



بحوث قسم اللغة الإنجليزية



Women Empowerment in Tanya Markul's

"The She Book"

تمكين المرأة في ديوان "كتابها" لتانيا ماركول

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to throw light on and evaluate Tanya Markul's treatment of the feminist crisis as reflected in her volume of poetry "The She Book." What distinguishes her experience is suffering not only because of being a woman, but also owing to being rejected and abundant by her family members. She uses her personal experience of suffering and healing to highlight the issue of women empowerment in her poetry. In her first collection "The She Book," she approaches the question of feminism stressing the idea that women empowerment is something that should come from within the woman herself. Markul has gone through real traumas and emotional pains in her life, the effect of which appears explicitly in her writings. In her poetry, Markul's feminist approach is obviously different from other writers as she confirms that empowering women can be attained by adopting certain strategies which may eventually lead to actualization of equality among the sexes in modern societies. Such feminist strategies are: consciousness raising and building relationships with other members of the society.

Key words: Women – Empowerment – Markul – "The She Book"

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المستخلص

تلقي هذه الدراسة الضوء علي قضية تمكين المرأة في ديوان "كتابها" للشاعرة الشابة تانيا ماركول التي حازت علي اعجاب الكثير من القراء نظرا لموهبتها الشعرية الفطرية. و تظهر قصائد هذا الديوان بصورة جلية مدني المعاناة التي عاشتها الشاعرة في طفولتها، الامر الذي انعكس علي نظرهما للحياة و رؤيتها تجاه القضية النسائية التي تطل بوجهها من آن الي اخر في الادب العالمي. و يجد القارئ لقصائد ماركول نفسه في مواجهة الشاعرة حيث تخاطبه مباشرة بطريقة تستدعي مكوناته النفسية فيشاركها الامها و آمالها تجاه قضية تمكين المرأة لتكون علي قدم المساواة مع الرجل في المجتمعات الذكورية التي يشهدها عالمنا الحديث. و تؤكد الشاعرة علي ضرورة زيادة وعي المرأة باهميتها و حتمية تواجدها بجوار الرجل في أي محاولة لرفع مستوي الحياة في المجتمعات المعاصرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تمكين - المرأة - ماركول - ديوان "كتابها"

Introduction

This study throws light on and evaluates the works of one of the promising junior poets who has shown real distinction in her poetic treatment of feminist issues; Tanya Markul. In her two volumes of poetry, "The She Book," volumes 1 & 2, she approaches the question of feminism or women empowerment from a special philosophy of her own. She thinks that women's empowerment is something that should come from within the woman herself and not something to be endowed by others. Tanya Markul has gone through real traumas in her life, the effect of which appears explicitly in her poetic outcome. In her own vision, Markul believes that empowering women can be attained by adopting certain strategies which may eventually lead to actualization of equality among the sexes in modern society. Described by critics as being "the wounded healer," Markul benefits from her actual emotional and psychological pains as well as her personal ability to overcome such pains to write poetry in which she urges women or all sufferers of the world to be inspired by her successful journey of pain and painkilling. In the following lines, the researcher has a close-up view of Tanya Markul, the feminist preacher and "the wounded healer" and how she could use her artistry to call for female empowerment as reflected in "The She Book," Vol. 1.

Tanya Markul is an American contemporary junior poet and author who lives in Copenhagen, Denmark. She comes from a low-income family that used food stamps and collected government cheese and bread for their food. Her parents were

addicted to quarreling and as a result of their constant conflict both of them deserted their house leaving the young children to experience restlessness and depression. The young Tanya went to live with her grandparents and witnessed there nothing but rejection, alcoholism, loneliness, and purposelessness. That early desperate life made the young Tanya suffer for nothing but being a victim to this miserable family.

At the age of 16, Markul began writing poetry as an outlet for her impactful experience as a young sufferer. Her poems have been met with acclaim; and lots of people began to read them finding out that she had the seeds of a promising distinctive poet. Such an atmosphere pushed the girl forward to continue writing until she finally published her first volume of poetry under the title "The She Book." The first volume achieved her real reputation as a poet and lots of readers worldwide have been attracted to her poetry.

