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THE INTERIORS

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EDITORIAL

The postmodern era has witnessed a spurt in women's creative writing as well as in feminist literary criticism uncovering the ideology of patriarchal society in works of art. While many feminist critics have decried the literature written by men for its depiction of women as marginal, docile and subservient to man's interest and emotional needs and fears, some of them have also identified male writers who have managed to rise above the sexual prejudices of their time. Literature by women presents an "imaginative continuum". They deal with gender issues and roles, female subjectivity, exploitation and oppression, the concept of being 'other' in a patriarchal society, the theme of growing up from childhood to womanhood, self-liberation through self-quest, sexual deviance and sexual autonomy, human relationships, realism, the image of the 'New Woman', globalisation, diasporic consciousness, clash between tradition and modernity etc.

Women in the present socio-cultural set up are aggrieved lot as in most of the cases they have been forced to live restricted and regimented lives. The lack of privacy, the physical boredom and the drabness of a monotonous family life have impeded the free growth of their feminine self. The problem for women today is not sexual but a problem of identity. To quote Betty Friedan, "many young women certainly not all – whose education plunged them into a world of ideas feel stifled in their homes. They find their routine lives out of joint with their training. Like 'shut-ins' they feel left out". (*The Feminine Mystique* : 1965, 20)

However, women, in recent times are no longer 'others' in Indian English literary scenario and that Indian English female writers have created a space for themselves. Woman is becoming free of the 'dependence syndrome', to quote Chaman Nahal. The women writers have broken down the orthodox model and have made their protagonists cross the threshold of their domestic arena. So we have Kajoli (*So Many Hungers*) showing great courage in the face of all odds and really not dependent on her male counterparts, Shree (*Forever Free*) hitting back at her husband by establishing a different model of living through defiance and Anasuya (*The Song for Anasuya*) who pays back the men in their own terms. Thus we find that the very concept of feminism as articulated by the modern female writers aims at the fulfilment in life i.e. to develop our personality to its optimum potentiality. Writers like Rama Mehta, Shobha De, Shourie Daniels, Kamala Markandaya, Bharati Mukherjee, Manju Kapur, Indira Goswami, Arundhati Roy, Jai Nimkar, Gauri Deshpande, Jaishree Misra, Anita Nair, Namita Gokhale, Anjana Appachana, Indira Ganesan, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali et al – all have carved niche for themselves and have contributed immensely to different genres of literature. They have shown an admirable understanding of the problems and the predicaments of the women. They have tried to delve deep into the forces that condition the growth of a female in the patriarchal society. Their writings reveal the variegated facets of woman in modern times and as such reflect the fully awakened feminine sensibility.

The present volume of the Journal consists of thirty three papers – ranging from the existential concern of Mahesh Dattani and Albert Camus to the human sensibility of Indira Goswami, morality of Tennessee Williams and human values of Khushwant Singh; from the Dickens's world of Utilitarianism to Amitav Ghosh's world of alienation; from the feminist world of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan writer and Bapsi Sidhwa to the world of Dalit writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Arundhati Roy and Mahasweta Devi; from the poetic world of Arun Kolatkar to the dramatic world of Girish Karnad; from the world of partition to the world of identity and cultural conflict and from Raja Rao's and Graham Greene's philosophical world to Arthur Miller's world of realism. It also contains a number of papers in comparative perspectives. Writers like Buchi Emecheta, Kamala Markandaya, Khushwant Singh, Bapsi Sidhwa, Rama Mehta, Tehmina Durrani, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Bharati Mukherjee have been dealt with from comparative viewpoints. Besides, there are papers related to the themes of aestheticism, incest, language technology, relationship between language and literature and pragmatic analysis of a text. In addition to the scholarly papers a few reviews of the recently published books have also been included in the Journal. It has also accommodated some poems by the budding poets.

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 and 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 Advisory Board and the Editorial Board 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, especially the research scholars for their papers. For the first time all the papers have passed through 'plagiarism check process', thus becoming more authentic and original pieces of writing. And for this I must thank one of my research scholars Ms. Sweta Kumari who undertook and completed the whole task ungrudgingly. Owing to this out of forty nine papers received for the present volume only thirty three papers were accepted for publication. I also thank my departmental colleagues, friends, well wishers and all associates 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, Shalini Agrawal (M.Sc., Botany) whose active co-operation proved fruitful in completing the work requiring sustained and patient labour, undivided attention and pointed concentration. I also bless my sons Arush Agrawal (BBA - LLB, Semester-I, SLS, Pune) and Ansal Agrawal (Std. IX, DAV Public School, Cant. Area, Gaya) for helping me immensely. Sri Ajay Kumar, Shivam Computer Press, too deserves thanks who designed and printed the eighth 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, 2019

Neeraj Kumar