

Silence as a Tool of Oppression and Voice as a Tool of Resistance as Portrayed in Select Autobiographies and Memoirs by Migrant Women

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Abstract

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed large-scale migration across the world, transcending borders and giving birth to migrant literature. It strives to project the emotional, psychological, socio-political, cultural and economic aspects of migrant lives in foreign lands raising issues like alienation, silence, nostalgia, transnationalism, hybridity, acculturation and assimilation.

The movement towards the foreign land may be under forced conditions such as natural calamities, abject poverty, war or persecution. It may also be voluntary when people migrate for better education, employment, marriage or a brighter future. Migration is largely considered a male phenomenon; however, figures suggest that women have migrated in almost the same numbers as men in recent years. Still, women are not given their due importance compared to men in the study of migration. Some feminists believe that women are always 'spoken for' by others and, therefore, remain unheard. They call for migrant women to come forward and share their stories with the world, spearheading the subaltern's voice and movement. For centuries, women's voices and writing have been muted or disregarded through patriarchy and colonialism. Women's silence has been imputed, internalised and glorified to such an extent that many do not even notice it. This research paper attempts to analyse the predicament of migrant women focusing on the theme of *silence, the method of silencing and resistance* as portrayed in select autobiographies and memoirs. The texts selected for the paper, namely *The Woman Warrior* (1976) by Maxine Hong Kingston, *I am Malala* (2014) by Malala Yousafzai and *The Last Girl* (2017) by Nadia Murad, aptly foreground the silenced emotions of emigrant women belonging to different parts of the world. It not only unfolds the stories of their struggle and subjugation but also reflects upon their resistance and regeneration.

Keywords: migration, women, silence, voice, autobiographies, memoirs.

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Introduction

Amy Burge notes that the phenomenon of migration cannot be understood based purely on socio-scientific research (Burge 2020, 5). Frank proposes that “migration literature refers to all literary works that are written in an age of migration or at least to those works that can be said to reflect upon migration” (Frank 2015, 107-29). Duffy points out the difference between autobiographical works by migrants themselves and fiction by professional writers that reflects migration directly or indirectly (Duffy 1995, 20-39). Gallien comes up with the term “refugee poetics and aesthetics” including “the publications of former refugees turned residents or nationals as well as, those who have not experienced forced displacement” aiming for a better understanding of the refugee crisis (Gallien 2018, 742).

The autobiographical stories based on first-hand experiences of migrants or their descendants (second and third-generation migrants) are generally considered more authentic and real. They aim to tell the untold and unheard accounts of their loss and dislocation, questioning the stereotypical and biased portrayal of refugees/ immigrants in mainstream media and national literature. Gallien points out, “The experience of refugee writing often consists of co-writing and co-translation between ‘nationals’ and ‘migrants’, which again complicates monolithic national frames” (Gallien 2018, 744). Migrant literature challenges the preexisting definitions of the ‘national’, often rooting for the global rather than the national. Migration is often considered a male movement; however, figures suggest that women have migrated in almost the same numbers as men in recent years. In 2000, there were 85 million female migrants compared to 90 million male migrants (Thapan 2005, 11). Still, women are not given their due importance compared to men in the study of migration.

Autobiographies and Memoirs

Audre Lorde considers writing a vital necessity for women’s existence. She calls for “language and action” by breaking the silence of women from different races and sexual orientations. “I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood. That the speaking profits me, beyond any other effect ... and what I most regretted were my silences ... My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you” (quoted in Gilbert and Gubar 2007, 225). Adeline Yen Mah advocates the idea of ‘bibliotherapy’ as the use of literature to help readers comprehend, evaluate and empower their own lives (quoted in Brown and Clair 2006, 151).

An autobiography is the metamorphosis of self as it develops, overcoming the trials and tribulations of life. It can be said that diaries, memoirs and autobiographies written in moments of pain and distress become a panacea for bruised souls enlightening and inspiring several others. Despite being particularly vulnerable to criticism, women writers across the world

are able to come up with some of the finest autobiographies and memoirs of their times (Faheem 2016, 138). This paper attempts to analyse three autobiographies and memoirs by migrant women belonging to diverse socio-cultural and political backgrounds.