In "The She Book," Tanya Markul adopts important strategies that contribute to the feminist issue in which all her generation is interested. In addition to her personal suffering due to her early childhood experiences, she is also chained to a generational gender-trauma, the feminist dilemma. All the poems of the first volume call for female empowerment as an important step towards gender equality, the ultimate objective of all feminist waves that burst throughout the 20th century all over the world. Markul could overcome her traumatic childhood by solutions coming out of her own personality and eventually found out that adopting such strategies may help in

healing the female sex's wounds in general due to gender-based discrimination. Being a poet, speaker, author, and intuitive healer, she got beyond her painful childhood and emerged with many spiritual lessons to teach her readers. Through her honesty and bravery, she has presented articles and poems which empower readers, especially women, to the best version of themselves.

Markul has been described by her readers as being a “wounded healer” because they understand the pain and power it takes to heal through personal traumatic experience. Commenting on the experience of Tanya Markul in her article “Healing & Vulnerability Are Born In *The She Book* By Tanya Markul.” Lisa Marie Basile writes:

“Her work places itself at the intersection of where accessible poetry and deeply personal ritual collide. If you are seeking the story of woman, of trauma and healing, and of raw truth, you will adore Tanya Markul’s *The She Book* She comes from generational trauma having experience witnessing addiction, abuse, and the negative fallout that comes from that sort of space: shame, darkness, pain. It is from this well that her poetry is born – and transcends” (2)

Basile refers to the personal conflicts Markul suffers from and how she receives such struggle by her sensitive nature reflecting them in her poetry. Moreover, she “transcends” her personal

trauma taking the reader with her into the generational trauma of the female race in modern times.

In spite of all the hardships Markul has met in her short journey of life, she has attained triumph over her painful experience. What really attracts attention to her emotional victory is that the solution comes from within. In her poetry, she transmits to readers her success to move from complete darkness into the light of self-actualization and strength as a woman. In her series "Women 2 Watch Media," Sue Rocco says:

"Her energy is one of calm, love, and wisdom that is so needed in our world today. Her life story begins with abandonment, rejection, depression, and addiction, and sits now with her husband and two boys who bring her the acceptance and love she is so desperately needed as a young girl."

Tanya Markul can be approached as a model of those who could change their suffering into an experience of success; the fact that emotional pain can be the fuel with which to charge the human soul to attempt a new fruitful beginning. In her poetry, she helps others heal by showing them how to hold a sacred space for their stories, and to lock the impossibility of changing their pain into soul-led healing power. The remedy she offers to achieve this is to look curiously within bringing a sense of humor to cracked surfaces and unveiling the beauty of hidden

authenticity. It can also be achieved by conjuring the courage to love and accept oneself in this lifetime.

“The She Book,” Volume 1

“The She Book,” Volume 1, (Tanya Markul’s debut collection of poetry) introduces to the world her painful and triumphant experiences in life. The book contains a collection of poems that tackles issues like emotional pain, change, and self-love. Markul uses second person singular in her poems as if she were speaking directly to her readers\friends. The poems of the volume are numbered in sequential order, each working to address some mixture of grief, trauma, and womanhood. Markul sometimes addresses herself, and at other times speaks to an unknown woman or the entire female gender in general.

“The She Book” can be approached as an attempt exerted by Markul to reach the audience or the readers with the message of female empowerment as a first step towards achieving all the principles of feminism as a worldwide movement. The book calls for rising above the hardships women encounter in their daily lives and establishing the strong spirit within paving the way for attaining the feminist aspirations for their future. All the poems stress ideas like setting women free from self-pity, self-hatred, discrimination, insecurities, and all other doubts they might feel within. In addition to the autobiographical atmosphere spread throughout the volume, Markul goes deeper to propagate the challenges and requirements needed to achieve

women empowerment entirely. Basile describes the volume saying:

“Beautifully simple and simply beautiful ...
Holding and reading this book is like if you
have your heart open on your hands and
you are reading your feelings ... It is like
sharing your deepest with your dearest.” (3)

Thus, Basile stresses the uniqueness of the book and how it takes the reader into an empowering, emotive, brave, and soulful journey in a traumatic world and how facing it can bring positive changes in the life of the female race.

