

ISSN 2319-4804
Impact Factor - 4.95

THE INTERIORS

A Peer-reviewed Annual Journal of English Studies

Volume - 12

2023



Editor

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Volume-12, 2023

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Composed by

Shivam Computer Press, Gaya (Bihar)

Mob. 9308571161

E-mail : shivamcomputerpressgaya@gmail.com

Printed at Shivam Computer Press, A. P. Colony, Gaya

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EDITORIAL

Outer space may represent the ultimate frontier but the most critical challenge now is the inner space – understanding the basic nature and behaviour of human beings. Men explored larger canvas of character and the locale and its infinite variety of reactions to a given stimulation. But women, who are the natural storytellers, on the contrary started exploring their own myth, memory and inner space to fulfil their creative instincts. However, in the rigidly formed and tradition-bound societies like India the repression one has to put up with is usually very severe and the resultant suffering often assumes pathetic proportions for sensitive individuals. Among the Indians the women happen to be the worst sufferers as the social norms and moral codes have been so framed as to be particularly disadvantageous to them.

The changing image of women in Indian English novels, from the suffering women to the assertive ones, redefining self and defying traditional mores, are realistically documented in the recent Indian English novels. Contemporary women writers like Githa Hariharan, Uma Vasudev, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De, Manju Kapur, Namita Gokhale et al through their fictions have chosen to talk back – moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonised, the exploited and those who stand and struggle side by side, a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of ‘talking back’ that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of a movement from object to subject, the liberated voice. Indian women novelists in English have presented different themes like clash between tradition and modernity, woman’s struggle for emancipation, identity crisis and psychological turmoil in a male-dominated society. They explore the existential predicament of the suppressed women in a patriarchal society controlled by rigid traditions and limitations. Being women they understand and unfold the inner mind of the subdued women with their feminine sensibility and psychological insights. They present their protagonists as vibrantly active in terms of feelings, intellect and emotions and reflect a kind of feminist approach, outlook and perspective. Their women need not compete with anyone, that all they have to do is to march hand in hand with men and go forward as equal partners, reaching out for an equitable share of man's worldly and spiritual goods, sharing experiences and aspirations.

The present volume contains thirty eight well-written papers. The scholars have mainly focused on the topics related to Children

literature, Feminism, Dalit literature, English language teaching, Comparative literature, Partition literature, Myths, Ecological studies, Translation studies, Subaltern studies, Film studies, Biography, Transgender studies and Criticism. Besides, the Journal also includes two book reviews.

The challenging task of publishing the present issue of the Journal has been possible only because of the constant encouragement of my mother, Dr. V. R. Agrawal, former Professor & Head, Dept. of Sanskrit, Post-Graduate Centre, Gaya College, Gaya (Magadh University, Bodh-Gaya) who shaped my personality and raised me to the height where I am. I invoke her grace for any good that I may do in this life. I feel obliged to the members of the Academic Advisory Board and all the Associate Editors and also to the panel of reviewers but for whose continuous support and encouragement this Journal would not have seen the light of the day. I thank all the contributors, who contributed their scholarly papers to the Journal. I am also grateful to my teachers for reviewing two books. I also thank my departmental colleagues, research scholars, friends and well wishers who rendered support to me in one way or the other.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not record my thanks to my wife, Dr. Shalini Agrawal (Assistant Professor, Dept. of Botany, Dr. V. K. S. College, Rafiganj, Aurangabad, Bihar) whose active and ungrudging help proved fruitful in completing the work requiring sustained and patient labour, undivided attention and pointed concentration. I also bless my sons Arush Agrawal (BBM, LL.B, Final year, SLS, Pune) and Ansal Agrawal (B.Com Hons, 1st year, Sri Ram College of Commerce, New Delhi) for helping me in numerous ways. Ms. Kanchan Devi, Proprietor, Shivam Computer Press too, deserves thanks who designed and composed the present issue of the Journal.

Finally, I invite the active co-operation from readers in the endeavour to promote a proper understanding of literature as an aid to make living really worthwhile. Constructive criticism and suggestions from scholars are earnestly solicited for the improvement of the Journal in future issues.

1st July, 2023

Neeraj Kumar