***The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston** follows Kingston's memories of growing up as a child of Chinese immigrants in the United States of America. The book blends autobiography with Chinese folktales based on stories of different Chinese women. The folktales talk about the life and status of women in Chinese society, unravelling the complexities of Kingston's own life – her Chinese American identity, her silence and her finding of voice. She feels different from her American classmates as she does from her own Chinese relatives. Owing to her intergenerational transmission of identity (Thapan 2005, 33-36), it was difficult for her to balance the world she lived in America and her 'second hand' Chinese heritage imbibed chiefly through her mother (Kingston 1976).

***I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick** is the story of Malala, a little girl living in the quaint village of Mingora in Pakistan. She was shot point-blank by the Taliban while on her way home from school for fighting for her right to education. Malala was named after the Pashtun heroine Malalai, who inspired her compatriots with her courage, and she literally grew up to be one. Right from a tender age, she was observant and critical of the ill-treatment of women and other social evils prevalent around her. She often dreams of becoming a politician to fix her country's problems. Malala was only ten years old when the Taliban took control over her region, followed by a series of murders, kidnappings and bombings. Mingora became the battleground between the Pakistani Army and the Taliban, making it impossible for people to stay there. They all decided to move to a safer place. Their identity was reduced to just three letters IDP – internally displaced persons – neither Pakistanis nor Pashtuns. On her return to her home in Mingora, Malala was attacked by the Taliban. She was airlifted to Birmingham to save her life (Yousafzai and McCormick 2014).

***The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity and My Fight Against the Islamic State* by Nadia Murad and Jenna Krajeski** presents an autobiographical account of the horrors of the genocide conducted by the Islamic State of Iraq on the Yazidis during the Second Iraqi Civil War (2013-2017). It gives a heart-wrenching account of how the Yazidis were forced to flee their homes and robbed of their identity and how men were massacred and women were enslaved, bought, and sold like animals. Nadia's grit and determination made her survive such atrocities and enabled her to escape to Kurdistan and finally to Germany. Her unrelenting efforts as a human rights activist to free the Yazidis from the ISIS control and rehabilitate them got her the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018.

Silence

One of the central themes of literature produced by emigrant women is ‘silence and voice’, along with alienation, nostalgia, violence, transnationalism, hybridity, acculturation and assimilation. Tirzah Z Zachariah highlights the relationship between feminist and postcolonial studies, arguing that, like colonised people, women have been deprived of an independent voice or space throughout history (Zachariah 2016, 22). Zachariah brings forth different feminist approaches to ‘silence’ by Tillie Olsen (2003), Elaine Showalter (1981), and King Kok Cheung (1993) to study the portrayal of ‘silence’ by migrant women. Tillie Olsen has written about different ways of interpreting women’s silence. In her view, “silence is considered as inability of voices to find expression” (quoted in Zachariah 2016, 22). Female writers are more likely to be silenced or ignored than male writers. Elaine Showalter uses anthropological evidence to show that “in certain cultures women have evolved a private form of communication out of their need to resist the silence imposed upon them in public life” (Showalter 1981, 192). Cheung presents a detailed analysis of silences suggesting that “silence, too, can speak many tongues, varying from culture to culture” (Cheung 1993, 1). She believes that silence should not always be considered as a sign of weakness; certain silences can also be enabling. Furthermore, Cheung lists certain common tendencies used by women writers to serve their purposes, such as the use of silence, both as a theme and a method, the use of literary devices like dream and fantasy, appearance/voice of a departed soul and open-ended quality of the text (quoted in Zachariah 2016, 25-26). Kingston’s *The Women Warrior* describes Moon Orchid as a woman who is snubbed and disowned by her husband, having dreams and delusions about someone trying to kill her. She kept telling her daughter, “Don’t come to see me because the Mexican ghosts will follow you to my new hiding place” (Kingston 1976, 155). She was silenced and ignored to such an extent that she started having hallucinations and lost her mind.

Methods of Silencing

Houston and Kramarae point out that there can be innumerable ways and means of silencing women – keeping women uneducated and out of public life, positions of authority, and decision making are some of them (Houston and Kramarae 1991, 387-399). Other destructive forms of silencing may include namelessness, erasure, denial, ridicule, false naming, threats, racism, veiling, misuse of religion/culture, male-controlled media, omission, anti-women educational policies, censorship, wars, and terrorism.

