

The House Wife Syndrome Manju Kapur in Home

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Abstract:- Manju Kapur is feminist who has very different style from her current authors towards feminism and the variance lies in her action of feminism which makes her characters outstanding from the other authors. As far as her novel Home is afraid, it is absolutely a specific example of her contemporary rational which is acutely fixed with values. Nisha is the central character of this novel. She is the single girl child in her family. Home is regarded as a place where every family member sense secure but Nisha is sensual exploited and misuse by her individual companion Vicky within the four walls of home. Then she has been sent away from her home instead of Vicky just for the sake of family honour. However she does so well in her studies while staying away from the home but she has to come back there after some years and her studies smart a lot and no one cares about it. In her patriarchal family, the sole purpose of a girl's life is to get married and that is why a girl is supposed to acquire all the qualities which are necessary to become a good wife. Her own self has no existence in her home. But she makes her own identity by her efforts. ManjuKapur has depicted the struggle of her journey in this novel.

Keywords: Family, Gender, marriage, Patriarchy

I. INTRODUCTION

ManjuKapur, an internationally acclaimed Indian woman novelist, has penned down five novels. ManjuKapur's novels reveal the life of women, their struggle for basic rights, quest for identity and survival. With education they become aware of their self-reliance which is proved in concern with new women. It is thus her endeavour to connect with the readers belonging to different regions that makes her resort to include certain vernacular words in her novels. ManjuKapur through the treatment of the language and delineation of the characters presents a real picture of the society and this is what impresses the readers. She talks about reality, the roots of Indian psyche, family-centred life, generation gap and all real life situations faced by common man. Hence it is observed that she revives the traditional linear narrative fashion and adheres to social realism rather than magic realism.

ManjuKapur builds the story on the concept that women of the present day society stand on the threshold of social change in an unenviable position. This novel gives voice to women's frustrations, disappointment, and alienation in a patriarchal world. It is a novel which provokes our thoughts as to how Astha, a married woman in search of her identity, registers her protests against existing patriarchal set up and emerges as an independent woman.

ManjuKapur is a well-known name in the field of feminism in post-modern women authors. She is known for her wonderful grip on the social and familial structure in India. Though she is feminist but her feminist is not only about the problems of women but it reflects a victory also

upon those problems through her characters. She has written five novels till yet

- 1- Difficult Daughters
- 2- A Married Woman
- 3- Home
- 4- The Immigrant
- 5- Custody

Home is about the home of LalaBanwariLal, a patriarch who has faith in living in a joint family. He is the head of the family and runs a sari shop in Karol Bagh. He has two children Yashpal and Pyarelal, and a daughter Sunita, who is married. The novel spotlights on three female characters-Sona, (daughter- in-law of BanwariLal), Rupa, (Sona's sister) and Nisha (Sona's little girl)- who claim their identity in their own ways. The story starts with two sisters: one is attractive and the other only plain. The beautiful elder Sona is married to the elder son of BanwariLal while the younger one, Rupa is attached to a junior Government officer of less esteem. At the starting stage the story spins around the life of Sona and Rupa before it focuses on the whole family.

ManjuKapur has portrayed the confused growing up years of Nisha in a heart rending manner as Nisha is sexually abused by her cousin Vicky in the early stage of her life. It affects the child psychologically and mentally. She thinks silently that, "she had done something dirty". Rupa believes there is something at their home which is

frightening and disturbing the innocent mind of Nisha. Rupa is sent to her aunt's house. Her aunt Rupa, and her husband, take full care of Nisha.

Focusing on the change of women's position, ManjuKapur has presented the changes in the moral foundations of the BanwariLal's family. The novel touches the realities of life in which owing to the modernization the 'old fashioned' shop of BanwariLal is replaced by modern type mirror's showroom and the 'home' is fragmented into flats. Anita Sethi in her review of Home writes,

"As tradition battles with transition, the older members of the BanwariLal family struggle to adapt to the seismic changes rippling through the country, from Nisha restyling herself with a new haircut and clothes to buildings being bulldozed to make way for chandeliered shops".

Discovery of Self in ManjuKapur's Home

ManjuKapur's Home summarizes the idea of women's liberation and the protagonist Nisha emerges as a new woman in the novel. Earlier in various socio-cultural situations, women were discriminated more on the bias of sex. Hence ManjuKapur mentions: "This is the life of a woman: to look after her home, her husband, her children and give them food she has cooked with her own hands" (H 126). This has been in practice with women as their duties to owe domesticity under the pressure of patriarchal notions and controls. Betty Friedan views that for woman, as for man, the need for self-fulfillment – the autonomy, self-realization, independence, individuality, self-actualization – is as important as the sexual need.

As Nisha is mangli, and destined to match her horoscope with a similar mangli, she should wait unless a mangli could find. Ultimately Nisha is at the centre of interest with an issue of her college education. After some days of being admitted into the college, Nisha came in contact with Suresh, an engineering student. It was a turning point in her life. Kapur observes that Nisha returned to college "feeling adventurous, daring and modern. For the first time she had interacted socially with an unrelated male". In course of time both Suresh and Nisha developed their relationship.

