



The Evolution of the Feministic Desire

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Abstract

Hermeneutics refers to the formulation of the principles of interpretation that apply specifically to the bible. From the 19th century, it reflects the theory of interpretation in general. It involves getting at the meaning of all written texts, including legal, historical, and literary texts. Dilthey claims that a reader is able to achieve an objective interpretation of an author's expressed meaning. The result of the evolution of feminism is the commencement of women's empowerment. For its development, the literature is the suitable path. The feminist children's literature is like fertile soil to expect the apt response. It points to the female experience and how it helps to expand and change the world. Cynthia Kadohata, a Japanese American writer leaves an attempt on feminism and women's empowerment in her works. It shines in her novel "The Thing about Luck", which won National Book Award in 2013. Through hermeneutic perspectives, "The Thing about Luck" brings out the suffering and challenges of women. It shows the first victory of women empowerment.

Keywords: Women workers, Empowerment, Decision making, Self interest, Culture.

Feminist Literature is to speak out the political, economical, and social inequality of the sexes. It is an organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests. It is against gender stereotypes and gender based expectations. It reflects the system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. It speaks against the literature where historically presented as objects seen from a male perspective. The goal is to develop and uncover a female tradition of writing. It is to interpret symbolism of women's writing so that it will not be lost or ignored by the male perspective. It uses to analyze women writers and their writings from a female perspective. It views the awareness of the sexual politics of language and literature.

Cynthia Kadohata was born on July 2, 1956. She is a Japanese American Children's writer. She is well known for children's and young adult novels. Her popular works are *Kira-Kira* and *The Thing about Luck*. *Kira-Kira* won the Newbery Medal in 2005. *The Thing about Luck* won the National Book Award in Young People's Literature in 2013. Her first short story got published in *The New Yorker* in 1986. Her works are *The Floating World* (1989); *In the Heart of the Valley of Love* (1992); *The Glass Mountains* (1995); *Kira-Kira* (2004); *Weedflower* (2006); *Cracker! The Best Dog in Vietnam* (2007); *Outside Beauty* (2008); *A Million Shades of Gray* (2010); *The Thing About Luck* (2013); *Half a World Away*



(2014); *Checked* (2018); *A Place to Belong* (2019). The New York Times praises *The Floating World* as “beautiful, clean yet lyrical prose”. Natalie Whetzel argues that *Kira-Kira* as “creates a masterpiece of specific moments entwined in emotions. This novel has the ability to inspire the reader to remember what it is to live with the heart of a child”. Hazel Rochman applauds *Kira-Kira* as “the real story I in the small details, never self-consciously ‘poetic’ but tense with family drama. In her first novel for young people, Kadohata stays true to the child’s viewpoint in plain, beautiful prose that can barely contain the passionate feelings”.

The story *The Thing about Luck* appears with the negative tone of the protagonist, Summer. She is a twelve year old girl desires good luck and feels they are cursed with bad luck. The journey of the protagonist commence with pessimistic perspective. Her whole family works under Parker’s Harvesting Company. Summer works with her maternal grandmother Obaachan, a cook and grandfather Jiichan, a combine driver. Summer’s younger brother, Jaz accompanies them who suffer with invisibility. Summer views the luck, “The thing about luck is that it’s like a fever. You can take fever meds and lie in bed and drink chicken broth and sleep seventeen hours in a row, but basically your fever will break, when it wants to break” (2). Her comparison shows her thirst of luck in her life. It portrays the life of a girl is not only her choice, but also the opinion of her surroundings.

When Obaachan and Jiichan moves to quarrel, Summer remind the words of her mother, “...after that number of years, you no longer had to be polite all the time” (5). It makes the children to learn to show their presence, importance, opinion and participation in the perfect period. It is also to make the girl children learn not to leave their dignity ever. Often Obaachan make the children to repeat her words to check whether they are listening. It is the good habit that Summer learns from her.

Melody (or) Mel is a close friend of Summer. For the meeting party, Mel joins Summer’s family to help. Obaachan asks Mel to vacuum the room. Basically, the culture should be strictly followed by the women. It means the women are to serve their family and be the house hold material. Summer’s family works as the contract custom harvesters. It means to harvest wheat for the land owners through the contract dealers. The farmer works under the dealers. They are responsible to complete the work within the particular time for the land owners. The dealers allot the workers to harvest, by providing harvesting equipments which got through the loan.