Family Hierarchies, Customs and Traditions

Women are often assigned responsibilities as docile homemakers looking after their homes, caring for children/elders, keeping the family together, and upholding customs and traditions. At the same time, they can be easily controlled, oppressed or even eliminated to restore

family honour, customs, and rituals. Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* presents an exotic blend of Chinese folktales narrated by her mother as talk-stories and her own perception of her life in the US. Apparently, the stories talk of brave Chinese women or swordswomen fighting for their land; but they also paint a bleak picture of women in China. Whether Kingston's mother wants to motivate her to be a fighter or to tame her into an ideal Chinese woman is not clear. Despite being a successful working woman and a doctor, Kingston's mother's stories are full of disturbing images of repressive Chinese society like slave girls bought and sold, babies left to die, women committing suicide, ridiculed, disowned, rotting in a mental asylum or stoned to death on the mere suspicion of being a Japanese spy. According to Kingston, "When we Chinese girls listened to adults talk-story, we learned that we failed if we grew up to be but wives or slaves" (Kingston 1976, 19). Her stories have tips for Chinese women on how to dress up, how to comb your hair, how to speak, how to walk ("pigeon toed") (ibid., 11) and so on.

In one of the stories, "No Name Woman", her mother tells Kingston about her father's sister who committed suicide, forgotten and disowned by the family for bringing disgrace upon them "Don't tell anyone you had an aunt. Your father does not want to hear her name. She has never been born" (ibid., 15). Another talk-story in the memoir, "At the Western Palace", talks about Brave Orchid's sister Moon Orchid's search for her estranged husband and her journey to the US to find her lost love, only to be mocked and rejected in return. "He looked directly at Moon Orchid the way the savages looked, looking for lies. "What do you want?" he asked. She shrank from his stare; it silenced her crying." "Look at her. She'd never fit into an American household. I have important American guests who come inside my house to eat." He turned to Moon Orchid, "You can't talk to them. You can barely talk to me" (ibid., 152-153). At that time, it was a common practice for Chinese men to move to the West leaving their wives and children behind. First, the woman is silenced into a voiceless slave and then she is mocked for her inability to speak well.

In her memoir, Malala explains how even as a child she was able to notice the discrimination against women in Pakistan and how fortunate she was to be blessed with a doting father. "I was the apple of my father's eye. A rare thing for a Pakistani girl!" (Yousafzai and McCormick 2014, 18). "Some fathers don't even think of their daughters as valued members of their families..." (ibid., 23).

Racism

It can be said that women of colour are silenced even more when there is sexism and racism in their own families, workplace and society. Michele Wallace opines that because of racism and sexism, a black woman does not dare to make herself clear; "the consequences in home and community seem too high" (Wallace, 1990, 220). The white Euro American culture has little or no interest in knowing about girls and women of colour.

In one of the stories in Kingston's memoir, *White Tigers*, she visualises herself as a Chinese woman warrior, Fa Mu Lan, who fought bravely, recollecting her magical chant. However, she soon realises that in the US she cannot gather enough courage to speak up against her racist bosses. In one of the instances, Kingston relived how her boss used extremely offensive and hateful words like "nigger yellow", mocking her Chinese origin. "I once worked at an art supply house that sold paints to artists. "Order more of that nigger yellow, willya?" the boss told me. "Bright, isn't it? Nigger yellow". "I don't like that word". I had to say in my bad, small person's voice that makes no impact. The boss never deigned to answer." Kingston also describes how her racist employer maliciously selected a venue for an official banquet that was picketed by interracial American organisations like CORE and NAACP working for the rights of people of colour in the US. "I also worked at a land developers' association. The building industry was planning a banquet for contractors, real estate dealers, real estate editors. "Did you know the restaurant you chose for the banquet is being picketed by CORE and the NAACP?" I squeaked. "Of course I know." The boss laughed. "That's why I chose it". "I refuse to type these invitations," I whispered, voice unreliable." (Kingston 1976, 48-49). In both these instances, Kingston felt too weak and insignificant to voice her feelings or overcome her fear.

Wars, Terrorism and Ethnic Cleansing

Women may have little say or participation in promoting wars but they suffer massively. Evelyne Accad, in her 1990 book *Sexuality and War: Literary Masks of the Middle East*, while discussing violence and peace mentions how the following are all related in a sexist and racist society: rape, femicide, infanticide, pornography, sexual slavery, sexual harassment, militarisation, war, refugees, terrorism, and armament (as quoted in Houston and Kramarae 1991, 393).