The 119 poems of “The She Book” come together to create something greater than the sum of its parts. The mainstream of the book echoes the feminist trend in literature that shows itself from time to time to achieve women empowerment in the modern world. It can be regarded as being a real addition in that connection. Readers of the book are attracted to the elegant and tender way of combing through the layers of emotions inherent in the poems. Markul’s mastery appears in her ability to move between her own emotional and psychological wounds and the inspiring revelations they have brought to her. She smoothly urges her readers to take actions. Her style of writing is responsive and relatable making the readers feel as if she might be the “She” the book talks about instead. Thus, it becomes clear that “The She Book” can represent the basics of the feminist movement with its call for women empowerment. It

would be more rational if the feminist principles and women empowerment basics are dealt with in a bit of details.

The Major Tenets of Feminism

Feminism is defined as “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.” (Hooks VIII) It is a compound idea that has great differences in meaning and connotation for people covering different generations, ethnic identities, sexual orientations, social classes. Feminism is not a static notion; rather it accompanies us throughout our lives and is shaped by the different perspectives we use to view the world at large and, most importantly, ourselves. The feminist theory is based on three main principles: (1) Women have something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the world. (2) As an oppressed group, women have been unable to achieve their potential, receive rewards, or gain full participation in society. (3) Feminist groups should work hard to initiate real social changes. (Ropers 5) Living in man-dominated societies, all women are exposed to different types of oppression: (1) Individual, which includes attitudes and actions that reflect prejudice against a social group; (2) institutional which includes polices, laws, rules, norms, and customs imposed by organizations and social institutions that disadvantage some social groups and advantage others; (3) societal/cultural which includes social norms, roles, rituals, language, music, and art that reflect the belief that one social group is superior to another. (Hardiman 28)

The feminist movement took the form of waves, the first of which began in 1849 stressing women’s right of suffrage. The

second wave launched the era between 1963 to 1980s and concentrated on reproductive rights of women. The third wave appeared in the 1990s and focused on female heteronormality. The fourth wave launches the present time. Through different in shape, the whole waves of the movement are interwoven into similar goals aspiring for women's rights to be treated equally as men in almost every field of life. The main objective of the movement is to use every possible means to empower women giving them the opportunity to self-actualize their identities as equal human beings to men. Two strategies are suggested by the movement to be adopted to achieve female empowerment: consciousness-raising and building relationships with the women participants and their external oppressors. (Erbaugh 8)

In order to create female empowerment, feminists suggest consciousness-raising as a real beginning in the issue of feminism. While raising consciousness, females become more aware of personal struggles they have to fight and they make sure that such struggles are closely related to other political and economic issues. (Bradshaw et al 25) Raising consciousness allows marginalized persons to realize where they are placed in the larger social structure and determine minutely the origins of their oppression. (Bradshaw et al 27) Awareness of their problems may lead to self- mobilization which, in turn, creates explicitly their empowerment. (Gutierrez 25)

The second strategy to be adopted by women in their attempt to get empowerment is building relationships as an additional means for creating women empowerment. (Brady et al 210) Lots of scholars believe that building relationships inevitably results in empowerment as the gaps and conflicts between males and females are bridged as a consequence to the collaboration and deliberation of conflicting ideas deeply rooted in their minds. Moreover, such conflicts may be beneficial to women participants as they foster their problem-solving skills offering them an opportunity to deepen and establish their ability to face life on equal footing with men. (Christens 889)

A more recent definition of female empowerment is currently adopted to enhance women's ability to be ready for gender equality required in all world societies. The main bulk of the recent definition revolves around the idea of accepting women's viewpoints or making an effort towards raising the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training. (Kabeer 13) Female empowerment equips and allows women to make life-determining decisions towards the different problems in society. (Bayeh 9) Empowerment for women is both a process and outcome. (Nozomi 1) It also includes their aptitude to make strategic life choices which had been previously denied them. (Steven 5) However, one important principle all women should bear in their minds in their attempt to get empowerment is that their empowerment should arise from within and not as something to be granted from others. (Mosdale 244) Moreover, in his article "Stop Calling for Women's Empowerment,"

Proctor puts it explicitly: “It is time to stop calling for women’s empowerment and start recognizing and respecting their rights.” (5)

