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The cultural subjugation of Bharat by India: A Deconstruction of Savita Bhabhi

On the surface, Savita Bhabhi, billed as India's first toon porn star does not appear to have much cultural significance beyond the obvious. The attainment of the unattainable is a popular *leitmotif* in pornographic material. The teacher, the friend's mother and (as in this case) the elder sister-in-law are frequent objects of adolescent lust and consequently are overrepresented in pornographic literature (I use literature as a catch-all term that includes motion pictures). In cartoon pornography, with the freedom of not having to use actors and greater narrative freedom, this tendency is only exaggerated. This being the case, Savita Bhabhi seems simply like the last in a long line of pretty typical sexual fantasies. The travelling salesman makes it with a lonely housewife. Adolescent boys seduce an attractive older woman. Infidelity takes place right under the cuckolded spouses' noses. These are very common themes in pornography.

However, with the more recent episodes, it has become clear that there is a deeper cultural subtext to Savita Bhabhi. This starts becoming apparent in Episode 4, where it is revealed that Savita Bhabhi lost her virginity in what is implied to be a rural setting. A careful reader will however have noticed by now that Savita Bhabhi is an urban middle class housewife. She probably speaks fluent English, and is in every way a citizen of India, the land of exploding opportunity rather than the poor, backward, repressed land of Bharat. Savita Bhabhi is obviously someone who has made the transition from Bharat to India, and is secure and confident of her new status.

Over the course of the series, we see her coming into contact with denizens of Bharat. The bra salesman in the first episode is an example. Another is Gopal, the elderly domestic servant and his replacement Manoj. Manoj is in fact the object of her desire in episode 5, who she uses for her gratification despite the obvious power disparity in the relationship. I found this episode the most revealing, as this is where the subjugation motif is most apparent. The sexual act itself starts out as a massage given by the servant boy to his mistress, who makes her dominance known through several small cues, such as an admonition not to get any oil on her sari, or a warning to the servant that he must not let this dalliance divert him from his work. He is the giver, she the receiver. When the roles reverse for a brief period, she reminds him of the nature of their relationship, and makes him service her again. Manoj the servant cannot even commence the act of copulation without her permission, which he must ask multiple times before it is granted.

The subtext reeks of subjugation. The subjugation, no less of Bharat by India. Savita Bhabhi has power over Manoj even though she is the woman and he the man – an inversion of the traditional power structure. This represents the power disparity between Bharat and India being the reverse of what would be predicted simply by the populations, and therefore raw political power (in a representative democratic system) of the two entities. As Savita controls Manoj's actions, so does India command the multitudes of Bharat. Savita directs the means of Manoj's gratification; this parallels the dependence for their entertainment by millions of denizens of Bharat on entities controlled by English-speaking Indians. Manoj must seek Savita's permission before starting on the means of obtaining release, just as Bharatians depend for their sustenance on an economic system controlled by Indians. In Manoj's unflinching use of the honorific *ji* in addressing Savita, we may infer the use of honorifics and other entitlements by Indians to cement the seeming of their superiority over the lowly Bharatians. In a final, poignant moment in the episode, we see the at the

conclusion of his labour, the unsated Savita gives Manoj another chore, holding out the promise of another unequal encounter. This clearly represents the eternal nature of the unequal system they enjoy in the minds of the Indians, and their confidence in their continued ascendancy over the Bharatiyas, whom they intend to exploit forever, a sort of Thousand-year-Reich that lasts forever in the mind of the oppressor.

Dr Tara Tatiana Pandey MA (Sophism) Lund University, PhD (Literary Deconstructionism of Popular Culture) St. Thomas-Freiburg Universität is the Alan Sokal Fellow of Egregious Deconstruction at the University of California, Sunnydale. Her book Tijuana Bibles in Modern Theology is now out in paperback. She can be contacted at tara.tatiana@pandey.ru .

Tags: [Deconstruction](#), [Pop Culture](#), [Porn Studies](#), [Savita Bhabhi](#)

This entry was posted on Monday, October 27th, 2008 at 3:34 am and is filed under [Uncategorized](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

40 Responses to “The cultural subjugation of Bharat by India: A Deconstruction of Savita Bhabhi”

amit varma says:

October 27, 2008 at 1:45 pm



Breathtaking scholarship. 😊

Just Mohit says:

October 27, 2008 at 2:00 pm



Tara-ji, what do we poor bhartiya know of such things? Please write these things in vernacular. thank you ji 😊

KJ says:

October 27, 2008 at 4:54 pm



“Lund University”
is that a joke?

