The Representation of Unattainable Love in T.S Pillai’s Chemmeen

T. Manickam, M.A., M.Phil., D.T.Ed
Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of English
RVS College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

Dr. K. Nagarathinam, M.A., M. Phil., PhD
Head & Associate Professor, Department of English
RVS College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

Abstract
This paper clearly focuses on The Representation of Unattainable love in T.S Pillai’s Chemmeen. Chemmeen is one of the celebrated works in Indian Literature. He is known as Malayalam novelist and Short story writer. His novels and short stories mostly focused on oppressed classes of Kerala in the mid twentieth century. Chemmeen is translated by Anita Nair from Malayalam into English in 2011. The author portrays Karuthamma and Pareekutty as lovers in the novel. The pitiable lovers of the novel are playing a vital role in the novel. They struggle a lot to express their love each other. They don’t even express their love through words but through eyes, they speak a lot. The lovers love to speak and spend time with one another. Both of them are unable to reach the destination of marriage. The tradition, customs and society are the major reasons of the unattainable love of Karuthamma and Pareekutty. They are unable to hide their love from one another when problem occurs. The author clearly presents happiness and pain of the lovers. Further, the writer describes their suffering in life without their loved one. The protagonist belongs to the fisher community. Her lover is known as Muslim trader. As per the customs of fisher community, a fisher woman should not maintain a relationship with a man belonging to another community. Keywords: identity, diaspora, politics, alienation, historical events, post colonialism

Keywords: Unattainable, Love, Tradition, Struggle, Marriage, Destination, Problems

Introduction
Indian Literature is one of the finest gems of world literature. It is not only entertaining the readers but also presenting a realistic image of life. The trio- Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan have played a vital role in Indian Literature. These writers have been giving awareness through the works. Indian Literature reflects Indian culture, tradition, social values, problems and challenges faced by common people and life styles of modern people. Chemmeen is one of the Celebrated works in Indian Literature. It is written by T.S Pillai. He is known as Malayalam novelist and Short story writer. His novels and short stories mostly focused on oppressed classes of Kerala in the mid twentieth century. His best works are kayar
and Chemmeen. His Chemmeen has become a very famous work. The Novel not only contains a traditional values, poverty of fisher community, risky life of fisher men Tradition of fisher Community but also love elements throughout the novel. The author portrays Karuthamma and Pareekutty as lovers in the novel. The pitable lovers play a vital role in the novel. Both of them struggle a lot to express their love. They don’t even express their love through words but their eyes speak a lot. The lovers love to speak and spend time with one another. But both of them are unable to reach the destination of marriage. The tradition, custom, society are the major reasons of the unattainable love of Karuthamma and Pareekutty. They are unable to hide the love from one another when confronted by a problem. The author clearly presents happiness and pain of the lovers. The writer further gives how they are suffering in the life without their loved one. The protagonist belong to fisher community. Her lover is known as Muslim trader. As per the custom of fisher community, a fisher woman should not maintain a relationship with a man belonging to another community.

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Two days later, the dead bodies of a man and a woman locked in an embrace came to rest on the sands. It is none other than that of Karuthamma and Pareekutty. Karuthamma is Chemban Kunju’s daughter a poor fisherman in the village. She is a girl who just stepped into adolesence. She is a very enthusiastic and loves to roam around the neighbour zhood. She has a childhood friend who is Pareekutty. His father is a wealthy trader. Pareekutty and Karuthamma used to play together in their childhood. They love to spend time together. Suddenly, Karuthamma and Pareekutty’s relationship takes an awful yet blissful turn. Pareekutty and Karuthamma have been spending time joyfully for a very long time until that evening. Pareekutty is tempted to admire Karuthamma’s body. He could have done it subtly but his excitement is too much to control. It is obvious that Karuthamma couldn’t help noticing it. Karuthamma feels insulted and gives her compliments. She crossed her hands in front of her chests in an attempt trying to stop Pareekutty from looking her body. They have been spending so much time together since childhood but a tension crops up in them. They used to enjoy simplicity and innocence of their relationship. They never used to care about anything, not even the attire they wear. For the first time Karuthamma felt an embarrassment about the fact that she was wearing only a Mundu nothing else. She has been wearing it regularly but never has she felt embarrassed. Though they vary in economical status, they are good friends. Pareekutty belongs to a different caste and he worships a different God but none of this stopped them from being friends because of their childhood innocence. The conversation between them is something that they are going to cherish forever. Childhood is only a stage of human life where elements like wealth and caste are replaced by the language of love. Lovedoesn’t have a native country because it is universal. The smiles and wailing are their pure means of communication.