In her memoir, Nadia talks about 'rape' being used throughout history as a weapon of war by men against women – a symbol of terror and misogyny. "The rape was the worst part. It stripped us of our humanity and made thinking about the future – returning to Yazidi society, marrying, having children, being happy – impossible. We wished they would kill us instead" (Murad and Krajewski 2017, 161).

The Last Girl presents the testimony of how ISIS misuses and misinterprets Islam justifying rape and killings through their fatwas and pamphlets. It gave them license to enslave, torture, buy and sell, marry and convert Yazidi women as their 'sabayas'. "But you have no choice. You are here to be sabaya and you will do exactly what we say. And if any of you scream again, trust me, things will be even worse for you. ... We were no longer human beings—we were sabaya" (ibid., 122-123). ISIS called their human spoils sabaya referring to young Yazidi women they would buy and sell as sex slaves. Sabaya were expected to be totally subservient to their masters. They were snubbed, beaten, whipped, and repeatedly raped

whenever they dared to raise their voice or escape. “When I felt his hand on my shoulder again, I screamed. It tore open the silence. Soon other girls started screaming as well, until the inside of the bus sounded like the scene of a massacre. Abu Batat froze. “Shut up all of you!” he shouted, but we didn’t” (ibid., 121)..... “Why did you scream?” Nafah tightened his grip on my hair ...Then he spat in my face ... Nafah pushed the lit cigarette into my shoulder, pressing it down through the fabric of the dresses and shirts I had layered on that morning, until it hit my skin and went out. The smell of burned fabric and skin was horrible, but I tried not to scream in pain. Screaming only got you into more trouble ... Nafah slapped my face hard, twice, ... “Go back to the other sabaya,” he said. “And never make another sound again.” (ibid., 127-128).

The Yazidis were brutally massacred, enslaved and converted by ISIS. They were snatched off their home, religion and identity as if the Yazidis never existed on earth “..... they piled up all the documents—IDs, ration cards, birth certificates—and burned them, leaving the ashes in a mound. It was as though they thought that by destroying our documents, they could erase the existence of Yazidis from Iraq” (ibid., 132). The use of such violence and force may lead to total silence of the masses through ethnic cleansing.

Misogynistic Policies for Education and Public Life

Malala Yousufzai, the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize winner, is a symbol of peaceful protest for education. Her memoir, *I am Malala* gives a powerful insight into the drastic change in her peaceful life in Pakistan after the Taliban took over. Malala’s own school, which was no less than a paradise for her, was under threat. It was a symbol of education, hope and freedom – a refuge from the chaos and insanity of a city at war. In her own words, “inside the Khushal school, we flew on wings of knowledge. In a country where women are not allowed out in public without a man, we girls travelled far and wide inside the pages of our books.” (Yousafzai and McCormick 2014, 34)

Malala dared to speak openly against the Taliban, attending rallies, writing dairies, and giving interviews in national and international media calling for help amidst threats and violence. “‘This is not the stone Age’, I said. ‘But it feels like we are going backward. Girls are getting deprived of their rights’ ... Microphones made me feel as if I were speaking to the whole world.... I felt as if the wind would carry my words, the same way it scatters flower pollen in the spring, planting seeds all over the earth” (ibid., 71). Denying them education and basic human rights, “Taliban want to turn the girls of Pakistan into identical, lifeless dolls” without any voice, feeling or identity (ibid., 75). The text abounds in numerous such references “Banners that read WOMEN NOT ALLOWED were strung up at the entrance of the market ... Fazlullah kept up his attacks saying that girls who went to school were not good Muslims – that they will go to hell” (ibid., 48). “The women of the village also have to hide their faces whenever they left their homes. And they could not meet or speak to men who were not their close relatives. None of them could read ... Schools for girls had been burned

to the ground, and all women were forced to wear a severe form of burqa, a head to toe veil.” (ibid., 23-24). “I’d seen the wives be required to walk a few paces behind their husbands. I’d seen the women be forced to lower their gaze when they encountered a man ... Living under wraps seemed so unfair – and uncomfortable. From an early age, I told my parents that no matter what other girls did, I would never cover my face like that. My face was my identity ... ‘Malala will live as free as a bird’.” (ibid., 17-18)