Hariprasad says:

October 27, 2008 at 5:23 pm



KJ,

Good catch. Yes, it is “Lund University” 😊

Btw, read more about Alan Sokal. Tara-ji is the Alan Sokal Fellow of *Egregious Deconstruction*.

tara.tatiana says:

October 27, 2008 at 5:24 pm



Although the similarity between the spelling of the name of the southern Swedish city of Lund and a certain Hindi epithet is commonly reckoned to be humorous, the pronunciation is actually quite different. Lund University (or Lunds Universitet as it is known in Swedish), apart from being my alma mater is Scandinavia’s foremost research university, and generally recognised as among the world’s top 100.

Noop says:

October 28, 2008 at 4:04 am



LOL. This is fabulous. Egregious Deconstruction indeed. We want more!

Monty says:

October 28, 2008 at 8:59 am



Talking of similarity of european names and certain Hindi epithet, how about Lauda Austrian airlines...www.laudaair.com. This is run by the famous F1 legend Niki Lauda. I LOL when i first saw this name myself...

Monty says:

October 28, 2008 at 9:01 am



Really liked the post by the way..Well done Tara..Only got to know about your post through Amit Varma's Indiauncut blog..will follow your blogs henceforth...do you write somewhere else too??

Rahul says:

October 28, 2008 at 11:09 am



wow. I still trying to wonder if I should be really surprised about the article or just laugh it off. Anyways, first time I'm hearing about Lund University. Keep the points of view going.

Also, about the authors.. Mikhail Murugavel Pandey and Tara Taniana? Those are really exotic names. Global village, we're almost there!!!! 😊

But until then,
Loving the eternal nature of the unequal system,
Rahul

rambodoc says:

October 28, 2008 at 11:23 am



Brilliant! I will now have to invest the remainder of this year doing my own studies of this highly-acclaimed Bhabhi.

varun thautam says:

October 29, 2008 at 11:05 am



was linked from amit's webpage..
I've got to read more about Savita Bhabhi..
however its and amazing post!!!
I loved it

boxpopuli says:

October 30, 2008 at 5:04 am



Dear Miss Professor Pandey, firstly, let me offer my heartiest congratulations on your research on our new indigenous art, viz. Savita Bhabhi. However, if I may, I would like to bring to your attention that your point about the subjugation of Bharat, relies mainly on the evidence as provided in the English language versions of said art. Please do note that the same is also provided in the vernacular tongues, including Hindi. While the overall narrative structure of the stories remains the same, the forms of address used between the main female protagonist and her male perpetrators show the balance of power weighing more in favour of the latter. It reinforces an even older power structure, namely the subjugation of the female by the male due to the latter's strong sexual energy – no matter if the former is a denizen of India and the latter from Bharat.

Please do not consider this as a criticism of your work, but rather a suggestion of an area for further research. I look forward to an even more detailed analysis from you based on the above.

I remain,

Your most humble servant (though not the massaging kind 😊)

Sanjukta says:

November 3, 2008 at 9:55 am



I couldn't make head or tail of this post.. shit whatever happened to my IQ... came here because somebody shared the link..

Madam, could you please tell me a simple thing.. are you expressing your discomfort with the inverse power structure portrayed by Savita Bhabhi narratives or are you happy that an indian / bhartiya woman is being more assertive and adventurous with sex without having a guilt conscious?

Is the bottomline of this research, a degradation of culture or progress?

asuph says:

November 4, 2008 at 4:27 am



Apart from my usual crib with deconstruction — that the temptation to paint everything with a newly found brush ends up missing nuances (but then what do I know, I'm not an art major) — I liked this one. Isn't porn the most deconstruction friendly literature? lol!

> I couldn't make head or tail of this post.. shit whatever happened to my IQ...

Sanjukta: It's got nothing to do with your IQ. It's got more to do with missing the point due to the cap that you're wearing (Hint: I've nothing against the cap, just the timing). Remember that not all factual assertions about power structure are necessarily endorsements of it. Now if you can't make a head and tail of that statement, I'd start worrying about the IQ too.

cheers,
asuph

Sanjukta says:
November 5, 2008 at 5:25 am



@asuph,

Oh damn terrible news... I couldn't make head or rear of that statement either...and of your entire comment. Which is surprising coz most people assume I am intelligent, hey I aint saying that, people say.