Women’s empowerment is desperately required in today's cultures and societies. Today’s world emphasizes “the need to make women self-reliant and confident, and empower them for a multi-dimensional growth of society.” (Prabhu, 2) It is necessary for women’s self-esteem as well as for the welfare of the society. Women should have the right to participate equally in education, society, the economy, and politics. They should have the freedom to select their religion, language, employment, and all other activities. Empowering women means promoting their sense of self-worth. This means promoting and helping them decide their ability to identify their weaknesses and how to overcome them. Commenting on the importance of women’s psychological empowerment, Bhasin writes: “While we were busy trying to empower women in the fields of society, economy, politics, etc., we forgot to empower them psychologically in order to make them fully self-sufficient.” (8)

Women Empowerment in Markul’s Poetry

In her poetry, Tanya Markul uses her personal experience of suffering as a motif to enhance the female empowerment issue stressing the same ideas propagated by the preachers of feminism worldwide. “The She Book,” her first volume of poetry, echoes the call for women’s emancipation from the chains of inequality

and empowering themselves from within. The title of the volume itself foreshadows the meanings and ideas tackled throughout the poems. Her philosophy in life colors and directs her vision of women empowerment in today's world. In many a poem, she confirms the idea that self-awareness is the first step females should take in their long journey towards their empowerment. Having a bird's-eye view of the poems of "The She Book" can lead us to the main issue Markul is inextricably involved in: women empowerment.

The first strategy Tanya Markul adopts is to awaken women to the necessity of their consciousness-raising, being the initial step to be taken towards female actualization in the modern world. The opening poem of "The She Book" takes the reader directly to the message Markul wants to communicate to women. She writes,

You are already enthroned.
 There is no putting down that
 crown
 Not a queen to a lover or
 community,
 but a holier mystery, an angelic
 decree,
 that will ever bend the knee,
 to the fierce yet tender wand
 of the awakening woman.

(*The She Book*, 1)

Markul reminds every woman that she is “already” a “queen” and her position in life is a “holier mystery” that is beyond questioning. Whatever the hardships women may come across, they should “never bend the knee.” By using the second person singular “you,” the woman feels that there is no least distance between the speaker and the addressee, the effect of which appears in the feelings of intimacy arising inside the addressee. The poem ends with a final message: she asks every woman to “awake.”

The first tool Markul uses to awaken woman shows itself in her confession that life is painful. She does not use flowery language or rosy colors in a romantic way. Instead, she appears more realistic when stressing that pains are necessary to foster woman's ability to endure any adverse circumstances. She believes that healing can be first brought about by accepting the pain getting the wisdom behind it. Speaking about her own emotionally painful experience in life and how she got beyond the merciless moments in her life, Markul writes at the beginning of “The She Book,”

Once a silent star in the sky, lost, alone and
Unnoticed, she began to dream her life awake.
Sensitivity brought light to her dark side and
vulnerability found words for what her heart
felt but couldn't say.

(*The She Book*, 3)

Taking herself as a model, Markul confirms how painful her life was emotionally and psychologically, as appears in “lost,”

“alone,” and “unnoticed.” However, she believed in her powers and got the how-know of bringing “light to the dark side” of her traumatic life. Later in the poem, Markul stresses the idea that as a woman, she found out through pain that she had superpowers within her which could push her forward to get “the wisdom in her breakdowns” as well as “the healing visions hidden” in her inner soul. She writes:

Pain helped her remember the power within
her storm, the wisdom in her breakdowns and
the healing visions hidden within her moonlit
nightmares

(*The She Book*, 3)

Markul asks every woman to deal with pain in a positive way. In another poem at the end of “The She Book,” she writes:

..... May we all sip
from the wisdom of our suffering.
And awaken with the courage to
share our stories that can heal our
inner and outer worlds.

(*The She Book*, 118)

Thus, Markul urges every woman to get the real “wisdom of our suffering.” By sharing her painful story with others, Markul thinks that doing so may heal her inner life which will be, in turn, reflected in her treatment with the outer world. In the poem “Fifty-one,” Markul puts it directly for all women:

The nourishment of pain is yours.
Weave its magic into your life.