During their lunch, Obaachan expresses her love toward Jaz unconsciously. This makes Summer feels sad, but she consoles herself as a elder one. It shows that the women are the symbol of Tolerance. When they did not get their own space from others, they have to seek their self support. Summer visits school for the last day before leaving for harvesting. She de-stress herself with Thunder (a pet dog) before entering into the house. Summer dislikes the single behavior of Obaachan. Obaachan like to eat plum fruit more. But she keeps the seed into a bowl. Summer hates like, “Spitting seeds like that would have gotten me quite a scolding, but as I said, he didn’t have to use her manners anymore because she was old” (26).



Summer should wear the rubber gloves before starting to make the dish. It is a rule by Obaachan, because she admires the beauty of her hand. Beauty is the hidden word refers to women. The major superstitious belief about women is that they are to be beauty conscious. During the bed time, Jiichan reveals his past story. Stories carry the part to pass the important role of women to the new generation. The major role of women is pregenerated. The stories of Jiichan reflect the moral and concentrating on the single work gives its unique success. In Jiichan's style, "I want you to remember, always keep eye open for special weed" (29). The special weed is the culture to get the unique success to pass it over to upcoming generation.

Summer suffers from DEET and its unusual smell. During the travel, Summer and Thunder enjoys the moisture air through the windows of the glass. Obaachan suffers from her back pain and takes rest in the middle of the highway. The sweet quarrel commences among them. They argue for who dies first by comparing the healthy foods they take. Summer is responsible for Jaz. Jiichan gives suggestion Summer for concentrating on Jaz. It is, "In fact, Jiichan taught me to meditate partly because he thought that would help my concentration whenever I had to hold Jaz back" (35).

They reach Mr. Parker's house after sunrise. Summer's innocence makes her to think the sun as the red ball in Japanese flag. Mr. Parker's development encourages Summer to make creative improvement in her life. Mrs. Parker is so kind and humble towards the workers. The meeting is to drive fast to Texas, as they should reach before fog storm approaches. A strict rule of the Parker's Harvesting Company is to harvest the wheat before rain. If it successfully done, Mr. Parker takes the employees to the special trip. She appreciates the attitude of Mrs. Parker. Mostly, the maintenance of time is possible only by women.

Mrs. Parker was all business a lot of the time, but she was very kind, and if anyone got hurt, she was all over them like a Band-Aid. She was a large woman with a strong, caring face, the sort of face that made you like her right away because he was nice, but you knew you couldn't take advantage of her. (43).

When they reach Texas, everyone start their work immediately. Obaachan will take her car to buy things for cooking.

Obaachan frowns at Summer not to stare at boys. Because boys cause trouble, it is not her age to face the issues. She blabbers about the age of girls get marry in this era. Like, "In my day girl not married by eighteen, she a reject. Different today. Girls get married at thirty. So if I stare at boy at twelve and get married at eighteen, that mean you tare at boy at twenty-four and get married at thirty" (54). Obaachan advises Summer to look after her own life than to get distraction. The team members are afraid of rain and hailstorm for harvesting. It reflects the good idea to make hay while the sun shines. The timing is more important for harvesting as it gives the essence of it. Summer shares, "My secret goal was to make mosquitoes out of real gold and sell them for jewelry" (59). It views the obstacles of women to throw from their life.

Summer's friend says life go on forever. But from her view, life makes everyone to realize something. Summer believes that life is not only to live and it is also to learn. The



wheat harvesting happens only when it carries thirteen point five percent moist. Timing is everything for harvesting. Mrs. Parker includes Tuna Sandwiches, Chicken Salad Sandwiches, and wheat bread in menu. Robbie, Son of Mr. Parker admires the photographic memory of his mother.

Summer feels hesitate for being responsible to find a grocery store. She thinks, she left free when she is with her parents. She has the habit of taking mental notes. She wishes to be a perfectionist like her grandmother Obaachan. Summer feel embarrassing to not having the photographic memory like Mrs. Parker.

Summer choose *The Separate Peace* to do her assignment for the school project. The book makes to think about deep inside of her. The women's search of peace in their life does not find the end. Summer walks with bare feet in a garden. It reminds her mother's words, "...because apparently, you could step on all sorts of terrible things outside-to her, the ground was a battle field" (88). She admires the farm and feels the life in it, even it is a part of the dirt.

May be I should just write the truth and say that it was the worst book I ever read, but that it made me wonder things about myself. It made me think that each person had all sorts of things going on inside of them, but most of these things would never surface unless circumstances were exactly right. So basically, inside of me was a big wilderness, and then around the wilderness was a nice, mowed lawn (103).

At last, she realizes herself as a genius. When the sky fills with the clouds and disappears, Summer thinks about the visualization of equality. The contradictory thought between Obaachan and Mrs. Parker resemble the consciousness of health. Summer admires the memory power of Mrs. Parker. Mrs. Parker repeats the complete novel without seeing after one read. Summer feels jealous of her talent and responsibility. One of the dishes in a buffet system goes wrong by Obaachan. Mrs. Parker does not believe her ears of Obaachan's unrespectable reply. Even the small mistakes of women are considered as against the world and in favor of crime.

