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THEME OF LESBIANSHIP IN ABHA DAWESAR'S NOVEL *BABYJI*

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ABSTRACT:

The effort has been made to focus on the theme of lesbianism as depicted by Abha Dawesar in her second novel, Babyji. Anamika, an HSC Science student is a leading character of the mentioned novel. She is bold, broad minded and rebellious in nature. She keeps lesbian relation with India, a widow woman, lives near her home, Rani, a domestic woman comes to her home for domestic works and Sheela, her classmate. Apart from these three, she also develops interest towards Chakra Dev and does not object when Vidur's father tries to touch her.



KEYWORDS: *Lesbianism, Romance, Kiss, Sex Education, Broad Minded.*

[1] INTRODUCTION

Abha Dawesar is an Indo English writer deals with the burring issues of the present time of Indian society. Her novels deal with the theme of LGBT, sex education, women empowerment, generation gap and domestic violence. *Babyji* is a second novel, published in 2005 deals with the major theme of LGBT especially lesbianism. The lead character is Anamika a school girl believes that everyone should be allowed to have affairs. She is so excited to have physical relation with three distinct women. The novelist very masterly projects the lesbian relation through the character of Anamika.

[2] THE CONCEPT OF LGBT

LGBT is a burning issue for

orthodox society of India. L stands for Lesbian, G for Gay, B for Bisexual, and T stands for Transgender. A lesbian is a homosexual woman. The word lesbian is also used for women in relation to their sexual identity or sexual behavior regardless of sexual orientation, or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns with female homosexuality or same-sex attraction. Gay means when male keeps physical relation with male. Bisexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction, or sexual behavior toward both males and females, or to more than one sex or gender. It may also be defined as romantic or sexual attraction to people of any sex or gender identity, which is also known as pansexuality. Transgender people have a

gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned sex. Some transgender people identify as transsexual if they desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another. It is a new emerging class in the world. This community feels freedom in having physical relation against the order of nature. Indian Government recently permits them to have such kind of relations with the kind permission of their partners. Many Indian and foreign writers deal with the theme of LGBT in their literary works in their own way.

[3] LESBIANSHIP IN *BABYJI*

From beginning to the end of the novel, readers can observe Anamika, a leading character as a

lesbian. She is an HSC student of Science believes in liberty. She is broad-minded and careless about the society and rebellious in nature. In the very first chapter of the novel, she meets a divorcee woman in the school who wants her small son to be admitted in the school. Anamika called her as India. She lives alone near Anamika's home and invites her the next day at her house. The same day, another woman, a domestic servant takes employment in her house – a young, healthy, low-caste woman, Rani.

Gradually, Anamika develops interest in India. Her one or two meetings with India are casual but as her interest in India increases, she dares to visits her house at night when her parents go to sleep. she slips through the back-door towards the construction site where there are jhuggis. She rings the door-bell and bewilders India opened the door. She directly tells her that she wants to pass the night at her place. India without any hesitation permits her and Anamika immediately jumps into her bed to sleep. She finds that India is not wearing anything under the white sheet. Then she asks India if she can touch her. India does not object. Anamika then begins to touch the various parts of India – her palm begins to explore hers, then her wrist, her fore-arms, her shoulders. Anamika says,

We must have caressed for hours. I felt as if I was living out of my body and outside of time.... Drifting off, I dreamt that India and I were revolving around each other as particles, and then suddenly Trans forming into waves, tides, currents (22).

Thus, the journey of happy days of Anamika starts with India and she enjoys her company and makes sex with her. The series of romantic relationship starts with India and on the next day in afternoon, she gets a chance to have romance with her domestic servant Rani. When Rani comes to Anamika's home for domestic work, she is alone and she invites Rani on to her bed and tries to touch her lips with her index finger and kisses her.

With this incident, Rani's mood has lifted and she responses her and second time with an intention Anamika kisses her. Thus, Anamika's second romance begins with Rani. On the same day at night, Anamika applies her old trick when her parents go to sleep, she from the back door manages to escape and reaches at India's home and again makes romance with her. In the bed with India beside her, Anamika moves both her hands all the way down India's back and over her cheeks. Then she grabs both her buttocks and squeezes them. She feels that she is an adult. She expresses her feeling thus;

I felt overwhelmed by the sensation. I wished I could express it in words. She was moaning softly and rubbing her smooth calves on my eyes. I squeezed the flesh in my hands more firmly now. It occurred to me that I could go further.... We spent the rest of the night cradled in each other's arms (27).

The next day in Physics class the teacher Mr. Garg asks about Plank's constant theory and nobody except Anamika could answer. That shows that Anamika is a queer mixture of brilliance and her free-minded physical actions.

