

with idealized notions of the family' (Arendell:2000 qtd in Dalla:190) Moreover prevailing societal attitudes that are prone to stigmatize a prostitute colours their and their children's lives. This basic assumption negates all possibilities of an identity that Subala nurtures and in a grotesque sequence of shocking details, Subala falls off her mothering stance despite savoring all pains of an impending motherhood. Society is always wary of any kind of independence in woman and hence a prostitute is conveniently marked as an outcaste and denied the sanctums of respectable femininity for being sexually deviant and ideologically independent. Subsequently they become victims of an overpowering patriarchy and never become free from that. Confronting the reality of their victimization they respond to the unspeakable humiliation of becoming an outcaste by asserting that it is their choice.

As a professional sexworker, Subala gradually builds up the right to determine the terms and conditions of her work and her earning power reduces its oppressive nature. From the deplorable stance of being an object of prey, she attains a subjective position. Nevertheless, it becomes clear from the narrative that she never derives pleasure from her work. It is only a supporting livelihood for her. Instead of commending her for making a good sale, we condemn her for honestly and openly exchanging sex for money. She is denigrated for entering an industry that commercializes sex while catering to male biological needs and denied the sanctums of respectable femininity. Subala's entry to this profession is the consequence of her identity as a male defined object of a subordinating sexuality that is reinforced by prevailing cultures and ideologies and made real by her sexual oppression in the form of rape and violence.

The groups of prostitutes described in Subala are colourful personalities and seem to have no qualms about their profession. The rough lessons of the sex trade have schooled them to a life of psychic and social adjustment in the face of rejection. This commercial exchange of sex may initially have been the result of coercion but faced with no other alternative; they accept their objectification and become dependent on men who are now imperative for their survival. They live up to their erotic image and subvert the negative connotation associated with their trade in the respectable sanctums. They consider it to be just another form of work that provides them their means of subsistence. Homen Bargohain seems to recognize the dehumanization of women that continues deceptively in the semblance of a woman's willingness and desire. If we accept that prostitution is just another form of work, we should also acquiesce to Kathleen Barry's assumption that sex is a male right whether it is 'bought, sold, seized in rape, or more subtly coerced as in sexual harassment' (Barry:1984:26). Considered thus, prostitution can never be a form of work because regardless of how they got into it, the prostitutes always remain degraded victims of male sexual supremacy as they become a source of fancy and pleasure for an economically