When Summer returns home, Obaachan notices her attachment with Robbie. As a responsible grandmother, she warns Summer's activity friendship is dangerous. Summer thinks, "I'm a good cook", I said triumphantly. "Men don't care about good cook until ready to get married," Obaachan said" (144). The world wants women to be a perfect marriage material. Even the culture is left in the responsibility of women to cope with.

Summer forgets to do her assignment to share her experience of harvest. She share her days in simple words. They are "We harvest the crops that feed the world" (148). The women are partially compared with the nature as it suffers in the world and serve the world. She adds another view. They are, "I help cook for the crew because my grandmother, who is supposed to be cooking, isn't well" (149). In here, undoubtedly the women have to follow what her same gender did before.

She learns cooking from Obaachan. Obaachan suggests her to put love into the dishes. Hence, it gives its best for consumers. Like, "Jiichan had told me that while I was cooking, I



should put love into what I was doing, and then the food would be healthier” (154). The world suggests putting love only during cooking, but for equality is doubtful.

Summer gets ready to reveal the story of the dead chicken to the Parkers. She encourages herself from, “Like, instead of sitting around worrying about it, just get the confession and punishment over with as quickly as I could” (156). If they have to move to Oklahoma, she changes herself to be so much responsible and will also meet many consequences.

Summer feels happy of Laskey’s words, “I appreciate your honesty” (167). The word of appreciation is like a life time thirst for women. Obaachan says, “But sometimes you have to do something stupid to do right thing. But right thing more important than stupid” (168). Learning from elders looks like the stepping stones to see delightful peace. Mr. Parker thinks to move some workers to Oklahoma soon. But Summer feels more as she is going to miss Robbie. Obaachan feels worried, because Jiichan works more in his old age. First time in Summer’s life, he is going to sleep by facing south. It is a great thing, because she has to forgive even the bed for everyone in her home. Forgiveness is portrayed as primary section of women’s character.

Summer shares “Sometime you’ll be happy and you’ll be sad, just like anyone” (180) to Jaz. It reflects the truth of women life. Jaz starts to mold himself to become mature and accept the life and ready to face the circumstances. When he suffers to sleep, Jiichan climbs up to his couch and recites his past story. It is about Jiichan gets lost in his childhood days. When he returns back to his home, he learns the lesson from his teacher. That is “They say school number one important, but even number one you don’t have to think of all the time. When you walk, think of walk” (181). Often he tells the story to concentrate on single thing to meet the success.

Jiichan and Summer discuss about Opinions and Social Pressure. When Summer cuts an onion, she begins to cry. Jiichan shares Mosanto, a huge agricultural biotechnology company develops an onion that does not make us cry. The uncut wheat looks like a flying carpet in the day time. It looks admirable. Obaachan informs Summer, Jiichan and Jaz to take rest in the combine, as she is going to drive. Summer questions Obaachan whether she feels humiliate and proud at the same time. Obaachan replies it as the human condition. She shares sometimes everyone have to take the life as it is. They have no option to choose.

The next day, the harvesters check the moisture level of the wheat to harvest. But the wheat moisture is in the maximum level. They procrastinate some hours to check the level. After some time, they ready to harvest. It reveals that the change take some time. Obaachan sets her cooking vessels in the night. Summer comments her as an incredible sleepless woman. The success blooms only from the sleepless nights. Jiichan worries for, “This worst moment of my life” (208). It is because his body is not in the condition to work hard and thinks big to repay the mortgage.

Summer wants to be a different kid and practices to meditate. Obaachan has more healthy foods and drinks for Jiichan. She expresses her love towards him. She questions with care, “How you feel old man?” (215). After so many works, the crew takes a break. Jiichan



takes a sound sleep and ask Summer to inform Mick that he is not going to work anymore. He feels satisfy by saying, “Your Obaachan drive when her neck hurt, I should drive when I sick. But she stronger than me. Tell Mick I need quit now. Cannot do more” (216). It portrays the clear view of women are not even physically weaker sex. The crew feels sad because,

The land here was more terraced than the land on the Laskey farm. This made the going slower. There was no way one combine could cut all the wheat that was here in only a few days. Even though it was a small farm, right then it seemed like the biggest farm in the world. The combine shook as I rolled into a trench hidden beneath the remnants of cut wheat. (218)

Summer thinks of the job, mortgage, house and life. At night, Summer comes out of the room and plans to drive the combine. She does not have light at night. She moves to the place of combine with help of Thunder. But in the middle, Thunder leave her alone and runs into the dark and disappear.

