

### Quest for Female's Identity in Tiwari's *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā*

Indira Acharya Mishra, PhD<sup>1</sup> and Luna Rana<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Principal author

Associate Professor

Department of English, Mahendra Multiple Campus, Dharan, Tribhuvan University, Nepal.

indiraacharya42@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8753-6427>

<sup>2</sup>Corresponding author

Department of English, NAAST College, Dharan, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

lunarana07@gmail.com

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#### Abstract

Sarita Tiwari (2015) in her collection of poems, *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā [Factory of Questions]* protests the tradition of wearing ornaments and cosmetics by women. Likewise, she rejects the use of submissive symbols and metaphors that have been used by the creative writers to define women. She identifies them as ploys that patriarchy has invented to maintain the subordination and subjugation of women to men. She argues that these techniques mystify and blur women's identity, so she questions and challenges them. Thus, this article analyzes five poems from the anthology to examine how the poet protests the traditional norms and values of patriarchy that define women as secondary to men and search for female's identity through them. To examine the quest for female's identity in her poetry, this article takes theoretical support from feminist critics like Mary Daly, Kate Millet, Naomi Wolf and others. These critics believe that patriarchy uses different types of myths to maintain women's secondary position in the society. The article concludes that in the quest for female's identity independent of men, Tiwari protests the tradition and culture that emphasize women's beauty and their submissive roles in the society. Through their interrogating tone and syntax, the selected poems challenge patriarchal norms which have been imposed upon women to erase their identity. The study helps to understand how patriarchy manipulates the myths of religion and beauty to maintain males' supremacy over females.

*Keywords:* feminist perspective, identity, myth, patriarchy

#### Introduction

##### Background

Tiwari (2015) has been a well-known Nepali poet. She has been writing for more than twenty years and has published three major works on poetry: *Buddha ra Lābhāharu [Buddha and*

*Lava*] (2001), *Astitwako Ghosanāpatra [Proclamation of Existence]* (2011) and *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā [Factory of Questions]* (2016). The anthology *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā* centers on contemporary debate regarding women's search for identity. Women have been claiming for their independent identity, and they have been revolting against the patriarchal society that has constricted their liberty. Tiwari has introduced herself as an ordinary person who throws stones at such a stagnant consciousness of the society. She declares that her protest is against the social system that gives special rights and concessions to the males and deprives females from their unalienable rights. Through this collection, she advocates for women's enlightenment and empowerment.

The title of the anthology, *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā* questions the gender bias norms and values of patriarchy. It demands for the restoration of the forgotten identity of women which defines them as free individuals. The tone of the poems interrogative. These poems suggest that women should interrogate the existing patriarchal ideologies which they have been slavishly following as if they are natural and universal rules.

The poet's claim for women independent identity resurfaces in the anthology through its interrogative tone and hostility towards the long followed patriarchal tradition. For example, "Dukhwa! Tor Nāu Kathi Halahi?" ["O Sorrowful Person! What is Your Name?"], "Ke Timile Malāi Ābiskār Garyau?" ["Did You Invent Me?"], "Jaba Ma Bahulāuchu" ["When I Get Mad"], "Hey Devi!" ["O Goddess!"] and "Dushmani" ["Enmity"]. These poems reject the rule of patriarchy, challenge the males' dominance and declare war against patriarchy. The speaker of the poems emerges as a radical woman who is no longer in the state of bearing male domination. She even dares to attack the father in the poem "Bā" ["Father"]. Tiwari has also reinforced women's search for identity through poetic techniques like onomatopoeia, metaphor, irony and personification in the poems "Putali" ["Butterfly"], "Fulaharuko Kārobār" ["Transaction of Flowers"] and "Bhakundo" ["Football"]. In this background, this article explores Tiwari's search for females identify in the text.

