

Psychopolitics in the digital Manufacture of Criminality in *A Burning*

Divya Saraswathi P.

Research Scholar, Department of English,  
SDNB Vaishav College for Women, Chromepet, Chennai.

Dr. P. Beena

Research Supervisor, Associate Professor of English,  
Shrimathi Devkunvar Nanalal Bhatt Vaishnav College for Women,  
Chrompet, Chennai.

ABSTRACT

Freedom is perceived by people of the state according to the governance, power and age. Freedom of speech from the past is modified to freedom of expression in comments of the present. Byung-Chul Han, a German philosopher, theologian and cultural theorist refers to this transformation of expression of thoughts in the digital era in *Psychopolitics*. According to that, contemporary power operates less through prohibition and more through exposure. This paper will discuss how self-production entails continuous self-surveillance in the case of Jivan, a young Muslim woman who was arrested for posting a comment on Facebook about the negligence of the government in a terrorist attack. This paper will further emphasize the contrast of the psychopolitics' function as referred to by Han which encourages disclosure and weaponizes the same simultaneously in the case of Jivan. The contemporary digital era gains power by targeting the psyche of the people by manipulating the

desires, feelings, and perception. Han writes that neoliberal power produces subjects who voluntarily submit. In *A Burning* submission appears as ambition, loyalty, and hope of Jivan. Jivan's expression is turned into evidence, and her ambiguity is turned into guilt as understood from the idea of Han's Neoliberalism. Ultimately Jivan's guilt is revealed as a psych political construction produced by internalized power and weaponization of visibility.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, Psychopolitics, Weaponization, Freedom, Surveillance.

\*\*\*\*\*