

PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN CHARACTERS IN THE NOVELS OF GITHA HARIHARAN

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The novels of Indian women mainly deal with the Indian middle class woman's sufferings, frustrations, social agitations, and their stillness as a means of communication. Their novels are portraying the sufferings and the struggles of women. Their women are occupied with the difficulties of fulfillment and self-definition in a man's world, the conflicting claims of self-hood, wife-hood, and mother-hood. They focus principally on the psychological searching of inner mind of women. These writers being women enter deep into the inner mind of the depressed women by virtue of their feminine sensibility and psychological insight and bring to light their issues, which are the outcome of Indian women's psychological and emotional imbalances of the society.

The women novelists articulate the feelings and suppressed emotions of women. They have expressed their own viewpoint, attitude, agonies, and their reactions towards the male-oriented society, its customs and traditions and enslaving attitudes. The oppression, lack of freedom to carry out their will, lack of freedom to carve out their career, de-recognition of their decision-making capacities, exposure of their potentialities in a limited manner are some of the issues that have come up in the novels of these writers.

The women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, and Githa Hariharan have chosen the problems and issues faced by the women in the male dominated world as the main theme of their books. They try to create awareness that this is the time to proclaim with definite precision. In India, the women writers' contribution is immense.

Thus the women writers present an insider's view of the female psyche, their inner aspirations, and their peculiar responses to men and things. The artistic nature of women writers reflects their vision and attitude though their emotional response differs from age and it reflects the social ethos also. So the Indian women writers present the complex rock bottom of the Indian psyche and showing its relation to the society. The characters are shown as grappling on the one hand with the changed realities of Indian life and trauma they entail and on the other hand with the psychic conflicts of personal origin.

The women of Githa Hariharan become conscious of the men surrounded by them. The women of all her five novels are persistently preoccupied with the primordial and sublime questions of the identity. They realise that they are nothing but appetite and sex to

the men around them. Though they become conscious they cannot escape from the world which traps them. They sacrifice, tolerate, and survive with the men around them. Their steps may be revolutionary but their results are negative to them. The traditional women convince themselves with the result. They are in a quest of everlasting and subsisting vision of life. They are trying to discover the more abiding faith, quite elevating fulfilling super-human values.

Githa Hariharan's creation of alternative women characters, and the design of a plot around their unconventional choices, embodies a form of writing closer to sexual difference theories and their search for women's solutions and priorities. Most of the protagonists, are feeling ill at ease and experience themselves misplaced and misshapen by the captivity of their surrounding and subsequently, after the awareness, through away the yoke. They are bored and desperate after redemption and release.

Githa Hariharan gives a clear picture of women's consciousness in all her five novels' prominent women characters. Mainly the protagonists of all her novel become conscious of their trapped life and they overcome their problems on their own. Her novels are littered with the blood and toil of her women personages who are in search of real meaning and value in their life.

Her protagonists like Devi, Sita, Shahrzad, Dunyazad, Meena, Mala, and Sara are under the grip of universal nausea. They wage a struggle against it by ultimately discover that nausea is universal; every refuge from it is vulnerable, every metaphysical resort is simply a myth. Githa Hariharan's women aim at their liberation from the shackles of their slavery under inhuman, deadening and wretched conditions, away from the life of spirits, virtually soaked in gross materialism. They heroically revolt against it and, in the process, erode themselves.

The women characters created in her novels are serious candidates to think new forms of liberated women identity, along patterns of resistance, survival, imaginative choices and solidarity, leading to unexpected life stories. The novels stand closer to the principles defended by exploring the liberating potential of imagination to create a new non-misogynous universe of popular references, which will be stimulating for consciousness of women.

It is curious to note that Githa Hariharan always follows the way of story-telling as they are implied in the traditional fantastic tales of ghosts and fairies. The supernatural world interferes with the everyday human world and it picks its favorites and chosen ones. These chosen humans, very often bear a bodily mark or a sign of this preference. The circumstances of birth may also contain some of these marks, often enumerated by wise man or prophets, and current among the people as forms of folklore or superstition.

The clearness that dawns on Githa Hariharan through her close analysis of the tragic life of her women is that they are reduced to being soul-less, life-less, unloved, alienated creatures carrying no place either in family, society, home or hearts of their callous and unimaginative husbands. In the face of rejection or to say dejection, faltering on pebbles one after another, they are left with no alternative except to embark on journey of freedom from their worldly cages they have been stuffed into. Their souls cry and in a fit of rage they say 'No' to such demeaning and wretched existence as if that is the only act of value they can commit out of sheer force of will and choice. This shows the consciousness of her women in all her five novels. They represent the modern women who are conscious of themselves.

Githa Hariharan has been able to invent meaningful new world that is not meant for perpetrating only agony, disgust, despair, loneliness, alienation, meaningless in existence but a world that is imbued with the everlasting springs, hope and harmony, upon a faith that does not ravage but enriches and invigorates, encourages the sustain. The vision of a changing, moving reality through the passage of time is a new faith that reflects through the women characters of her novels.

REFERENCES

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