### **Problems, Objectives and Methodology**

Most of the literary texts written from the patriarchal perspective depict women as voiceless and dependent beings. Guided by patriarchal mind set, these texts portray women either as devoted wives or as beautiful damsels in distress. Such texts define women as male's appendages. Tyson (2005) has clarified that there are only two models available for a woman in literature. If she follows the traditional norms and values and plays the submissive roles, she is rewarded as a good girl. Or she can follow the model of a bad girl by defying those norms and values to get punished at the end (p. 89). To justify women's subjugation to men, these texts use submissive metaphors in which women are compared with flowers, moon and others delicate objects. Literary texts or films that deviates from this trend are considered as less

standard ones. However, Tiwari's *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā* portrays women as radical, challenging or daring ones who seek their identity independent of men. Through her poems she questions and challenges patriarchal assumptions that treat women as mere appendages, or shadows of men. The way she defies the patriarchal definition of women as silent, submissive and dependent beings and asserts and justifies women's independent identity triggers our curiosity to analyze her poems to explore the quest for female's identity in the anthology. In the process of analysis the article deals with the following research questions:

- What images of women are depicted in the selected poems?
- How do the selected poems claim women's identity?
- Why does the poet protest traditional norms and values?

The main aim of this article is to explore the quest for female's identity in the selected poems.

For this examination, five poems have been selected: "Ori Daro!" ["O Other!"], "Ke Timile Malāi Ābiskāra Gareu?" ["Did You Invent Me?"], "Hey Devi!" [O Goddess!], "Putlā" ["Effigy"] and "Putali" ["Butterfly"]. These poems are purposively chosen because in these poems the voice of protest against traditional norms and values is pertinent. Through these poems, the poet defies the traditional metaphors which define women in terms of beauty and delicacy. So, these poems form the primary source of information for the analysis. Likewise, critics on Tiwari and other text books that deal with feminism are used as secondary sources of information. This article uses descriptive and analytical research design for the analysis. The primary text is in Nepali, so the researchers have used transliteration and free translation of the selected extracts.

Based on the qualitative research paradigm, it analyzes the selected extracts from the poems through feminist perspective. This article primarily uses the arguments from radical feminists, though not limited to them. The radical feminists, such as Kate Millet, have argued even against those male sociologists who asserted confidently that "women's subordination to men is natural" (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 54). They even blamed some great literary figures like D.H Lawrence, Henry Miller and Norman Mailer as leaders for the articulation of patriarchal ideologies (53). Mary Daly claimed that "Not only are men out to twist women's minds, but they are also out to destroy women's bodies through such practices as Hindu suttee, Chinese foot binding, African female circumcision, European witch burning and Western Gynecology" (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 61). These feminists believed that these great literary writers are partially responsible for promoting and continuing women's subjugation to men. They approved those practices that blur women's true identity, and make them dependent beings. Thus, these feminists have been demanding female authors to write with feminist

consciousness and assert women's identity through the projection of radical and empowered images of women.

Tiwari has tried to rescue women from patriarchal norms and values that trap them and limit their identity. She protests those norms and values in search of women's identity as free individuals. For example, in the poem "Ori Daro!" [O Mother!], the speaker rejects the ornaments that women are convinced to wear to mark her feminine identity. She reasons that women should boycott those ornaments that restrict their liberty. Women's liberty has been trapped by patriarchal trap of beauty standards. In this regard, Daly insisted that, "Women should decide who women want to be . . . if they want to be hags instead of bathing beauties, then so be it. It is for women to decide whether being a hag is good or bad" (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 63). Tiwari also claims in line with radical feminists, challenges and questions the patriarchal logic and standards. The title of the books *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā* [*Factory of Questions*] suggests the crux of interrogation in her poetry. Thus, the radical feminist perspective is chosen for the analysis of her poems.

### **Review of Literature**

The anthology was shortlisted for Madan Puraskār 2015. It is the highest literary award of Nepal. However, only a few critics have done its critical appraisal. Some of these critics have discovered the voice of protest against patriarchy. Jayasingh Mahara (2016) stated that Tiwari's poetry has been the outcome of the pitiful condition of women in the Nepalese societies where they are burnt alive for not being able to bring enough dowries. They have been raped by their own family members and they have also been tortured for failing to provide a male issue to the family. Tiwari has found these women powerless and weaker in comparison to the other women who have been able to bear male issues. Due to these gaps, Tiwari has been compelled to rethink these dynamics of relationship between male and female in the society. Therefore, she began composing poetry to expose the reality of our so-called rational society. Thus, these subject matters form the content of the poem "Hey Devī" ["O Goddess"]. Her another poem, "Ke Timīle Malāi Āviskāṛ Gareu?" ["Did You Invent Me?"] contains the answer to her question that haunted her for a year and a half: "Does a woman create others or she is created at all?"