I am sure I am missing something here... too many metaphors damn, i guess I'd only understand if Dr. Pandey would respond to the question in simple english... I really want to understand you see..

tara.tatiana says:
November 6, 2008 at 2:28 am



Sanjukta,

I implied neither discomfort nor happiness with the power structure in the Savita Bhabhi storyline. I do not believe women taking the dominant role in sexual relationships is cause for discomfort (as long as such activities are consensual). However, it seems to me unlikely that the creators of Savita Bhabhi mean their work targeted as it is to male adolescents, as a tract favoring women's liberation. This dichotomy, a dominant woman in an art form that almost by definition denigrates women's role in society, led me to look for deeper motivations for this portrayal of a nonstandard power structure.

I trust my reply is in plain enough English to allow you to slake your curiosity.

Also, I would appreciate if you'd address me by my given names on this blog, since in my family, "Dr. Pandey" is not a unique qualifier.

saa says:
November 8, 2008 at 9:13 pm



I think the whole deconstruction is completely wrong. Seems like as a woman you are actually flattered the comic gives power to the women. But in fact it is due to the repressed nature of Indian Men who cannot just get any girl they want(though it is changing right now). This is more of the typical Indian Man's fantasy where the guy has to do as little as possible to get laid. If you read all the stories(not just savita bhabi, but any adult story book from India) you will see that the male actually does very little seducing in them. It is the female who takes charge, and gives the man what he has been dreaming about for so long. This is mainly due to repression as opposed to consciously giving power to woman,maybe it is subconscious.

Full disclosure, I am an Indian male.

SEV says:
November 11, 2008 at 10:36 pm



Ms TTP,
Brilliant!

I suggest further deconstruction along the lines of what boxpopuli suggested.

I too plan to start a timeline of events in the Bhabhi's life, and extrapolate possible connections – one of which we have already seen when the servant discovered remnants of the salesman's visit.

Do let me know if you would be interested in collaboration on such research.

Bhanu Prasad says:
November 12, 2008 at 6:03 am



–I think the whole deconstruction is completely wrong. Seems like as a woman you are actually flattered the comic gives power to the women.—

When the woman initiates it, she is merely pandering to "sex

crazed" men. When the man starts the sparks, he is using his "patriarchal" power to exploit women.

Your argument and of boxpopuli IS circuitous and unconvincing.

Tara,

Speaking strictly from science, women sexually desire powerful and dominant men. Servants are the last class to choose bed mates from.

The story is what it is: a work of fantasy.

Anon says:

November 27, 2008 at 2:42 pm



This is real BS.. I think the writer was either drunk or doped when he was writing savita bhabhi. You can basically take anything and deconstruct it into something seemingly scholarly and with undercurrents of meaning. I bet she will even take mickey mouse and connect fascism to it.. lol..

Psychologists have no better work than write such crap !

ars says:

December 9, 2008 at 1:34 pm



kindly let me know how many times u have masterbated to write all this stuff

susmita says:

December 14, 2008 at 2:24 pm



i wana see savita bhabhi in a wife swapping encounterand a one night stand

does it really matter says:

March 2, 2009 at 8:01 am



good way to drive traffic to your site

Kt says:

March 27, 2009 at 8:53 am



seriously get a life dude. this is just a porn comic and take it on its face value. there is nothing to research here, and derive conclusions abt what .. a comic character and what she would be in real life. Confident, transition from bhara to india, what crap !!!!! shame on u.. calling it a "scholarly article" . do u even know what the fck cultural subjugation means or u just used thesaurus ! .. wait i think u would be trying to "deconstruct" abt me after reading this post . For heaven sake, the world has bigger problems. Do something abt them if u can !!

neha says:

March 29, 2009 at 2:15 pm



wtf. its fucking porn, stupids, not literature. deconstructing it indeed. get a life please. yes, you too tara titata pandey.

Manav says:

March 31, 2009 at 4:03 am



I am surprised, Neha, at your implicit hierarchy of published work. In fact, to look at the definition of literature provided by the Random House Dictionary reveals your fallacy- "the body of written works produced in a particular language, country, or age".

Your attempt to segregate "literature" and "porn" seems to be symptomatic of grave bias- ignoring as you do the fact that what we now consider great literature was once considered pornographic- Lady Chatterley's Lover, for instance, or the celebrated 1905 Cakes and Ale by Somerset Maugham. Furthermore, your assumption that porn cannot be deconstructed seems elitist, and blind to the social realities one can often see in porn. Picking up a "Mast Ram" novel off railway platforms might reveal more about social heirarchies than, possibly, the Constitution of India.

I assume your mis-spelling of Dr. Tara Tatiana Pandey's name was a mistake. However, the way you have at present spelt her name is especially unfortunate in light of your comment, bearing as it does a superficial resemblance to a certain vulgarism* for certain intimate parts of the female anatomy.