Let it cloak your shoulders.
 Let it open you like a flower.
 Let it educate your heart,
 and reveal your superpower.

(*The She Book*, 51)

Markul asks woman to deal with pain positively. The use of metaphors in the second and fourth lines is highly impressive and takes the reader to the meanings intended in a beautiful way. In the second line above, she speaks of pain as if it were having a magic power with which to face the obstacles in her life. In the fourth line, Markul thinks that pain can be a source of life with which the flower of her life can be opened. Moreover, She believes that pain can teach lots of lessons to woman, the least of which is that it may “reveal” her “superpower” within her, the power that gives her the ability to endure and to change suffering into wisdom.

In another poem, Markul speaks about her emotional pain and her ability to change its severity into an endurable experience by reminding herself of the hidden superpower rooted in her and the wisdom behind the pain. She writes:

Even though emotional pain
 was passed down to you, and has been
 coursing through your veins since the
 moment you felt gravity, so has the
 strength, wisdom, and the kind of
 warriorship that can end
 this tragic saga

with you.

(*The She Book*, 117)

Markul here addresses any woman in such a situation reminding her of the “strength” and the “warriorship” within her in an attempt to charge the power of the woman in her struggle with the hostile circumstances of daily life.

In the poem “Fifty-Two,” Markul stresses woman's ability to change every painful experience in her life into a triumph. She writes,

The rules of this game are yours.
The arena is yours.
The sweat, fire and burn is yours.
The triumphs are yours.
And like everything in life,
It is all waiting for you.

(*The She Book*, 52)

All the threads of the puppet are in the hands of woman. She owns the problem and the solution at the same time simply because all “the rules of the game” are within her hands. The pains are hers and “the triumphs” over all pains are also hers. The last line above assures that the future of the female sex is awaiting a journey the woman herself and no one else should set out into to get her awaited-rewards.

After accepting pain making of it a driving force to go forward, Markul moves to the second step in raising the consciousness of women of their hidden potentialities and “superpowers.” In many a poem, she reminds women of their true worth asking

them to be well-aware of who they are. In the poem “Seventy-Two,” she addresses woman saying:

Your pain will transform you.
 Your story will enliven the world.
 Your truths will magnetize your tribe.
 Your weird will set you free.
 You are worthy.
 You are worthy.
 You are worthy.

(*The She Book*, 72)

Markul invites woman to defeat any hints of despair due to pain showing that her triumph will guide the world through. The woman has a strong personality and deserves to be on equal footing with man in modern society. Repeating “you are worthy” stresses the idea behind. In “Twenty-Four,” She confirms the strong personality of woman saying:

..... And I don't know any woman
 who just gets over this. Because, for a
 woman,
 it's hard to ignore the power and magnitude
 her body has - that she has. Because her
 story
 is every woman's story.

(*The She Book*, 24)

Markul boasts of the woman's ability to go beyond all pains and to empower herself simply because she is up to that positive

position she can attain for herself through her own potential powers. She praises “the power and magnitude” of woman’s body confirming her “strength,” “courage” and worthiness as well as her ability to “control the world.”

Markul advocates the second step after accepting the pain which is to believe in her womanly identity that deserves love of herself. In “Ninety-Seven,” she writes:

When I realized my pain came from
wanting

to be liked, I started to love myself.

When I realized my pain came from
wanting

to be acknowledged, I began to see the
woman

I really was.

(*The She Book*, 97)

When she “realizes” that the sources of her pain and problems in life are “to be liked” and “to be acknowledged,” she naturally resorts to loving herself as a woman singing of her “authentic self” that deserves to be highly evaluated by others. Of course, love increases woman’s awareness of her respectable identity.

In another poem, Markul stresses love as a basic mechanism in any attempt to be aware of oneself. She writes,

May you discover
what it really means
to love

and accept yourself
in this lifetime.

(*The She Book*, 104)

The poem is an invitation for every woman to love herself and to have confidence in her powers as well.

The climax of Markul's feeling of the necessity of woman raising of consciousness of her powers as a female living in a male-dominated society comes in her poem "One-Hundred-And-Six." The very outset of the poem reminds woman that she is a crowned queen of the universe, if man is the crowned king. She praises woman saying:

A queen you have always been.