Maniprasad Dhakal (2016) is another critic who has critically analyzed the contents and the themes of her poems. He agreed that many of her poems contain the theme of protest against the patriarchy, but, at the same time he has placed a criticism due to her indifference in some aspects. For instance, in the poem "Hey Devī" ["O Goddess"] she writes, the mistreatment of the females can be ended through the waking up of the Goddess. But in her line "Baru siddhiyos sabhyatā rarittiyos prithivī, chāhindaina" ["Even if civilization got collapsed and the earth got barren, it is not needed"], she shows her indifference to all other species in the name of the protest against patriarchy. Similarly, the poem "Putalī"

["Butterfly"] shows women's desire to fly freely pursuing their free and independent dream. They do not want to be decorated like a doll. But Dhakal doubted if ordinary women have the same desire. Women, in the poem "Bhakundo" ["Football"], are being played like *bhakundo* [football] and the same ball comes in the form of a human to protest against such exploitation. The speaker (woman) sees the face of her father in the rapist's face. Dhakal wondered about the effect of the poem upon those readers who lacked fathers, and those who did not get the opportunity to ask various questions to them. He doubted if the poem does a justice towards the father.

In an interview by Muna Gurung (2019), Tiwari herself has commented on her work. She explained that readers and her close friends call her a Taliban or a member of ISIS. They have imagined her carrying a belt of bullets around her shoulders, AK47 in her hands, simply due to one of her radical poem entitled, "Hey Devi" ["O Goddess!"], included in this collection. The poem has portrayed an ugly reality of the contemporary society; it reveals that all of society's shame has poured down in her vagina.' The speaker has also mentioned 'semen' and explains how a father rapes his daughter repeatedly. She identifies them as routine incidents of our society. She insisted that she has not pointed more than five percent of the ills of the society, though people have been reluctant to confess its ugly aspects (para. 15). The interview has foregrounded the bitter and tragic experiences of many Nepali women.

Abhaya Shrestha, the editor of *Nāgarik News* has been inspired by Tiwari's collection. He identified poems like "Ke Timīle Malāi Āviskāṛ Gareu?" ["Did You Invent Me?"], "Hey Devī" ["O Goddess"], "Bijeta" ["Winner"] as some of the poems that keep the poet alive. He compared Tiwari's "Hey Devī" ["O Goddess"] with the poems of Maya Angelo; both have the taste of explosion. According to him, the presentation of Hindu mythological Goddess as powerful one by a Marxist poet has made this poem controversial (in Tiwari, 2015, p.1). But there are rare Nepali poetry like *Prashnaharuko Kāṛkhānā* [*Factory of Questions*] that aesthetically portray the power of patriarchy which has declined due to patriarchal domination. He admits that poignancy and precision of language use have sharpened this poem.

According to Promod Dhital, the author of *Yugbodha, Prashnaharuko Kāṛkhānā* [*Factory of Questions*] has been written for those groups of people in the society who have been excluded and marginalized. As per general understanding, these groups lack art and have only ugly protest, rage and slogans. The thoughts expressed in this collection cannot do much for them. In this case, poetry like this cannot be considered as beautiful to them; but it is beautiful only to the middle class people. Similar type of comment can be seen in Rajkumar Banya. He pointed that her poems stimulate turmoil and advocate the beauty of combat in the name of women's freedom (in Tiwari, 2015, 2). For him, Tiwari can be proved as an advocate of war.

These critics have pointed the domination of patriarchy over females in Tiwari's anthology. They have praised her for raising women's voice through poetry. They noticed that women's voice has been subdued in the traditional literature. Though they have praised for the use of poignant language and sharp metaphors, they have not explored how the poems have depicted the women's identity. Thus, this article endeavors to fill that gap by analyzing the poems to explore the search of women's identity in them.

### Results and Discussion

Most of the poems in this collection question and challenge patriarchal norms and values that are restrictive to women's freedom. The title of the poem itself asserts that those who have their independent identity dare to question and challenge for their right. Tiwari has clarified about the title, "Factories in general produce goods of the same kind; factory inside a poet produces discourses of a different kind. It is because the poet seeks answers to the questions which originate a new discourse" (KC para. 2). This new discourse can be taken as a claim for women's identity which has been lying dormant due to patriarchal restrictive norms and values imposed on women. Due to them, women are lagging behind in majority of the fields.

