

FEMININE PROSPECTIVE IN ANITA NAIR'S LESSONS IN FORGETTING

¹Starlin Judith Venibha.P, ²Dr. D.L. Jaisy

¹Research Scholar, Reg. No: 18133164012042,

St. Judes College, Thoothoor, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

²Assistant Professor, St. Judes College, Thoothoor, Affiliated to Manonmaniam, Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

Abstract

Indian women novelists have given a new dimension to the Indian Literature. It reflects the hopes and aspirations of the people. Anita Nair has much insight into the concerns of studies, family, love and striving for fame and fortune. She has portrayed such a life in her recent novel lessons in forgetting. For modern educated women, marriage is the main problem. Lessons In forgetting is a depiction of characters due to failed marriages particularly the psychological conflicts. This fiction is impressive in its skill and painful in its integrity. The novel deals with the life of upper middle class families of Ninteens against the back drop of the Southern Tamil Nadu and Bangalore. In this novel the writer describe the whole world of women with simply stunning frankness. This article attempts to explore how aspirations and struggle help people to overcome from the predicament and to establish one's identity.

Key Words: Aspirations, Sub-ordination, Individuality, predicament, suppression.

Anita Nair is one of the eminent leading novelists in the realm of Indian writing in English. Lessons of Forgetting is one the most appreciated novels written by her. This novel throws light on the aspirations and struggle of women in the modern society where everything is guided by male dominance. This novel narrates the tale of Meera who is the Chief protagonist of the novel lives in her ancestral Lilac House with her mother and grand mother. They have good time and live happily in that house. But the death of Meera's father brings them in difficult situation. The Unfavourable circumstances lead them to lead a simple life. Meera never aspires more than requirement. The Novelist Remarks:

Meera never dreamt big dreams. She had no desire for designer cloths, diamonds or expensive holidays. In those hard years after her father's death, she learnt to work ship at the alter of enough. That was all she ever hoped for. Enough to keep the roof over their heads and food in their heads and food in their bellies. Enough to retain dignity and not have to ask reluctant removed relatives for a temporary hand out. (41)

Meera's life changes when her house is chosen for photo shoot. Giri is one of the crew members of the team. They fall in love with their first sight. Giri Marries Meera. He wants to start his own business. For that he need huge amount. He convinces Meera to sell the Lilac House to fulfil the requirement. Meera refuses to sell the house. Therefore, Giri disappears from her life, leaving her with two children and her mother and grandmother. After the departure of the Giri from Meera's life, Meera faces a lot of problems financially as well as mentally. Meera is in search of a job to fulfil the basic needs on her family.

J.A. KrishnaMurthy a cyclone expert, come to India and needs an assistant who would help in his research. He has a daughter Smriti. She come India to complete her degree. One day Jak gets devastating news about his daughter. He comes to India to find out the truth of the accident news about his daughter. Who is in very bad shape right now. Two stories which are interlinking in occasions are told in this novel. One of Jak's and one of Meera's. The characters and situation interlink but in essence the stand separated altogether, except that the nature of fate is the same for them. A lot of expectation is built up as the novel progresses as to what has happened to Smriti, Jak's daughter. The truth, when revealed is melodramatic and anti-climactic.

Meera get a job as a research assistant to Jak. She decides to give up her old identity as she come to know that Giri has demanded divorce. Once when Giri urges to see her in modern dress, Meera tells him that, "I am forty four years old, Giri. I can't dress like I am twenty. I have a daughter who's nearly twenty years old. It looks too silly for me to dress like she does" (107). Time and circumstances teach everybody how to change in life to survive in the society. Now Meera is a research assistant to Jak. She admits willingly to change her old identify.

The Lilac House play a crucial role in Meera's life. It is this house, with its elegance and gracious living that attracts Giri to her in the first place and it is this house, with its elegance and gracious living that attracts Giri to

her in the first place and it is this house that becomes the cause of discords between the two, bringing about the collapse of their marriage. To the ambitious, calculating and hailing from the lower middle class, the riches of the Lilac house are irresistible to Giri.

Meera performs very well in her works. She does all the works by herself. She doesn't need anyone with her even she doesn't feel awkwardness in the party. She attends the Vinnie's party on her own. Meera with her new found confidence and understanding of her situation is afraid to make any commitment right away through fully aware that life seldom offers second chances to men and women.

Smriti is the second leading character of the novel. Whose life is the vivid portrayal of women's struggle to establish an identity in the modern society. Smriti is in India to complete her degree as she was fascinated by the tale told by her father Jak about India. She wants to experience the tradition and culture by herself. She goes on a tour with her friends to spread awareness against the existing social orders such as female foeticide and dowry systems. They work on the script dying daughters. During this campaign she visits the village, Minjikapuram as she has heard the name of this village several times from her father. While walking her the sea beach her foot gets injured by a bit of broken glass. As there is only one hospital in the village. In the hospital she meets a number of pregnant women who have come here to find out the sex of unborn babies. Which is illegal before the law. Smriti starts to conversation with Rishi and trying to explain about Minjikapuram Clinic:

'They have a mobile scan unit and they tell the pregnant women the sex of the foetus. But there's more going on. I am going to find out what's happening there. What they are doing is not just illegal, it's wrong. And somebody has to stop it'. The righteous indignation on her face filled him with dread. (295)

Smriti determines herself to fight against the female foeticide. She prepares a plan to check such type of social evils. To make the women realize that the girl foetus has to be given a chance. That they can find joy in their daughters too. In that hospital Smriti investigate the matter. She started to collect the proof against this illegal act for making a report. She interacts some of the woman at the hospital to know the activity and involvement of doctors regarding the abortion of female foetus. She meets a woman Chinnathayi whose daughter had died at the nursing home after an abortion and she has some of the papers and report with here Dr. Srinivasan and his men were very angry with Smriti as she was damaging their business they pass a wrong message to Smriti using Chinnathayi's name and call her at Sea beach. It was a deception but Smriti was not aware of such Sordid crime.

As Smriti reaches at the place, the three brawny men attack on Smriti and destroy her. Chinnathai is the witness and she remarks, "They were animals, these men. They tore at the girl and it seemed the more she screamed the more excited they became it was the smell of blood" (317). This incident makes Smriti a motionless pathetic and frozen figure Smriti has been brought up in the USA but in India her identity and modernity leads her to that conditions. The novelist portrays how the cultural difference and family background are responsible for the women sub-ordination and suppression in the society. Smriti has been brought up in United states where there is more openness and liberty regarding the gender issues. But in India she faces a lot of problem from house to hospital and from college to campaign.

Lessons in Forgetting is really portrayal women's aspirations, struggle and redemption in general and seeking women's freedom and emancipation in particular. Each and every character has some aspirations from the life and the society as well. They pass through many turbulence but their struggle and patience help them to overcome from the circumstances. Meera experiences many ups and downs in her life. She is well educated and a famous cook book writer. Her aspirations never die in the absence of her husband. Meera has changed the ideology. The narrator advocates the equality, liberty and self-independence of women in the modern male dominated society.

Work Cited:

Nair, Anita, *Lessons in Forgetting*, New Delhi, Harper Collins, 2010 Print

Beauvoir, de Simone, *The Second Sex* Transmission, Ed. H.M. Parshley, London: Vitage, 1997, Print.

Madsen, L.D. (2000), *Feminist Theory and Literary Practice*. London: Pluto Press

Moore, Lucy. *Maharanis: The Lives and Times Three Generations of Indian Princesses*, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2004. Print.