In *The Last Girl*, Nadia reiterates that life was not easy for women in Iraq under ISIS. They were wiped out of public life. “All the women were completely covered in black abayas and niqabs; ISIS has made it illegal for a woman to leave home uncovered or alone, so they floated through the streets, almost invisible.” (Murad and Krajewski 2017, 133)

Threats and Ridicule

Nadia recounts how forced marriages, conversion and humiliation by ISIS snatched Yazidi women’s identity away from them, muting them physically, mentally, and emotionally. “Hajji Salman would tell me over and over, ‘I will punish you if you try to escape’ ... Maybe, if I tried to escape, the beating would be severe enough to scar or disfigure me ... ‘You are no longer a virgin,’ he would say, ‘and you are a Muslim. Your family will kill you. You are ruined.’ Even though I had been forced, I believed him. I felt ruined.” (ibid., 171-172)

These women were made to believe that they were worthless creatures having nowhere to go. Women’s discourse as well as their existence are trivialised. Nadia recalls how one of the ISIS militants yelled at them scornfully, “All you Yazidis, do you always stink?” ... “I wanted the militants to be so put off by our stench – after sitting in hot buses, many of us vomiting from fear – that they wouldn’t touch us. Instead, they pushed us toward the bathroom in groups. ‘Wipe that filth off of you!’” (ibid., 134)

Apathy or Women’s Complicity in Silencing Other Women

Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* opens up with her mother warning her not to speak, thus one woman silencing the other. “You must not tell anyone, what I am about to tell you.” (Kingston 1976, 3). This statement is highly ironic and paradoxical. It is ironic as Kingston has found her voice through her memoir and she is telling everyone about it. It is a paradox because much of Kingston’s mother’s preaching is based on telling—giving voice to the Chinese customs and traditions.

In her memoir, *The Last Girl*, Nadia asks certain pertinent questions regarding the apathy of the people living in the towns or cities where she and other women were taken as sex slaves. “I was amazed to see that life was going on as usual ... Civilian cars filled the road in front of us and behind us, the drivers barely glancing at the trucks full of women and children. We

couldn't have looked normal, stuffed into the backs of trucks, crying and holding on to one another. So why wasn't anyone helping us?" (Murad and Krajeski 2017, 109) "The screams from the slave market followed us, loud enough to echo through the entire city. I thought about the families in the houses on those streets ... There was no way they couldn't hear what was going on in the house. Music and television, which otherwise might have drowned out our screams, were banned by ISIS" (ibid., 143). Moreover, she was taken aback by the apparent indifference of the Iraqi women "Any woman in Iraq, no matter her religion, had to struggle for everything. Seats in parliament, reproductive rights, positions at universities—all these were the results of long battles ... Under ISIS, women were erased from public life. Men joined it for obvious reasons—they wanted money, power, and sex ... Those men were served by the laws adopted by ISIS, which gave them total authority over their wives and daughters. I couldn't understand, though, why a woman would join the jihadists and openly celebrate the enslavement of girls ..." (ibid., 153).

The indifference of the women of her own country towards the plight of Yazidi women tore her heart and filled her with bitterness and disgust. She narrates her encounter with a non-Yazidi woman in Mosul in the following words: "I stared at Morteja's mother, looking for a glimmer of sympathy. She was a mother after all ... She knew I was there by force, that I was separated from my family, and that the men in Kocho had been killed. She showed no affection or sympathy toward me, only glee in finding out that because I had been forced to convert to Islam, there was one fewer Yazidi in Iraq. I hated her, not just because she had let Mosul be taken over by ISIS, but because she had let it be taken over by men." (Murad and Krajeski, 2017, 152-153).

