

STUDY OF REBELLION AGAINST SUPERSTITIONS AND AGE OLD TRADITIONS IN DR. RAJAN GAVAS'S MARATHI MOVIE “JOGWA”

Shobha Kashinath Tambe
Research Scholar
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University,
Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India

21st century, we call it modern world where all things are modern, advanced & scientific. In one hand, people reached on moon. Science & Technologies have become our part & parcel. But on the other hand, in some rural villages people are still living a dark, humiliated life. They are illiterate so they are far away from science & technologies & are caught in the trap of traditions & superstitions. They are leading their own created worthless life.

It is a reality that because of these customs, traditions & superstitions they are not ready to come out of this demarcated life & worsening their own life.

This paper is going to focus on such type of social grime through the story of the film “Jogwa”.

Abstract :-

‘Jogwa – The Awakening’ explores the life of a rural people from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra who are the devotees of Goddess “Yellamma” known as “Jogtin”(female) and “Jogta”(male); are treated as sex slaves & viewed with a mixture of semi-respect & disdain.

It is a very heart-wrenching story. It exposes the hypocrisies & exploitations of an oppressed society harrowed by archaic traditions & plagued by superstitions in the heart of rural India. It also shows the contradictions within society as well as turmoil of human nature. The Story shows us the struggle of one man & woman, their inspiring journey against these so called traditions, superstitions, their revolt to break the chains of discrimination, sexual slavery & forced servitude.

Introduction :-

Winner of five national film award “Jogwa- The Awakening” has to be by far one of the best contemporary Marathi movies, in terms of theme, structure, music & acting. It is also a story of enlightening & disturbing. The story of this film is adapted & based on three novels ‘Chaundak’, ‘Bhog Bhandar’ by Dr. Rajan Gavas & ‘Darshan’ by Charuta Sagar.

The story shows as the crudeness of a society that calls itself civic. The people of this society doesn't know that in the name of god, goddess, custom, they play with the emotions of human beings.

In the story, it is shown that how Suli & Tayappa living a happy, normal life and suddenly are entrapped in the net of traditions & superstitions. They are made a Jogta & Jogtin.

A Jogta (male) once chosen is stripped of his masculinity. He has to dress & accessorize himself as a woman, let alone giving up his physical needs. He has no choice. If he revolts, he is stripped of his masculinity - this time physically. They are forced by the society to give up everything and serve God. A Jogta has to give up the fact of being a man and suppress all his desires. In the case of Jogtin, it is expected that she gives up herself, she cannot get married, she cannot have children, or have a life of her own. All identifying factors like caste, religion, identify & very name are taken away from them & they are known as Jogta or Jogtini.

It is found that ill fated Tayappa is forced by his family to take up the service of deity, wear a sari & beg alms in the village. While on the other hand, just because a knot was found in the hair of Suli, her mother forced her to do the same. Both become Jogta & Jogtin against their wishes.

We see in the story that how Suli & Tayappa has to live against their wishes suppressing all their emotions. Tremendous social as well as family pressures turn Suli & Tayappa into a Jogta & Jogtin. Both of them get psychologically affected & lose their courage. Ultimately they accept their fate & come to know how Jogta and Jogtins live their lives.

It is a very big tragedy that Jogta & Jogtins are given very disgusting, insulting & disrespected treatment by the society. They don't have any incoming source so that they have to beg alms & sing a song in troupe in praise of goddess Yellamma.

It is very horrible to come to know that the male ones initially being raped by young men soon become used to & then slowly start loving it which become their only source of fun apart from alcohol. The women become whores, property of men & so get cheated & commit suicide.

The character Yamnya from this story says that

“Jogatin mhanje malavarachi ghanta,

Kunibi yava an tan vajavun java”.

Means : Jogatin is a public property and anybody can mistreat her.

Above lines depict the crude reality of a life of Jogtin and how people treat her. Automatically a question arises in the mind that don't they have emotions?
Aren't they human beings?

There is a scene of river. The character Yamnya while bathing says to Tayappa to scrub his back. That time he says,

“Has any man ever looked at my wet body in such a way that my mind becomes as light as a feather, and the waves begin to feel thirsty?”