The poet claims that women identity is independent of men. She denies women's identity in relation to men as their subordinates. In the poem "Ke Timīle Malāi Ābiskār Gareu?" ["Did You Invent Me?"], she questions who came prior to this earth, men or women. She explains that female's existence is independent of men. Females have been on this earth from the time immemorial; their existence has not been created by patriarchy. But their independent identity has been blurred by patriarchy. So, she claims that women have been searching for their authentic identity which has been misrepresented as a weak and delicate being in patriarchy. This search can be traced in the lines: "*Hidirahe khojda/ Jugau aghi dekhi kasaile khosirākheko/ Āphnai anuhārko naksā* [I've been searching since the time immemorial the map of my face which has been taken forcibly from me"] (ll.34-36). The map of the face is a metaphor for women's authentic identity which has been taken away by the patriarchy through various ploys. In her assertion of women's identity, Tiwari reminds Marilyn French, who believes that the first human societies were mother centric as they were most active in survival-oriented activities of the group like sharing, caring, bonding and maintaining harmony with the nature (in Tong, 2009, p. 57). So the poet wonders how men can create women. Therefore, the poet protests against such a false identity bestowed to women.

Patriarchy creates women's identities through various ploys such as modernization. Before the arrival of modernism, the women of indigenous society are free. However, as western influence touched the indigenous societies, it brought the concept of subordination. "Indigenous women have not been marginalized in their traditional societies, this only happens in Western-dominated societies" ("Women and Identity" para. 5). Although modernization

brought a relative freedom for women this “freedom is an ephemeral possession full of contradictions: growing sexual harassment challenges women’s growing access to the public sphere” (Liechty, 3010, p. 311). The poet reclaims women’s identity which is free of such ploys:

*Janmajāta*  
*Maile liera āeko chhu āphusanga*  
*Eutā naisargika anuhāra*  
*Ma dinna kasailāi*  
*Ābiskārko mohara lagāera*  
*Nrishashatāpurbaka*  
*Āphno anuhārmāthi shāsana garirahana*

[I have owned a natural face right from my birth. I will not let anyone to put a seal around it and rule cruelly over it] (ll. 51-57).

Patriarchy has put seals on women to justify men's possession over them. The *sindoor* [vermilion], *mangalsutra* [marriage string] and *natheli* [nose-jewel] are nothing more than patriarchal ploys that define women in relation to men. It is a compulsion for a married woman to put such seals as marker of their good fate and the sound health of their husbands. Indirectly they show their dependency on men. They are also the sign of modernized women. This way, in the name of civilization or modernization, patriarchy creates identities of women. The poet rejects using such ornaments and reclaims her own identity, not smeared or blurred by the mask of makeup and cultural markers like *sindoor* and *pote*.

The fact that patriarchy implicitly obstructs women’s identity through ornaments is depicted in the poem “Orī Daro!” [“O Mother!”]. It also points out the fact that “matriarchy is nothing but hidden patriarchy where a matriarch in the house advocates the same ideals as a patriarch” (Alvi para. 9). The poet rejects this norm when she writes:

*Nathiyā nadeu malāi*  
*Thosiyā pani nadeu*  
*Sakchhyau bhane deu āmā*  
*Jindagi jitney gīta*

[Do not give me nose jewels, mother. If you can give me something, give me the song that can gain victory over life]. (ll. 1-4)

Here, the persona does not blame her mother for perpetuating male domination by training her daughter to mask her true identity, but she tries to aware her for her blindness towards patriarchal domination. She points that how women are manipulated to follow the traditions slavishly. Albeena Alvi (2019) claimed that patriarchy attributes:

Such adornments . . . as a facade of protection is an undeniably delusional theory that a covering over my chest [with scarf] and silver wire in my nose is enough to repel sexual predators. Such an idea enforced within a household does nothing but encourage 'rape culture' where the focus is on the woman and what she is wearing instead of the mentality of the people around. (para. 6)

Therefore, the poet urges all her mother not to instruct her to follow the patriarchal norms and values that define women identity in relation to men. Rather than imparting the legacy of patriarchy to their daughter, every mother should encourage her daughter to search her identity and gain her liberty. They should encourage their daughters to explore their identity and liberty and live their lives as they prefer.

