989.
2. Hey, Valerie. “The Necessity of Romance” *Women's Studies Occasional Papers*, No. 3, University of Kent, 1983.
3. Janice A, Radway. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*. University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
4. Simon O’Lesser. *Fiction and the Unconscious*. Beacon Press, 1957.
5. Sudhir Kakar. *The Inner World: A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*. Oxford University Press, 1981.