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Feminist Perspective In Jhumpa Lahiri's Work

Dr. Rashmi Nagwanshi
Assistant Professor English
Govt. College Junnardeo

It is universally admitted that story telling comes naturally to women. In almost all the languages, women novelists have taken the foremost position in the art of narration. There is thus an increase in the output of series produced by women writers. Special stress is being laid on feminist literature. It is increasingly being believed that women are super story teller as is evident from the stories written by Anita Desai, Kamla markandaya, Ruth jhabvala and Nayantara sahal.

Jhumpa Lahari's range is very wide in terms of peoples and lands. In this sense she may be considered an international writer. As stated before, she was born in London of Bengali parents and grew up in Rhodes Island, U.S.A. Since she has an Indian origin and many of her stories have a typical Indian flavor, she may be considered as expatriate Indian writer. In this respect, she stands in the same category as that of V.S. Naipaul, whom Bharti Mukherjee calls and Indian expatriate writer. It will be desirable to compare Jhumpa Lahari with other Indian expatriate writers to judge her position as a writer of fiction. There are quite a few women short story trailers of Indian origin who have excelled in creating an Aroma of Indian setting environment.

Jhumpa Lahari may be regarded as a significant short story writer of the Indian Diaspora who has enriched the Corpus of international writing in English. Interpreter of melodies has received tremendous response and made a mark on the contemporary literary sense. The first edition of her book published by Harper Collins was sold out in record time. It has received unqualified praise from readers and critics. Her work exemplifies the role that experience of being a part of Diaspora plays in shaping an artist's imagination. Her anthology has an interesting sub-title, stories from Bengal, Boston and Beyond. Her range is really wide and spans three continents of people caught between tradition and modernity, between the value and principals they have inherited and the New World standards they are compelled to espouse.

Jhumpa lahiri's women protagonist has been daughters, wives, mothers and mistresses. These are the roles that demand different kinds of response from women in the name of honour and dishonor, right and wrong but always in the context of men's lives. The writer subjects these mythical characters to the contemporary situation and probes into the sensitive but untrodden concerns of their heart. The responses are amazing, as amazing as to expect a replay of the mythical "perfect women" image today.

Jhumpa lahiri's portrayal of the women of different generation including the young shobha of Temporary metter and Boon Ma of A Real Durwan, presents the world of women divided into the traditional and modern. Her female protagonist is from the middle- class. Besides her class identity, she cannot betray her gender identity. Her women are sensitive to the changing times and situations. They are aware of the

social and cultural disabilities to which they are subject in the male dominated society. She finds them caught up in a conflict between their family and professional role between individual aspiration and social demands.

Lahiri's women, like 'Mrs Sen' in the story of the same name, stand at the crossroads of tradition. They seek change but within the cultural norms. Speak not to reinterpret them but merely to make them alive with dignity and self respect.

In Mrs. Sen's, we see the psychological upheavals turmoil and sense of insecurity that an immigrant has to face. This character is shown as a powerless individual. She is leaving in an alien- society and with a husband who is unable to understand her emotional needs and longings. Mrs. Sen pins for Calcutta but she is imprisoned as a bird in a golden cage because her husband cannot go and she cannot think of going alone. In her stories we are not told the proper names of the protagonist. They are referred to by their surnames or title of address, thus suggesting a representative nature of characterization.

Undoubtedly Lahiri is a feminist writer but with a broad humanistic outlook. Her works are essentially reflective of the inevitable situation of the beleaguered contemporary indian women which she has depicted with great artistic finesse and astounding originality.

It is a common belief that feminist all over blame not only male possessiveness and chauvinism but also female reluctance, easy acquiescence and lethargy for the bed shape that woman existence is in. Male-gods are the unchallengeable legislators of a patriarchal society and women join them in their pride which makes the matter worse. But if we go through the stories written by Jhumpa Lahari we may say that this notion is wrong for the contemporary women is all set to acquire her own space and establish an identity of her own.

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