Feminist critics believe that the notion of beauty invented by modern society disempowers women. They warn women not to be misled by the unachievable false standard of beauty prescribed to them. Wolf (2002) contends that society's emphasis on a woman's appearance makes women weaker than men socially, politically, and economically. She identified beauty myth as a last resort that patriarchy uses to disempower women, who otherwise have been liberated ever since second wave feminism of the second wave of the 1970s. She identified the beauty myth as a "new religious dogma, using some of the mind-altering technique, older cults and sects arose around age and weight to functionally supplant traditional ritual" (p. 13). Women are so brainwashed by the unachievable beauty ideal that they undergo a cosmetic surgery that will cost time, energy and money for them. These will intern contribute male capitalists, who mostly won the beauty industries. Black also warned that it is too heavy for women to spend on femininity through beauty treatment (p. 2). So the speaker of the poem rejects those norms and practices associated with women's appearance in "Orī Daro!" ["O Mother!"]. There are altogether nine negative words in this poem that indicates this rejection such as *nadeu* [don't give me], *chāhinna* [not needed], *māgdina* [I won't ask], *thorai bho* [happened less]. Traditional women, guided by patriarchal mindset mostly accept the norms or standards patriarchal beauty with the illusion of being attractive. Therefore, the poet has tried to empower them by exposing the hidden politics behind the notion of beauty. She suggests that women should free themselves from the mask of cosmetic and reveal their true identity.

Moreover, the speaker of the poem argues that the real identity of women is related to the nature and not to the ideals of beauty such as ornaments and cosmetics. This identity is reflected in the lines: "*Rachnechhu maile indrenī/ Ghāma ra pānī bokera/ Bharilo pārchhu jindagī* [I will make life complete by carrying the sun and rain, and by creating a rainbow]" (ll. 26-28). Daly claims that "female energy is essentially biophilic" (Quotedt in Alcoff, 1988, p. 408). "Men would desire to dominate and control that which is so vitally necessary to them: life-energy of women" (p. 408). In this context, ornaments, as the poet names them as *nathiyā*,



*thosiyā*, *hasulī* and *pahirī* can be taken as signs of domination and control of men over women. Alvi states, “These norms [of adornments] are nothing but early preparations of an ideal bride ready to be given away” (para. 5). Therefore, the poet appeals women to stop decorating their body by these ornaments rather they should demand a biophilic identity: "*Basdina kasako bandhakī/ Deu mero bhāgako bihānī /Deu mero bhāgako jindagī* [I will not stay as someone’s mortgage/ Give me my share of morning/ Give me my share of life"] (ll. 32-34). The demand of morning and life is the demand of identity, independent of men.

In patriarchy women are defined as men's plaything. They need to attune with the patriarchal dictates and passively follow them to be socially acceptable. The poet identifies the identity that defines women as men’s desire objects as a false one. This false identity lived by women in patriarchy is explored in the poem “Putlā” [“Effigy”]. This poem rejects women’s identity as a weaker sex who should depend on man for their existence. The poet favors those women who are ready to cast off their arguments, thoughts and knowledge. This is depicted in the lines below:

*Tarka, bichār ra sāmānya bibek*  
*Gumāera sārā nijatwa*  
*Rahanchhu sheṣa*  
*Kaṅkālko phrem māthi chhalāyamān putlā*  
*Ra misinchhu bhidmā*  
*Ani balla ma*  
*Timilāi manparne mānche hunchu*

[After losing all the privacy such as argument, thought and general knowledge, I become a remnant, a manipulatable effigy on the frame of skeleton. Then I will be mixed in crowd, and then only I will become the person who you like]. (ll. 12-18)

Tyson (2008) observes the definition of good girl and bad girl as a way in which sexist ideology continues to influence us. She argued, "If she accepts her traditional gender roles and obeys the patriarchal rules, she’s a good girl; if she doesn’t, she’s a bad girl” (p. 89). In these lines, the poet attacks this value in which women can establish themselves as good by remaining silent, i.e., by becoming an effigy-like person.

The speaker of the poem emerges as a radical feminist. She casts off the silent and submissive feminine identities given to her. In the final stanza, the poet introduces a radical woman who goes against this patriarchal value. This woman would mean a bad woman who raises voice and questions against domination:

*Tara māfa garnu*  
*Mātra timilāi mana parna*  
*Manjur chhaina malāi*

*Putlā hunu*

[But I'm sorry. I reject to become an effigy simply because you like it]. (ll. 19-22)

This radical woman of the poet resembles to “wild females” introduced by Daly who “reject the seemingly good aspects of femininity . . . They are all man-made constructs shaped for the purpose of trapping women deep in the prison of patriarchy” (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 61). Daly argues that “To become whole, a woman needs to strip away the false identity – femininity – patriarchy has constructed for her” (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 63). For the poet, women's true identity lies in their liberty in speaking and questioning the seemingly normal values. So, she rejects to become men's effigy.

