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EDITORIAL

Women writing has got momentum in post-Eighties with a galaxy of new women writers who display their feminine sensibility in their fiction. They plead for women's emancipation, equal rights to women on par with their male counterparts, their individuality and identity in the society. Mention may be made of writers like Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Uma Vasudev, Githa Hariharan, Shobha De, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Gita Mehta, Dina Mehta, Meera Syal and Kiran Desai. Indian women in the past were denied opportunities available in the society. The traditional values and early marriage system in Hindus and purdah system in Muslims confined them within the limits of the home. Her identity is related to her family. Women started acquiring education as a result of many reform movements by social reformers like Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Mahatma Gandhi and D.K. alias Annasaheb Karve. The educated women became conscious of the injustice inflicted upon them by the patriarchy.

Post-Independence India witnessed a significant change as constitutional provisions were provided to offer women equal rights and privileges in society. Indian women got freedom from the clutches of illiteracy and ignorance in the wake of independence. Their thirst for knowledge and yearning for identity were stirred up as their latent potential came to the forefront. The women who have enjoyed the benefits of the education commenced a wide campaign for equal rights for women. In such a transitional phase, the Indian women had to encounter the clash between tradition and modernity. The difficulties of adjustment between the time-honoured values and personal fulfilment generally result in conflict and frustration. It is true that the men of the patriarchal society even in this twenty-first century are not ready to accept and understand the awareness and altered views of the women in respect of their place and position in their family and society. They expect the women to be the preservers of Indian tradition which they believe is in following the 'Sita-Savitri' image.

However, the new women assert their disagreement to this attitude and voice their resentment about being smothered in confinement. They are able to sketch their own life as a result of their changed notions towards life. It is an outcome of women's education, her rights of

citizenship and other legal rights and above all her gainful employment and economic independence which have tremendously influenced her outlook, especially related to her conjugal relationship and attitude towards marriage. In spite of this, it appears that the modern Indian wife still confronts difficulties in the process of her performing the various roles allotted to her in the society. The consciousness and modernity in her thinking lead her into the conflict of two opposite directions the images and expectations of the traditional and the modern wife. This dichotomy signifies the complacency of the Indian-English writers who portray the unresisting, submissive, tradition-bound and intending sufferer who takes pride in sacrifice. The women writers of the recent past have brought about significant shifts in the reconstruction of the lives of men and women in their work using the narrative devices that allow silences, gaps and breaches in the social relations to render a new impression and present personal, private relationships and experiences. The novels written in the recent past throw deep insights into the female psyche and present a full range of feminine experience.

The present volume consists of thirty five well-written papers followed by a translated short story. The scholars have mainly focused on authors like Haruki Murakami, Vina Mazumdar, J.M. Coetzee, Nadia Shivack, Albert Camus, Amitav Ghosh, Mahasweta Devi, Shobha De, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Attia Hosain, Rama Mehta, Jaisree Misra, Rabindranath Tagore, Aravind Adiga, Charles Dickens et al. Besides, themes like Black feminism, LGBTQ, Utopia and Dystopia, Multiculturalism, Gender Studies, Linguistics etc. have also been discussed thoroughly. It also contains one translated short story and three poems.

The challenging task of publishing the present issue of the Journal has been possible only because of the constant encouragement and support of the members of my family. 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 also thank my departmental colleagues, research scholars, friends and well wishers who rendered support to me in one way or the other. Ms. Kanchan Devi, Proprietor, Shivam Computer Press too, deserves thanks who designed and composed the present issue of the Journal.

30th June, 2024

Neeraj Kumar