* I use the word 'vulgarism' in its original sense- Latin 'vulgus', the

common people.

Yogesh says:

[April 20, 2009 at 2:09 pm](#)



I serendipitously landed at this site and after the novelty wore off, I started wondering that despite all the slickness it is just a crude seduction tale, one written by a man for a man, that too of not very refined tastes, rough and ridiculous. Wonder how the author of the blog could read all that subjugation of Bharat by India, in what language does she expect the salesman to speak in a English cartoon, Cockney?

hamurabi says:

[May 20, 2009 at 8:02 pm](#)



Is everybody here just using big words for the heck of it? Sure, the language used by most of you is good, thankfully! But what is it with you people? The whole "don't segregate porn and literature" crap! I mean, simply because the works of D.H.Lawrence which were once known as porn are studied as literature now, does it imply that "all" porn of a generation will become literature in the next? Bull shit. The true intentions of the creators of Savita Bhabhi were to present material online that people could masturbate to. That's it. Hence the differing art styles across the comics (the creators weren't sure which style would be most titillating). I think Ms. Pandey has chosen to spend so much of her valuable time (that is questionable, actually) on this comic series because it is the first such series in India to be available online. I think the article, the author and many people who have commented on this article all suffer from the same dysfunctionality – that of taking things way too seriously.

calanor says:

[May 22, 2009 at 5:13 pm](#)



hamurabi :

Is everybody here just using...

absolutely right mate

i was just searching the net to download savita bhabhi having a hard time in finding a link not blocked by our college and i landed on this link and i was like what ??? whoaaa lmao man do you guys (both the authors and the commentors) do it often?

firehorse says:

[June 1, 2009 at 6:22 pm](#)



Great Job Tara. Quiet a lot of indians will not appreciate or accept your write up. this situation does happen clandestinely in indian society & many men desire deeply & fantasise heavily, though they wont agree as indians are hypocrites.

Keep up the good work and keep providing such incisive analysis of the changing indian mind, desire, needs & wants...

Of interest: Mix tapes, manifestos and cultural subjugation | Blotting paper says:

[June 17, 2009 at 2:37 pm](#)

[...] Tara Tatiana Pandey deconstructs Savita [...]

Toothsoup » Blog Archive » Of interest: Mix tapes, manifestos and cultural subjugation says:

[June 21, 2009 at 6:31 pm](#)

[...] Tara Tatiana Pandey deconstructs Savita [...]

hamurabi says:

[June 22, 2009 at 8:52 am](#)



"railway platforms might reveal more about social heirarchies than, possibly, the Constitution of India.

I assume your mis-spelling of Dr. Tara Tatiana Pandey's name was a mistake. However, the way you have at present spelt her name is especially unfortunate in light of your comment, bearing as it does a superficial resemblance to a certain vulgarism* for certain intimate parts of the female anatomy."

what a load of cock, manav! u bloody vile tatitta-tit sucking tatiana fucker..

MK Narayanan says:

[July 12, 2009 at 3:24 pm](#)



From the day when srilankan govt killed LTTE kingpin the famous notorious site of SavitaBhabhi.com also vanished. any links between these two.

does'nt matter says:

[July 18, 2009 at 6:42 am](#)



bloody hell!!

are'nt there any serious problems other than this?

stop pondering over this porn sites and try something else!!it is not that imp u 2 post a blog and giv a new loophole 2 distract any indian mind who dont hav any idea of al these matters!

НИКОЛАЙ says:

[June 11, 2010 at 6:53 pm](#)



Игры

gtoosphere says:

[August 28, 2010 at 10:59 am](#)



This is the problem with deconstructing modern literature (gets worse with pornography)... you see patterns in things because you are obsessed with finding the patterns.

Frank Miller recently expressed anger in a recent interview over interpreting him as a genius because all he did was some light entertainment and a generation people are spending their lives wearing stupid costumes and the more intelligent ones studying them!

Hayden Winters says:

[September 28, 2010 at 10:39 pm](#)



I am having some difficulty trying to load this page. I visited it many times before & never got anything like this, but now when I try to load the site it just idles 4 a minute or two and then just stops. I have tried both with www & without. Does anyone know what could be the reason? Please ask your host support... I hope to be able to come back soon.

Cleo Kravetsky says:

[January 19, 2011 at 9:33 am](#)



I am very thankful to this topic because it really gives great information *.-

Energia Solar says:

[March 3, 2011 at 4:38 pm](#)



I am not sure where you're getting your information, but great topic. I needs to spend some time learning more or understanding more. Thanks for wonderful info I was looking for this information for my mission.

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