



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

English

THE SCAPE OF FEMINISM IN ANITA NAIR'S NOVEL "LADIES COUPE"

KEY WORDS: Feminism, quest for independence, ipseity and gender equality, gender discrimination.

L.B. Thamil Yazhini

III B.A., Department of English, Bon Secours College for Women, Thanjavur, TamilNadu, India.

ABSTRACT

The main intension of this paper is to manifest how Anita Nair describes Indian Feminism, culture and demeanor through the women characters in her novel "Ladies Coupe". Anita Nair is one of the most celebrated women writers in India. She often focuses on the dilemmas of women in Indian society and how they strive and tackle the predicaments to seek the independence, cachet and ipseity in the patriarchal society. Indian society is ow sequestered, conventional and importunate some particular code of deportment from women. Moreover, Indian society have not been correctly followed and show obeisance to rules and regulations, law and decree rather it's prying well into other's life and spread gossips but it will willingly certainly have acquainted and teemed with "class and caste"!!! Feminism is a tussle for equality of women or it's an endeavor to make women equal to men. Feminism trusts gender bias wants to be annihilated so that egalitarianism can ambit it's utmost perspective. The novel raises a question can a women stay single; and lead an ecstatic, contented life without men.

INTRODUCTION

Anita Nair is the living Indian writer who was born in 1966 in shorn Ur in Palakkad district of Kerala. She is an innovative artist innately endowed with an onliest adept and erudite perspective. She is considered as one of the pre-eminent writers in the Indian English literature. Her other few works are The Better man, Lessons in forgetting, Cut like Wound, Malabar mind, Goodnight and God bless. One of her notable novels is "Ladies Coupe." The novel circles around the peregrination of the middle-aged Indian woman named Akila as she travels to Kanyakumari in her seek for Independence and on the Ladies Coupe, five women who shared the anecdotes of their life which emboldens Akila to live her own life! The conversation of all the six women have subjected to the common tyrannical thing "Gender Discrimination". The novel raises query whether the role of an Indian women as a delineation of other women, existing below the repressive patriarchal systems relating to cultural combat, should be deterred only to their roles as wives and mothers. Hence, woman's role is constrained to procreation, unconcerned of her own requirements and ambition. The protagonist of the novel Akilandeshwari wants to change these asinine conventional practices, thinking in the society. She mettles in search for the emancipation, dignity in the male dominated society.

AKILA'S QUEST FOR LIBERATION, IPSEITY, RELATIONSHIP AND EQUITABILITY:

Akilandeshwari alias Akila forty-five, single and working as a clerk has been brought up in a traditional family of Tamil Brahmins. After Akila's father died, she has to look after her family. She is really such a responsible woman who often thinks about her siblings a fulfill all their needs. But they don't show any proper care to her. Moreover, she has been like a money mending instrument. Yes! Because her mother and siblings need her only when they in want of pecuniary advantages. This is clear when author says: "When Akila's father died, two things happened: Sundays became just another day of the week and Akila became the man of the family (75). She sacrificed her love, desire an ambition. She constrained herself in the stupid society. She is not taking any social independence. Even, she refuses to be herself for the sake of the society and family. She feels doleful and very conscious of what society speaks about her. Though she is financially independent she could not lead a contented lifestyle! Aged forty-five and the circumstances, society demanding her to be a spinster. She feels deserted without having a comate and getting oppressed by her own sister. She is certainly not competent to live a life of her own. On her way to Kanyakumari, Akila encounters five dissimilar women- Janaki Prabhakar, a cosseted wife and muddled mother;

Margaret Shanthi, a chemistry pedagogue married to the tyrant man Ebzener Paulraj. Prabhadevi, the perfect daughter and wife transformed for a life by glimpse of a swimming pool; A fourteen-year-old Sheela Vasudevan, with her proficient to regard what others cannot; and Marikolunthu, whose chastity was ruined by one night of doltish man's lechery. They share their life experiences with each other. Even though, they differ in age, educational background, cultural rearing and cuisines. Their stories are interconnected with a common thing, the cataclysmic vicissitude of Indian women in a patriarchal social mandate. In the end each story enlightens the story of Akila who harks to all other women and endeavors to apply their panorama and justifications in contrasting to her own life.

THE MOST HEART-RENDING TALE OF MARIKOLUNTHU!

Among these five phenomenal women characters: The most heart wrenching saga is that of Marikolunthu, the Dalit woman thirty-one years old and an unmarried mother who preyed upon of a man's concupiscence: her penury obligating her to do things that contravene the conventional society. Now, she is mother to spurious child. She has tackled destitution, molestation, lesbianism and agony. "I was a restless spirit wrapped and bitter. Sometimes I would think of the past and I would feel a quickening in the vacuum that existed within me now" (226). Her life is teemed with full of frantic and untoward moments!! She is from conservative family background a patriarchal system is pressured woodenly on her. Marikolunthu is working in chettaiyar house, the richest man in the village and there she employed to guard the child; howbeit, she abhors her own son who was born as an outcome of her sexual assault by the malevolent Murugesan. Her virginity is depredated by him. She is incensed and could not tolerate that the rapist malicious Murugesan was not punished, in lieu she is chastised to make her living by being a helper in the chettaiyar house. Lack of erudition and profession makes her a hardship throughout her life! Her wrath abates only after seeing the cadaver of Murugesan ablazing in the pyre. From the troublesome tale of Marikolunthu it is blatant that she came across too many tribulations and struggled a lot to survive in the society! Later, she began to love her innocent son. Marikolunthu can be called as a "TRUE FEMINIST". It is through her story that the complications of rape, virginity, maternity, heterosexuality are explicated in the novel. Thus, a women must be educated and be courageous enough in all kind of life stages!

CONCLUSIONS

"Ladies Coupe" examines the status of a women in a typical bound social decree that sees women insular in the role of a

reverential daughter, docile wife and a breeder of children. Women in post-colonial India dauntlessly thwart such demarcate roles and seek the liberation and nobility. Indeed, the train journey represents a journey beyond the bounds of family and responsibilities. It's a journey that will eventually make them aware of their self-esteem and ipseity. Though Anita Nair is not a feminist, she brings out the Indian women quandaries and how they strive to survive in the male dominated society. All women have the capability and power to crumbled the encumbrance and in one period of time we will exultantly seek our emancipation a complete liberation!

REFERENCES:

- [1] Nair, Anita. Ladies Coupe. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.
- [2] Lisa Lau (2014) No longer good girls: sexual transgressions in Indian women's writings, *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 21:3, 279-296, DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2013.791252.