Finding a Voice

Through all these years, women have learnt and devised effective communication techniques against intense methods of silencing and suppression. According to Houston and Kramarae, some of the ways women have broken silence are through the analysis of silencing techniques, including creative code-switching, re-evaluation of trivial discourse, graffiti, oral histories, coining new words, writing diaries, journals, memoirs, forming support groups, starting women's presses and other alternate means of expression. Houston and Kramarae noted that the use of silence under the pretence of docility and ignorance were among the leading strategies of resistance for the African American slaves (Houston and Kramarae 1991, 394)

The final chapter of the memoir *The Women Warrior*, 'A Song for the Barbarian Reed Pipe' focuses on Kingston's difficult childhood and teenage years, her attempts to get a voice and to reconcile with her mother and her conflicting messages about women's empowerment and disempowerment. She even holds her mother responsible for her inability to speak properly, for cutting the membrane under her tongue as part of the Chinese custom. Eventually, Kingston was able to find her own voice through her writing; her words became her arsenal to overcome

her doubts, insecurities and frustration. She was able to create and assert her own identity, her own talk-story keeping whatever she liked from her mother's stories and discarding whatever she did not. She went on to become a celebrated author and a successful teacher. Finally, she was able to recollect her own victory chant, sing her own song, refusing to be silenced anymore by anyone. Kingston told her mother, "I don't want to listen to any more of your stories; they have no logic. They scramble me up. You lie with stories ... " "You can't stop me from talking. You tried to cut off my tongue but it didn't work ... I am smart. I can do all kinds of things. I can make a living and take care of myself" (Kingston 1976, 201-202) In her memoir, Malala remembers her fight for survival at various hospitals in Pakistan and UK. She was finally able to speak and smile after undergoing numerous surgeries and spending months in hospitals. Malala's voice, which the Taliban wanted to silence, grew louder and stronger with time. During her address at the United Nations in New York in 2013, Malala reiterated her vision:

"...Malala Day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who has raised their voice for their rights.... I raise up my voice not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard...On the ninth of October 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends, too. They thought that the bullets will silence us. But they failed. And then, out of that silence came thousands of voices ... Weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born ... One child, one teacher, one pen, and one book can change the world" (Yousafzai and McCormick 2014, 191-192).

In Nadia's own words, "Every second with ISIS was part of slow, painful death – of the body and soul" (Murad and Krajcski 2017, 119). Nevertheless, this death and despair lead to her rebirth and regeneration. Her resolve to save herself and others and to see the ISIS being trialled and penalised for their crimes kept her going. She declares, "I know now I was born in the heart of the crimes committed against me ... My story is the best weapon I have against terrorism, and I plan on using it until those terrorists are put on trial (ibid., 2017, 308). She sincerely hopes that she should be the 'last girl' in the world with such a story.

In the Foreword to *The Last Girl*, Nadia's lawyer Amal Clooney remarks, "As a human-rights lawyer, my job is often to be the voice of those who have been silenced: ... There is no doubt ISIS tried to silence Nadia when they kidnapped and enslaved her, raped and tortured her, and killed seven members of her family in a single day. But Nadia refused to be silenced. She has defied all the labels that life has given her: Orphan. Rape victim. Slave. Refugee. She has instead created new ones: Survivor. Yazidi leader. Women's advocate. Nobel Peace Prize nominee. United Nations Goodwill Ambassador. And now author... Those who thought that by their cruelty they could silence her were wrong. Nadia Murad's spirit is not broken, and her voice will not be muted" (ibid.). She has become the voice of every Yazidi woman, every rape victim, and every refugee who has been abused and who is waiting for justice and rehabilitation.

Conclusion

Migration literature has made its mark through poetry, fiction, autobiographies and memoirs. Some emigrant writers are exploring new arenas like graphic novels and digital forms to disseminate global awareness about the complexities and challenges related to their displacement. Amy Burge questions whether migrant literature is enough to change the world or help create a more equitable life for all, especially refugees and migrants (Burge 2020, 20). Gallien considers “refugee literature and art as forms of poetic and political intervention” (Gallien 2018, 723), while Viet Than Nguyen reminds us about its limitation. He says “True justice is creating a world of social, economic, cultural, and political opportunities that would allow all the voiceless to tell their stories and be heard, rather than be dependent on a writer or a representative of some kind.” (Nguyen 2018, 20)

It can be concluded that migrant literature may not offer instant justice or rehabilitation to the refugees or migrants, but it surely gives them a ‘space’ to vent out their anger and share their dreams with the rest of the world. Migrant literature humanises the refugee crisis. Such stories by migrant women, refugees, victims, enslaved people, survivors, writers and activists are definitely a step forward –making their voices heard, generating awareness and creating empathy. It must be coupled with better welfare policies, effective laws and fair trials, particularly for women and children, formulated and implemented by the concerned governments and lawmakers to save the world from more hatred, violence, and misery.

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