Patriarchy desires a silent woman for it would be easier to manipulate her. So, Tiwari wants women to cast of the feminine self which is defined in terms submissive and silence. Daly, in her *Pure Lust*, too, has “transvaluated what counts as moral virtue and moral vice for women.” The speaker in this poem matches with the lusty and wild females introduced by Daly who are “the undomesticated women who refuse to be governed by the rules of men's shadow society” (Quoted in Tong, 2009, p. 64). Tyson also urged:

It is important to note, too, that the patriarchal concept of femininity- which is linked to frailty, modesty and timidity – disempower women in the real world: it is not feminine to succeed in business, to be extremely intelligent, to earn a big bucks, to have strong opinions, to have a healthy appetite, (for anything) or to assert one's right. (p. 86)

The seemingly happiness maintained by women in patriarchy is their passivity in the form of effigy. So women's true identity lies in their liberty.

Another case of the poet's rejection of women's constricted identity in patriarchy has been explored in the poem “Hey Devī!” [“O Goddess!]. This poem is about the search for women's identity. This appears particularly in the lines:

*Chāhiena,  
Yuddha bandījasto  
Parājayako billā lāgeko ātmahatyā jindagī  
Malāi ladnu chha timīsital ubhiera  
Itihāsko antima ladāi*

[I do not want to live as a war prisoner. It would be a life of defeat, a joke. I want to fight the last battle of history by standing along with you.] (ll. 83-87)

Indeed, patriarchy has made the life of women just like the life of a war prisoner because it needs the females' energy for its existence. Daly has aptly claimed that it has “attraction/need of female energy . . . of love for those victimized into a state of living death.” Furthermore, she

adds that “patriarchy is necrophilic and sadomastic” (Quoted in Kassam, 2012, p. 104, 105). This means that it gains pleasure from the subjugation of women. The given lines are a sharp rejection to such sadism and necrophila of patriarchy.

Patriarchy has been sustained by subordination and subjugation of women, since it is structured in favor of men. For example, it has used them for advertising its products and for sex. This appears in the line: “*Timrā ākhā ra othaharuko bigyapana/ Timrā bhangimā ra seksa apilako charchā* [Advertisement of your eyes and lips/ Appeal of sex and your body parts]” (ll. 55-56). Black (2004) pointed that contemporary beauty industry grew with advertising aimed at women. She has quoted Peiss who claimed that “women's magazines and advertisers inducted their female readers into a world of brand-name products and smart shopping, while department stores created a feminine paradise of abundance, pleasure and service” (p. 18) Fredrickson and Roberts projected that women internalize the view of males and begin to objectify self by treating self as an object to be looked at and evaluated on the basis of their appearance (Szymanski et al, 2011, p. 8). This is a kind of coercion not recognized by women.

Women are manipulated to look beautiful through the consumption of cosmetic. The advertisements promise to tell them what men truly want, what faces and bodies provoke men's fickle attention. But Wolf (2002) warned that beauty myth are unable to tell the whole truth about their advertised products. Hence, women should understand “the healthier the industry, the sicker are women consumer and the civil rights” (p. 82). Because of the fear of being rejected by men women turn their head to the advertisements. It is apt to quote hooks (2005) who defined patriarchy as “a political –social system dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence” (p. 18). The poet's observation of patriarchy comes closer to hook. “*Abachetanmai ghokaieko ho timilai/ Sahansiltāko abadaita barnamālā/ Ra garāieko ho timro chetanāmāthi pakshāyaghāt* [You were made to learn by heart the words of tolerance while you were unconscious/ And then your consciousness has been paralyzed”] (ll. 50-52). This is symbolic to history of human civilization where women needed to accept the dominance of men. In this way, patriarchy has been successful to demystify women's identity and deny to identify them as free thinking, conscious individuals. This coercion has been recognized and challenged in the poem.