A queen you must always be.

For you're filled with your own kind of
magic.

The wanderer

creator

lover

mother

dreamer

between earth and sky.

(*The She Book*, 106)

Thus, Markul confirms the woman's stature in the society, a position which has been and will ever be the same without change. The woman here and there has her own "magic." The poet names some of her roles in life which woman plays in a distinct way.

In the poem “Sixty–Seven,” Markul stresses the same idea of woman’s value in our life. She reminds every woman of her real value saying:

Exhale deeply and completely.
Because you are already beautiful.
Because you are already enough.
Inhale fully.
Because you are already powerful.
Because you are already genius.

(*The She Book*, 67)

Markul proudly asks every woman to “exhale” and “inhale” completely and fully because of all the rarities woman already has just by birth: power, genius, holiness, and magic.

The second strategy Tanya Markul suggests for women to achieve their empowerment is through building up relationships which may lead to realization of the significance of women’s role in today’s culture and society. Of course, the first relationship to be secured is between the woman and herself. All the ideas related to woman’s awareness of her own powers can be approached in that direction. It is a kind of relationship between woman and herself. However, there are other forms of relationship required by women to get their empowerment.

An important tool to establish strong relationships in Markul’s view is holding a deeply rooted connection with nature and other human beings. Of course, in moments of despair, one needs the help of others to listen to him sharing him his feelings which may perform the role of an outlet for such desperate

moments. Relationship with nature is necessary for woman to get her rightful position in modern society. In the poem “Twenty-Eight,” Markul stresses the same idea when she writes:

Sit in the darkness if you want to feel better.
Cause there is no other way out of this mess.
Be still and feel until you can't tell where
you,
begin and shadow ends. It will scare you with
depth and spook you with glory. Let it show
you a new way, and a stronger, softer, more
magical you.

(*The She Book*, 28)

Thus, according to Markul, in times of stress and pains, woman can do nothing but building a relationship with nature by sitting “in the darkness,” as it is the only outlet “out of this mess” around her. By doing so, woman is endowed “a new way” through which she can find out “the stronger” and magical powers hidden within her.

In “Twenty-Nine,” Markul propagates the idea that any woman should have an intimate relationship with nature as nature can teach her how to face the hostile world around her. She writes:

She learns, grows and becomes so strong and
so brilliant as much through suffering as
triumph, as much through screaming her head
off in the dark as sitting quietly among swaying

flowers.....

(*The She Book*, 29)

Markul propagates the idea that woman coming into close contact with nature may charge her with the needed power to face the upcoming problems. The relationship with nature here makes the woman “strong” and “brilliant” giving her the ability to “triumph” any forms of “suffering.” Hence, nature endows her with the weapon with which to get her equal rights in society after overcoming the hardships she may come across. In the poem “Thirty-Nine,” Markul also says:

Sit long in nature, and after a while, she'll sit
within you. Let her take away your name,
your
history.....let her
.....and awaken
you to your inner mermaid.

(*The She Book*, 39)

Thus, Markul advises woman to be unified with nature so as to give nature the opportunity to save her soul.

Another form of relationships suggested by feminists is the relationships among human beings. In order to get her empowerment, women should have relationships with other human beings in the society. In her poetry, Markul stresses the need of woman to be aided by others in her search for identity as a human being having the same rights as man. In one of the poems of “The She Book,” She writes:

As I wept
 in the arms of darkness
 I heard the voice of my grandmother
 say,
 Nothing stays the same, darling
 not even pain. (113)

In moments of despair, one needs the sympathy of others to help him bear the severity of the moment. Speaking about herself, Markul remembers one of such moments while weeping, when her grandmother soothes her pains. She reminds her granddaughter that “nothing stays the same.” The wise old woman tells her child that life is a mixture of “ecstasy” and “ache” and that life is always in a matter of flux. The relationships among human beings may help in charging the young with a current of endurance to face any coming pains in her life. Of course, Markul addresses all women in such a situation. The relationships with the nearest family members strongly affect the members of the family and may shape their lives, especially women. The relations Markul has with her family push her to realize early in life important lessons to get prepared for the years to come. In her poem “Twenty,” Markul writes:

It was hard growing up
 with my mother and father long gone

 and some uncles thought I was a burden.
 But most preferred unwanted children

to be silent and invisible.