She scares for being alone. Her deed are, “I closed my eyes and took a few big breaths. But I didn’t have a choice” (227). She switches on the light of the combine and gives two horn sounds of combine. Mick notices that Summer tries to drive. He help her and divides their farm as north and south. When Summer begins the combine, it moves forward with faster speed. She feels little bit scary. She thinks to be sensitive to the ground. It is like, “It was kind of like when you’re walking and you automatically adjust your feet with each step” (229). Mick asks her to slow down. Summer thinks that Mick discourages her and shouts him as a negative person.

She believes the word of Obaachan, “I remembered Obaachan saying pressure was the most powerful force in the world. I had a lot of pressure on me and in me” (230). It means the pressure forces everyone to move forward. Obaachan shares it in a optimistic tone. Even with more tension, Summer works with the combine to harvest the wheat within the time. The dust hides Mick and she completes half of the work. It makes her to feel happy and hugs Thunder.

She recollects the word of her father, “Rise to the occasion!” (235). It motivates her to correct herself. When she steps down to clean the farm, Mick stops her and asks her to return to the motel. At last, Mick encourages Summer as she does her decent job cutting. His words make Summer to think him like a big brother. She feels tire by thinking, “I cried because I was relieved the night was over and also because I knew I had to go back out there tomorrow and run the combine again” (238).

They plan to go for the hotel to have their dinner. For that, they enquire the best restaurant near the motel. At night, Summer cleans all the vessels before sleep. She thinks of Mick talk less to all. She reminds of the workers talk less in front of their higher officials. Like, “It’s hard to have a big conversation with people who are in charge of you sixteen hours a day” (250). They share about the food they have in the restaurant. Obaachan says, if we put love in the food while cooking, the person who eats becomes stronger. If we put hate in the food, the person dies.



The next morning, Summer notices a boy is very friendly and close to Jaz. She wishes to bring that boy to her house, so that Jaz would not feel lonely again. That night, she secretly moves out to the farm field. Mick helps Summer to drive combine. When she starts the combine, she feels like safe and secure. She moves the combine very slowly, like “The bin was empty when I started I drove slowly, sometimes even more slowly than two miles an hour” (258). She realizes her happy mood while she smells the scent of cut wheat. She feels proud and encourages herself, “Since I went two miles an hour and good drivers went five mile an hour that meant I was 40 percent of a combine driver, more or less. Not bad for a twelve year-old girl” (260). She satisfies and trusts herself to improve their family condition. She feels courage and sights the black sky, stars and the wheat as her world. Her fear leaves her and the dust of her personality start to settle. She does not do any mistakes and wants to jump up to the sky.

Obaachan and Jiichan come to know about the hard work of Summer. They encourage her to continue and start to trust her for the improvement of the family. Summer surprises the beauty of hard work. The combine’s slow move and the moon’s hang over the field is admiring for Summer. She reminds of her father’s words, “You do what you can do” (270). The Jiichan’s family comes out of the bad luck.

The good luck approaches them after many struggles. Summer views the bad luck is to bring out her talent to combine driving and her thirst to learn new and become expert. The bad luck helps to make realize her family about Summer’s love and care. She jumps and walks with the happiness in the middle of the highway. It ends with new hope.

Women are not only suffers of their gender, but also by race, class, and illiteracy. They opt to de-stress themselves to face their surroundings. Their only option to motivate them is SELF. Beauty is the word given to stop rejuvenating the women’s rights and talents. The travel of Summer through the moisture air reflects the love of surrounding towards women. Throughout the novel, the harvesting resembles the life of women. Women are with the package of responsibility to carry the idea and rules of culture to their upcoming generation. At proper age the women have to learn household works and get marry, give birth and teach the lesson to their daughters that she learnt. Procrastinating the harvest leads to the destruction of weeds. Perfectionism is the term born to decorate the action of women. Feminist literature strives to get the freedom to convey their thoughts, the recognition of individuality, getting financial strength.

The major characters of the novel, moves from Kansas to Texas and to Oklahoma. They work under contract for Parker’s Harvesting Company. Even a twelve year old girl, Summer works as a labor to repay the mortgage of her family. Summer’s family is oppressed to follow the instruction of the Parkers. They have no option to change the list of menu even. When Jiichan gets sick, Mr. Parker offers only an hour to rest and restart the work. The sudden plan to move another area makes the crew to struggle.

The encouraging words of Summer’s father and Jiichan makes her to move forward and take the position to save their family. Hard work, Success, Individuality is not only meant for men. It holds the carpet for the talent minds.



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