



# **Women and Subalternity in Moroccan Contemporary Cinema: Yassmine Kassari's Erraged (The Sleeping Child) (2004)**

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# Outline

- The current situation of woman in Moroccan cinema
- Disclosing the discourse of subalternity in Yassmine Kassari's film the Sleeping Child
- Conclusion



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# The Current Situation of Woman in Moroccan Cinema

The representation of gender issue in Moroccan contemporary cinema has remained homogenous and unchanging in its portrayal of woman as a subaltern other.

Gayle, S. (2009, p.309) “Most Moroccan films reflected a more pessimistic viewpoint about the changes available to women. If not death, then divorce, insanity, abject misery, despair, or prostitution seemed to be the primary options offered to film women by male filmmakers.



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- Orlando, V. (2009) argues: “women’s roles in Moroccan male filmmakers’ works tend to be pessimistic, casting them often as victims of socio cultural mores, misery, and poverty.”
- Films such as: Lalla Chafia (1982) by Tazi Mohamed Ben Abdelouahed, Chergui (1975) by Moumen Smihi, and Souheil Ben Barka’s Blood Wedding (1980) have featured women characters suffering from the weight of ill cultural norms or struggling against abusive treatment exerted by their male oppressors.



# Disclosing the Discourse of Subalternity in Yassmine Kassari's Film the Sleeping Child

- Raged or (The Sleeping Child) is a feature-length film that was produced by Yassmine Kassari in 2004.
- The film was shot in a remote rural area situated in the Atlas Mountains in the north-east of Morocco.
- The film features the hardships both Zeinab and Halima endure after being left by their husbands who go for clandestine labor in Europe.



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- Orlando, V (2011,p.124) “Women are left to fend for themselves, to preserve and endure silently while their men go off to Spain to find work.”
- The young women are also supposed to stay in one fixed space, and be subject to the eye watching of their mothers and in-laws.
- Men are the present-absent in the village, however their patriarchal hegemony reshapes gender role over daily lives within the village.





**Fig. 1 Zeinab and Halima watching their husbands leave the village**



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**Fig.2 Halima meeting Hassan in the forest**



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**Fig.3 Zeinab watching her husband on the videotape**



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**Fig. 4 Zeineb with her mother-in law consulting the fqih**



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# Conclusion

- The critical analysis of Kassari's "the Sleeping Child" has disclosed the role of traditions and patriarchy in constructing a subordinate female other that can't seek freedom or speak her voice. Despite the fact that the film tried to make the male characters physically invisible in the village, their patriarchal presence has been strongly maintained by the old mothers turning the hope for woman's liberation far-fetched.



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