(*The She Book*, 20)

The poet clarifies the relationships between her and the members of her family. She confirms the absence of intimacy and warmth between her and her father, mother, uncles, and aunts. This reaches the climax when she reveals their feelings towards that “unwanted” young girl. However, she accepts the challenge of being in such a psychological atmosphere and decides to build a kind of relationship with them as a remedy for her painful experience. She finally realizes:

I am nothing.

I am nothing to them.

And nothing to you.

And nothing to anyone.

(*The She Book*, 20)

According to Markul, the solution comes in accepting their unloving emotions towards her and to build her own future away from their indifference to her. She decides to love herself in order to save herself. Markul wants to say that any female can adopt the same strategy to rescue herself. In her poem “Nineteen,” she speaks decisively on the same issue saying:

You should never have to ...

beg someone to love you

force anyone to see you

or fight to make them stay.

Not even blood.

Not even bone.

(*The She Book*, 19)

Markul anticipates the relationship between two different parties of siblings, especially if they are not in good terms with each other. According to her, it is better to go beyond the situation changing it from a passive experience into a more positive strategy to plan for one's future life. The message here is directed to all women in order to overcome such hardships in their lives.

Another step Markul suggests for building relationships is having ties with other human beings away from the family. This can be done especially with people who are related to one particular kind of future life. She thinks that women should unite together to form a powerful current that can push the water forward. In the poem "Sixty-Two," Markul says:

But she had a soulful mission. So she
surrounded herself with women who had
their
own intentions and goals, but more than
anything, women who wanted to heal
themselves, and who also wanted to see her
heal, rise and manifest her dreams.

(*The She Book*, 62)

Accordingly, all women should cooperate and help one another to get their overall dreams achieved. All women having the same "intentions" and "goals" should be unified so long as they have one purpose of life in common.

According to Markul, such relationships with other human beings should be built on equal footing. All the members of such a relationship should bear in their minds that all the members are equal in almost everything. In her poem “Eighty-Five,” she writes:

When she shifted from competition to
Collaboration, all the women around her
became radiant stars in a dark blue sky, each
one striking and rising, without trying to
outshine.

(*The She Book*, 85)

Every woman is more like a star shining and guiding others through. Each woman plays an indispensable role in their glorious fight to get their respectful position in society. No woman should “outshine” others because all of them are equally important and do their jobs skillfully and ably.

To deepen the feeling that all women need one another in their struggle towards equality, Markul addresses every woman reminding her that all other women are in need of such a relationship which represents the only possible means to attain their goal. In another poem, Markul addresses every woman:

You never really know the
true impact you have on those around you.
You never know how much someone
needed

that smile you gave them.

(*The She Book*, 111)

The poet confirms the importance of the relationships among all women as a step towards unification which, in turn, guides them through to get their hopes of equality.

Conclusion

Tanya Markul is a promising young poet whose work has acclaimed real stature among poetry readers worldwide. In her two volumes of poetry having the same expressive title, “The She Book,” she reveals both her personal trauma reflected in her painful lifetime, as well as the generational trauma of all women on earth who suffer because of gender-based behaviors. Women empowerment has always been at the core of her mind and heart while writing the poems of the two volumes. All strategies theorized by eminent proponents of feminism and female empowerment can be traced out in her poems. Enduring pain courageously changing it to be a motif that pushes her forward is Markul’s original suggestion women can adopt to eventually attain their empowerment. In her poetry, she urges women to get beyond their pains and traumas simply because they have the power to do so. By raising women's consciousness of their potential abilities and hidden powers, Markul invites women to

have self-confidence and even pride in their indispensable role in today's life and culture. She also urges women to have strong relationships with other human beings in an attempt to establish a real position in society. What really attracts readers to Tanya Markul's poetry is her use of the language that echoes the healing and revealing powers inviting all sufferers of the world to go ahead. According to Markul, the solution of the female crisis comes from within women themselves. She always reminds them in her poetry that they themselves have the power to initiate any change they are looking forward to in a challenging modern world.

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