

Original Article

Women In Literature: Representation And Resistance

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Abstract

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Literature can give delight and instruct the people about the cultural differences. It can be said that that literature depends on the people who are culturally and educationally advanced. The novelist may find clever field for the further development of the novel as a real art form. So the novelist must pay attention to the fiction which needs weight as well as intelligence. It is said that emergence of symbolism and naturalism in the literary work perhaps indicates a tentative direction. Such a combination would allow the inclusion of the pressing events of the day. The infusion of a symbolic tradition into naturalism would transform minor items into major significance. So it would not cut the writer off from immediacies like local politics, class structure, personal goals, the nature of ambition, and all other pressing details of daily existence. So the novel can give the definition of man in his society. Regarding the status of women in the Pre-Vedic period, the information is very scarce and ambiguous. Ancient scriptures and literature have accorded a high place to the woman by treating her as a paragon of beauty and virtue. In classical literature, women have been considered as embodiments of the elements of beauty in nature. The idea of pativrata was emphasized. It was believed that a woman finds fulfillment only as a wife or life-partner of a man. This image of the woman has persisted over succeeding generations and this idea contributed to the subordination and the low status accorded to woman in society. The new ideas and innovative thoughts specifically rooted in the social customs that affects the life style of the society. The social and moral principles were given new dimensions to motivate women of the modern world.

Key words: Real art, Naturalism, Ancient scriptures, Social customs

Introduction:

The novelists project woman's nature in desperate situation and her predicament. The protagonists demonstrate the changing facets of Indian womanhood. Each faces a conflict between personal desires and societal expectations and their condition is further aggravated by the sense of predicament. The works of writers are analyzed generally from a modernist perspective in terms of subjective psychology and predicament. According to Geraldine Forbes, "The first historical accounts of Indian women date from the nineteenth century and are a product of the colonial experience". Both accounts of the British missionaries and the Indian reformers postulated a theory of a golden age, after which there was a long period of stagnation and decline. Mulk Raj Anand is one of the most important writers in Indian English fiction. He has been severally described as a humanist, a socialist, a Marxist. He has also depicted the predicament of the Indian woman who is a victim of the social injustice. In the novel, Gauri the female protagonist belongs to a poor family in a village. She gets married to Panchi, a peasant, in the neighboring village. Gauri is also a victim of this oppressive burden of Sita. Under his tutelage, Gauri is transformed into a person with a strong will and individuality. The necessary of education and the benefits thereof were unknown to Gauri. The transformation in Gauri is due to her contact with the urban center. Many women of her class were silently putting up with the atrocities, but Gauri succeeds in putting an end to her troubles. All the traditional gods that Gauri believed in did not come to her rescue. Even educated women could not solve the problems of these classes.



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Raja Rao is a great son of mother India. He is an Indian novelist in English belonging to the first generation. He is the child of the Gandhian Age. *Kanthapura* is the first novel of Raja Rao which was written in France. The novel *Kanthapura* has a vivid and realistic picture of the Gandhian freedom struggle. Raja Rao has brought the Indian atmosphere thoroughly well into his study. *Kanthapura* portrays women as taking major roles. It unveiled the immense potential of Indian women. Women are in the forefront but Raja Rao focuses that it is not in defiance of their men. Women rise to the occasion and release their inherent potential but they do not do it independently. Raja Rao gives a glowing description of the village *Kanthapura*. Most of the activist like Rangamma, Ratna and Achakka are widows. Raja Rao portrays a positive image of women as forces of harmony and survival which is effectively described as the end of the novel. In the midst of the chaos created the police, women sit and sing. A child is born and a Brahmin child widow nurses the baby of a weaver woman and the barriers of the caste are transcended by women. Women are shown as upholders of stability. Ratna is a child widow who has been powerfully influenced by modern ideas and who does not regard being a woman as a matter of shame and inferiority. Achakka is revealed by her manner of narration and her comments on persons and events. Her function is representative and her strength lies in being anonymous. Narsamma is the old widow, orthodox and conservative. She has a great love for her son and she has high hopes of a brilliant career for him.

Anita Desai is a very famous writer in English literature. She published her first novel in 1963, *Cry, the Peacock*. In her novels, she focuses upon the personal struggles and the problems of the Indian women. The main character Maya faced various problems in her life. Anita Desai successfully tunnels into the chaotic world of Maya's consciousness. Her neurosis also denotes a collective neurosis which tries to shatter the very identity of woman in the contemporary society dominated by man in which woman longing for love is driven mad or compelled to commit suicide. The whole events given by the writer which are fully relates to the matters of marriage life of the main character. The heroine of the novel wants to lead a satisfactory life. She always pines for the sexual satisfaction. Already she was the daughter of a wealthy father and she married a person who senior to her age. Maya has so many habits that maintained by up to now. But her husband does not like anything as well as no poetic mind. The main character Maya thinks that *Peacock* always have struggle for survival and the writer used it as a symbol in this novel. In this novel, Anita Desai has depicted the failure of marriage between Maya and Gautama. She is the pioneer of the psychological novel in modern Indian English literature. Female characters are dominant in her novels. Here she externalizes the interior of Maya's psyche.

Conclusion:

For ages Women become victims of the patriarchal order. These women see themselves as unworthy to rebel against male domination. Woman is wise and intelligent and has anger for the cage treated around her by the society. She understands the hypocrisy of the male dominated tradition. Many times she rightly interprets the life of women praised by the tradition and elevated to divine status. She is sometimes looked down upon only as a bed-partner and an object of enjoyment or merely as a slave and sometimes respected as a mother and even worshipped as a goddess. On the other hand, her time related problems and changing status, as well as role in society is depicted. Woman represents all the feminine sorrows. This woman gets battering from her husband, toils hard and faces hunger. On the other hand, as a woman she exploited by the male dominance in a very cruel manner and she struggles to bring up her children. She looks after every child as a blessing of God. The traditional image of woman is as home-maker. Woman demands an existence outside the family but within the social framework. So many years, women were dominated by men in every field.

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