The lines of Yamnya depict the deep emotions, feeling which he feels or the condition in which he lives, made him to feel that. But It is very shocking for Tayappa being a man to live like a woman by draping sari & feel like a woman. He gets disturbed very much after hearing Yamnya & gets drowned in to the thoughts.

In the story, it is found that while living a life as Jogata, Tayappa suffers a lot emotionally. He loves Suli very much but being a Jogta, he can't express his love because he has no right to love or marry.

Suli loves Annu & dreams for a happy, settled life with him but he smashes her dreams of a happy settled life. He rejects the parenthood of the unborn child. Suli is devastated. From the very sentence of Annu,

“Jogatin mhanje gaav jevan kuni hi yava ni jevun java”

Means jogatin is a woman to whom anybody can use as means of sexual pleasure.

It is shown that Jogsins are not getting proper treatment as they are not given any identity or place in the society. They are used by men as a thing of pleasure, fun. It is again proved that Jogsins – a woman is not considered as a human being. She is mere a thing, trapped by society, in the name of customs, traditions & superstitions. She is a puppet made to dance on the wish of male. She is used whenever he wished against her permission & is easily thrown away as per his convenience as if she is useless.

Tayappa & Suli have to crush their emotions. They faced many insulting incidents. But it is also found that their inherent free natures soon began to revolt against the custom & they become increasingly aware of their frustrating lives & craved for freedom.

Suli is driven away from her own house after a forced abortion & here Tayappa also get kicked out of home. Both heart-broken come together, give support to each other. Tayappa finally expresses his feelings to Suli & Suli also accepts his love. Both decide to break all the shackles of discrimination, & want to be free from sexual oppression & servitude & want to find true happiness. They start dreaming of a happy married life & sing a song; The song is also heart-touching; In that song, their rebellious attitude towards customs & superstitions is found.

Suli wants to break all these so called traditions & the chains of bangles which are trapped by superstitions & wants to be free from all these hell-like, rotten life & wishes to start a new traditions, superstitions free life.

Rebellious suli wants to get free from this disgusting frustrating life. Her inherent free nature gets suffocated & according to her it is the right time to revolt against it.

There is also a scene which focuses the bitterness of the life of Jogta or Jogsins. When Yamnya dies, after his burial all the fellowmen of his sects start to beat him with a footwear saying that-

“Reborn again either a Man or a Woman.”

It shows how horrible, terrific is the life of a Jogta or Jogsins. Their whole life they have to suffer a lot suppressing all their desires, passions & emotions. It was shocking to both Suli & Tayappa.

Knowing that Tayappa & Suli want to start a married life and Tayappa changed his customs as a man All fellowmen belonging to their own sects disapprove such a union & they take Tayappa to the

mountains for castrating. It is very horrible to see as well as to think about it but it is real thing which happens in the society of jogta & jogtin. If someone tries to revolt against the fixed rules of their own society, they get punished like this.

Who made these rules? Who made these customs? Are they really worth than a human being, their emotions and freedom?

When Suli comes to know, gets furious against all the people harassing Tayappa. Suli starts beating up people by whatever she gets into her hand. Tayappa also joins her. By seeing their attitude of both Suli & Tayappa, everybody start running wherever they find place to run down the mountain. In this way Suli & Tayappa come together & start a new happy life.

It is found that how both Suli & Tayappa took an action against these traditions & superstitions even lot of opposition from the society. They remain firm, stick to their decision, tried very hard & at last got victory.

There is really need to make a loud cry against these man made superstitions & traditions which make our society crude more than monster. All these inspire to human humiliation. Superstitions should be eradicated from the society & so it is very necessary to remove it first from our mind, thoughts & practice.

I hope this paper will help to eradicate all superstitions & traditions from the every corner of our society.

References:

- 1) <https://youtu.be/hQ2wzEuy0n0?si=MaETxrWN0Rueqiax>
- 2) <https://marathimovieworld.com/review/jogwa-review.php>
- 3) https://m.imdb.com/title/tt1653015/plotsummary/?ref_=tt_ov_pl
- 4) <https://wogma.com/article/jogwa-societal-grime-with-aesthetic-beauty/>