Traditionally women are depicted as fragile creatures that need men's protection. Patriarchal society expects women to become beautiful and delicate like butterfly. But, the poet denies to be portrayed as fragile in the poem “Putalī” [“Butterfly”]. The persona asserts that she is not the same butterfly which society expects her to be. Rather she is a wild butterfly evolved out of various sufferings:

*Bhogera prakriti chakrako niyati*  
*Gujarera ekai janmamā hajjārau yonīkā dukkha*  
*Bado yatnale*  
*Baneko hu putalī*

[Bearing the destiny of nature's cycle and going through the pain of having vagina, I have become a butterfly with great endeavor.] (ll. 34-37)

The poet claims that women's destiny is tied to natural cycle and not to patriarchal norms. Here, by referring vagina, she also argues that the menstruation is not a sign of weakness but wildness because that is where her identity lies. Sargisson (1996) writes, "Daly seeks in *Gyn/Ecology* (1987) a true, wild, women's self, which she perceives to be dormant in women, temporarily pacified by patriarchal system of domination" (p. 184). This wilderness has been muted by social norms that compel women to stay in subordination. The poet tries to revive such wildness in women.

Women's power has been muted by patriarchy by teaching them to become cultured. The poet refers this culture as something that controls women's creativity: "*Malāl nachopa/ Malāl napakra/ Udna chāhānchu ma* [Do not cover me, do not hold me. I want to fly] (ll. 4-6). The factors that cover and hold women, according to Liechty (2010), for example, are fashion which women are supposed to use for prestige [*ijjat*] economy that women are expected to maintain. In fact, prestige economy is both, the primary process of culture and fundamental area where patriarchy is naturalized (p. 311). Therefore, the persona warns men to free her now because she wants to explore the world freely in her own way:

*Jānna chāhānchu*  
*Yi sabaikurā*  
*Aaphnai ākhāle*  
*Āphnai vivekle*

[I want to know all these things with my own eyes and with my own conscience]. (ll. 25-28)

Contrary to the passive culture maintain by women, she claims that she is an active butterfly who is capable to experience and understand things from her own wisdom. Milner (2009) informs, "Women [are] operating beyond the prescribed norms and [beyond] the consequences of such indecorous behavior" (p. 583). This desire of operating beyond patriarchal norms is clear from the concluding lines, "*Udna chāhānchu ma/ Mukta udān* [I want to fly, a free flight]" (ll. 47-48). Thus, the poet argues that women have a great potentiality to create an identity of their own if they are set free from the patriarchal norms.

Likewise, the poet also criticizes arts like literature and paintings for misrepresenting women's identity and naturalizing male's dominance:

*Mukta garideu malāī*  
*Timrā kyanvāskā parkhālharu bāta*  
*Timrā kabitākā haraphharu bāta*  
*Jahā jahā*  
*Tathakathit saundaryakā nāmmā*  
*Yugau dekhi*  
*Banāekā chau malāī*  
*Bandī*

[Set me free from the walls of your canvas, from the lines of your poem, and from everywhere, where you have imprisoned me for centuries in the name of beauty]. (ll. 39-46)

Here, the poet challenges Humanist tradition that has developed standards of literature where women are necessarily alien, submissive or dependent. In the name of beauty, they have misrepresented women in every sectors including literature. Millet points out that authors as D.H Lawrence and Henry Miller as the most articulate leaders of patriarchy and tags them as literary pornographers because they have portrayed women as sexually humiliated objects abused by men. This is what they meant by ideal sexual conduct (Tong, 2000, p. 53). Patriarchal feminine traits like frailty, modesty and timidity disempower women in the real world. Because in the real world to excel in any field one needs to be courageous, bold and daring; she should readily accept challenges. No one will confide power to someone who is weak and timid. Thus, the poet searches her identity by freeing herself from such misrepresentations of women. She, as a radical and liberated woman, claims female identity independent of men.

### **Conclusion**

The analysis of the selected poems from Tiwari's anthology, *Prashnaharuko Kārkhānā* explores the poet's quest for female's identity. In the quest for female's identity, she rejects, challenges and questions the long followed taken for granted assumptions of patriarchy that emphasize women's subordination to men. She protests the myth of beauty by denying long held tradition of women wearing ornaments and cosmetics. She identifies the beauty products and ornaments as the ploys invented by patriarchy to disempower women. She shows contempt to the slavish adherence of women to patriarchal norms and values that have reduced them to the role of effigy and butterfly. Her persona discards the traditional feminine identity defined in terms of modesty, frailty and timidity and emerges as a radical, revolutionary and subversive woman. Instead of the traditional, silent and submissive woman, she opts a wild woman who questions and challenges the norms and values of patriarchy in search of female's identity

independent of men. The implication of the projection of the wild woman suggests women's entitlement to personal freedom like that of men.

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