

WOMAN AS THE “OTHER”: A STUDY OF SHAUNA SINGH BALDWIN’S

WHAT THE BODY REMEMBERS

SADAF JAMAL¹ & RAJNI SINGH²

¹Junior Research Fellow, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian School of Mines University, Police line Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

²Associate Professor, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian School of Mines University, Police line Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

ABSTRACT

Culture establishes well defined roles for men and women, thus separating their rights by drawing clear lines. The present paper aims at unraveling the status of ‘woman’ in the patriarchal society governed by its dual value system. For the purpose, it explores Shauna Singh Baldwin’s Commonwealth award winning novel, *What the Body Remembers* in the light of Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex*. Baldwin attempts to break the androcentric ideology and reinvent the lives of women, also fulfilling her implicit political aim by posing questions and suggesting re-assessment. Her concern for society and woman projects her philosophy and inner being. She has also tried to divulge the psyche of the female victim, suffering under false ideologies and value system of the oppressive society. Through her incredible novel, she has shown the anger of a soul that has been reincarnated once again as a girl- same soul destined to live the same story of trauma.

Baldwin propagates her message to fight against oppression, inequality and gender discrimination as these are the biggest social evils with dangerous repercussions, threatening the very notion of equality and social justice. The struggle of strong-willed women and girl-children against patriarchy is something that Singh Baldwin understands and expresses well. She skillfully exposes the hypocrite society and introduces the readers with the gruesome and offensive treatment done to woman.

KEYWORDS: Gender-Discrimination, Inequality, Oppression, Secondary Position of the Woman