While Anamika's romance with India and Rani is going on a third romantic adventure starts for Anamika. It is with her class-mate Sheela. Sheela is very beautiful, intelligent and very popular with the boys. One day, Anamika enamors by her beauty and recently develops fire in her, she tells her that she has beautiful lips and she would like to kiss them. She repeats it and says that she is serious. Sheela remains silent, but in the evening when Anamika is sitting with her mother, Sheela rings her and enquires what she meant about her talk of kissing her. Conscious by her mother's presence she replies that she is just joking. But the next day in the school when Anamika meets Sheela, once again the topic of kissing started. When enquired she tells Sheela she does not think kissing wrong thing or immoral. During the assembly Anamika goes up to Sheela for uniform inspection as Head Perfect and finds fault with skirt. Sheela falls out of line ready for punishment. Sheela pleads not to ask her to run as her skirt is high and the boys would stare. Then Anamika suggests if she can kiss her. Sheela tells her nobody has kissed her so far. Anamika wants more fun and mischief with her. She tells Sheela that uniform inspection is not over, and she wants to check her bloomers under skirt. As per the rule girls are supposed to wear white bloomer and not simple panties. Anamika lifts Sheela's skirt and finds Sheela wearing a blue pants. She also notices Sheela's waxed legs, as a punishment Sheela is asked to do then 'Uthak-Bethaks'. Thus, romantic fire for Sheela is ignited in Anamika. After that, she takes all opportunities to have a look at Sheela or talk to her.

After this incident, Anamika takes Sheela to canteen in order to please her and they start to talk about kiss and in reply, Anamika answers that she is not kissed by any one from the school but older persons outside the school. On hearing this, Sheela wonders and keeps watching her. Then Anamika takes Sheela to horse-riding, with the help of the school horse-keeper and coach, Sameer Bhaiya. During horse riding, Anamika keeps on watching Sheela's body parts and ignites the fire of romance for her. Anamika is thinking about Sheela;

My mind was elsewhere, weighing the pros and cons of having one more affair, with some-one of my own age, a girl without a husband or a son. A girl who was neither a servant nor an elder, someone more or less my equal (53).

Thus, Anamika gets involved with three women. Sheela is her third and the latest lover. Anamika thinks about it;

After I decided to add Sheela to my list of lovers, I started to work toward my goal. I would use my academic reputation in conjunction with my official authority to complete my project (55).

As a part of this project she tells Sheela that she would help her in Mathematics and Physics. They both would stay back after classes for 'extra-curricular' activities. Sheela is told to tell a lie to her parents that she has to remain in school for practice for Sports Day. Having decided this Anamika is wondering how to handle three lovers. Then, she thinks of Draupadi having five husbands. She feels in her case she is the Draupadi; and India, Rani and Sheela are Pandavas. As Pandavas must have laid down some rules on how to share Draupadi in the same way Anamika also needs a set of rules about her three lovers. It would be wrong to give one of her lovers more time than the others.

The novel moves ahead with the course of the time and many other incidents take place in the novel. After the incident of the DTC bus, when she narrates the entire incident to Rani and she sobs out and Rani calls her a small child. On hearing this word, Anamika suddenly stops crying as if a tap has just been turned shut. She emphatically tells Rani that she is not a child. Anamika suddenly changes her mood and as if to prove that she is not a child but a grown up and mature being, she throws Rani on the bed and starts opening her blouse frantically. Then she pulls her Sari down and lifts up her petticoat. Then she touches her and slides her finger wherever it would slide in. Rani also reciprocates by hugging her hard. Her arms are tight, almost vice-like, around Anamika's back. Anamika narrates the scene;

I had the image of the two men from the bus.... and I started pushing into Rani more vigorously. The German guy from the porn magazine, but with Chakra Dev's face, the Brahmin from the movies with his servant positions from the Kamsutra all mixed up in my head till I could no longer think. I felt rapacious and greedy for her (95).

Anamika's romantic overtures with India and Rani continue and then the important episode of chat on sex-education in school happens. Lecture approached, Anamika is imagining various questions that she would ask to the doctor who would come, like - 'Ma'am what is the difference between making love and having sex?' or 'Ma'am is it all right for a woman who is having her period to have sex?' Anamika asks maximum questions with broad minded and gets clear idea regarding sex.

Apart from these three women, Anamika sometimes attracts towards Chakra Dev and she does not object when Vidur's father tries to touch her. However, Anamika also gets angry on Chakra Dev and Vidur's father but sometimes she keeps soft hearted feelings for them.

[4] CONCLUSION

Thus, Dawesar has depicted Anamika as a unique girl. She is broad minded and bold in nature. She does not think wrong in having affairs with anyone. Throughout the novel, she keeps lesbian relations with three women, Sheela, her classmate, Rani, her domestic servant and India, a widow neighbour. Anamika, being an HSC students feels free to have lesbian relation with more than one woman. Thus, the novelist absolutely puts her efforts to finger at the lesbian relation in her second novel.

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