When Pareekutty asks Karuthamma whether her father could sell the fish to his father, she innocently replies it would be so if he has the right amount of money. Pareekutty sprawls his palm and asks- where he has the money. The writer has taken us to the world of Karuthamma’s where innocence only prevails. This conversation shows how Pareekutty and Karuthamma have seen this world through their purest eyes. They never expressed and demanded anything until then. They don’t even realise that they are very friendly after so many years. It’s their affection that made them meet so often. They are not aware of the society, culture and religion. It seems like they have bypassed every hurdle in the pursuit of becoming life long friends, except admiration for the physic but Pareekutty’s ogling look embarrasses her. Karuthamma tells him not to look at her but also avoids from his sight. Karuthamma’s mother Chakki cites various types of reasons to avoid Pareekutty. Each of these ideas ridiculously supports the discrimination of the female. She advises Karuthamma to be pure in body and mind and not to indulge in any love affair with Pareekutty.
The author has portrayed the typical characteristics of a mother through Chakki. He has presented the character uncompromisingly without the fear. She is a great example of how female discriminate other females, be it her own daughter or anyone else. She is a rigid follower of cultural superstitions. She advises Karuthamma to resist her feelings towards anyone. She also tells her that a fisherman’s safety return is the only way to stay pure. She makes sure Karuthamma would never talk to Pareekutty by saying her father’s life would be over if she does so.

Karuthamma is very much confused with these theories. She never imagined that she would be the one who would put her father’s life at stake. Chakki also tells her that there would be so many men like Pareekutty, very eager to take advantage of her physical beauty. Chakki successfully tricked Karuthamma into believing that Pareekutty also is one of those men whose only need is physical pleasure. She also advises her not to be seen by men because that would be a disrespect to the child of the sea. It also brings misfortune for all the people living in the seashore. She is not sure if Karuthamma would take her advice into concern. On the same note, Chakki does not blame Pareekutty who isn’t aware of this as he belongs to a different religion. Karuthamma is so innocent and believes everything her mother says. She takes it very seriously and follows it ignorantly. She doesn’t have the courage to question whether a woman’s virtue is the deciding factor of so many silly superstitions. The life of fisher community should not rely on women’s virtue rather it is based on the skills of those fisherman and nature. She has successfully tamed Karuthamma’s natural instincts and turns her into another rigid follower by mentally injecting her the posion of superstition.

Pareekutty wants to apologize to Karuthamma for what happened in the shore. Pareekutty doesn’t know that Karuthamma has gone through a lot of transformations. In an attempt to make her come out her house, he starts to sing songs sitting on the boat. Karuthamma feels an inner heavy heartedness which she tries to wriggle out at any cost. The pain starts to grow more and more just like his songs. She wants to get rid of the feeling that grows with each line he sings but ends up in vain. She completely forgets everything she has learnt from her mother. Her heart has been urging to see his face once and tells him she is not angry with him about his look. She is reminded of the greedy men and that she couldn’t finally resist her urge. She wanted to talk to Pareekutty very badly but she has to stay quiet because of the culture, superstitions and above all the family. She is not ready to ruin the culture of the shore.

She leaves Pareekutty and marries a fisherman who belongs to the next shore. Pareekutty struggles a lot to lead his life without Karuthamma. He has been singing songs on the shore in the midnight which reminds his blissful memories with Karuthamma. He cannot even concentrate on his trade. His trade almost go bankrupt. There has been a promise between Chakki and Pareekutty that the latter would not intervene in Karuthamma’s marriage with Palani. These sharp words stab like a sphere into his heart. He has been sitting on the shore like a stone. He does not respond to anyone’s questions. He recalls the memories of Karuthamma and thinks to meet her. He tries to control himself and avoids to meet her as per the promise. Meanwhile Karuthamma has been leading a pathetic life with her husband. She is unable to forget Pareekutty. She is worried about Pareekutty. She keeps thinking Pareekutty’s sacrifices, songs, funny laughs and joyful events. Slow by slow she receives problems from her husband. She is mentally tortured by her husband. Her husband suspects her which further ends up in trouble. She is in the need of selling fish in the East to lead a life. Her neighbours also criticise about her past life. She even does not have a good friend to console when she is in trouble. She wishes to go to her mother’s home and wants to see Panchami. Her husband doesn’t allow her to visit her mother’s home. Her parents also do not visit her because of the issues related to bride price. She wants to know about her mother’s health status. Her mother lies in an unconscious state when she leaves home along with her husband. She has
been suffering mentally because of her husband’s verbal abuse. Meanwhile, Pareekutty delivers Chakki’s death news to Karuthamma. She drowns into deep sorrow after her mother’s death. She further worries for the ugly appearance of Pareekutty. She feels guilty of his plight. She thinks that she is the major cause of his ruined life. They want to live together but the norms of her community would not allow them. Their desire turns out to be true through death. The author displays the true love as well as the tragic end of Karuthamma and Pareekutty.

Conclusion

The paper deals with the tragic end of Karuthamma and Pareekutty. The writer portrays Pareekutty and Karuthamma as childhood friends in the beginning and later as lovers. They loved each other and wished to marry. Pareekutty sacrifices a number of things such as money, trade, reputation and so forth for the sake of Karuthamma’s love. A fisher woman cannot marry another community man as per the customs of fisher community. They do not even try to take a step forward to marry as she is not ready to ruin the culture of the shore. They sacrifice their lives for the sake of community, society, religion and social status.

References