ManjuKapur's Basic Approach to Woman's Life

ManjuKapur's basic approach to woman's life in her novels is to liberate them from the oppressive measures of patriarchal symbolic order. In the process, the protagonists in her novels have sustained a lot of physical, emotional and psychological sufferings. These women have however achieved their long sought freedom to a certain extent. The purpose of this study is to analyze issues related to the middle class or upper middle class women. This study is based on two widely read novels of ManjuKapur- Married Woman and Home. The women's question today is,

therefore, no longer an issue confined to the position of women within the family or their rights to equality with men in different aspects of social life, it is part of the total, far broader question regarding the direction of change that our society is taking - economic, social, political, and the intellectual perception and analysis of that process. It is in this context that the role of women is discussed in the novels of ManjuKapur. The idea that all women were meant to get married and be submissive to their husbands was given a second look when we read the novels of ManjuKapur.

A Critical Analyses of ManjuKapur's Novels

ManjuKapur's contribution is marvelous in the field of Indian English fiction. She shows her unique strength and vitality in the presentation of various thematic perceptions in her novels. The most discussed themes of feminism can be noticed here and there in her novels with different modes and degrees. She dives deep into human emotions and passions of modern life and presents different colours with minute observation detail also. She seems to be the novelist of modern Indian woman who is in the state of transformation in the era of globalization. She seems to be the real spoke woman of modern woman's voice in modern Indian English writing. Her novels are able to present the picture of human life in detailed manner.

In the novels of ManjuKapur, there is an abundance portrayal of man –woman relationships, especially husband –wife relationship and lover –beloved relationship. In Indian English writers, there have been many novelists who have written some superb and fantastic tales of such type. R. K. Narayan was perhaps the first novelist to analyze the importance of husband –wife relationship in the making and shaping of human life and family. He has projected some beautiful husband –wife relationships in his novels; the relationship between Ramani and Savitri in *The Dark Room*, Krishna and Sushila in *The English Teacher*, Marco and Rosy in *Guide*, etc., are some sublime presentation of R. K. Narayan. He seems to be the master of human psychology as far as the delineation of husband –wife relationship and men –women relationship are concerned.

After R. K. Narayan, even in the modern age, there are a large number of novelists like a Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Deshpande, Shashi Tharhur, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya, Kiran Desai, Namita Gokhle, Jhumpa Lahiri, and many more have shown consistency and stamina in portraying man –woman relationship in abundance. These writers have applied different social, literary, political, sociological and psychological theories in order to explore new heights in the era of globalization. But one thing is very common that they have viewed man –woman relationship in the view of

feminist stance. They have presented the contrasted picture of Indian social and cultural values which do not allow women to cross the limits and go beyond the set theories which design and influence their lives.

ManjuKapur, in all her novels, *Difficult Daughters*, *A Married Woman*, *Home*, *The Immigrant and Custody*, has presented some fascinating husband –wife relationships and man –woman relationships. She has analyzed all these relationships in the light of modern complications. The impact of sex, money and materialism is quite evident in her delineation of these relationships. The relationship between husband –wife has been presented in order to show its importance in making the family life either happy or unhappy.

The happy relationship between husband and wife is the major source of happiness and prosperity if there is a sense of true devotion and dedication to each other; otherwise, it's become the cause of frustration, unhappiness, gloominess and sorrow. Particularly in the modern age in which human relationship has become more and more complicated, the sublime concept of husband –wife relationship is also distorted and many deformities have taken place. Now, one may find the great role of money, sex and glamour in the formation of husband –wife relationship and man –woman relationship. It is a reason that more instances of divorce, emotional breakdown and other such cases have been in the modern ages which were not visible fifty years back.

In the modern age, each and every novelist has tried to see man –woman relationship in new circumstances. Especially the women writers try to analyze man –woman relationship or husband –wife relationship in the context of women's perspective. In the novels of ManjuKapur, there is a clash of tradition and modernity, personal and universal, head and heart, emotion and reason. ManjuKapur tries to see women not dependent on men economically or socially or politically or even emotionally. There is a gradual development in the outlook of ManjuKapur from her first novel *Difficult Daughters* to the last one *Custody*.

The readers may find the delineation of man – woman relationship in the context of modernity and its effect. She lays emphasis on the circumstances how man – woman relationship is being influenced by the internal as well as external forces from time to time. The modern diseases like discomfort, bewilderment, sick –hurry, divided aims, faithlessness, etc., seem to distort the basic concept of human relationship in the modern age. ManjuKapur, in her all novels, tries to discover a new territory where she desires for freedom every time. Her characters are some strong individuals who never stop before man –dominated society.

They do not hesitate to go beyond the traditional and conventional norms to visualize their dreams and aspirations. Her woman characters seem to be the powerful exponent of her philosophy of feminism which she always seems to cultivate through her novels.

ManjuKapur's first novel *Difficult Daughters* is certainly a pensive tale of discomfort in the life of a sensitive girl who seems to be struggling in the male-dominated society which provides a little space to woman in general. In *Difficult Daughters*, ManjuKapur presents the conflict between tradition and new outlook even at the time of partition. In her debut novel, ManjuKapur seems to analyze a female character in the milieu of strong traditional family in which there is little scope for a girl to visualize her potentials. Kapur focuses her eyes on the character of Virmati too much in the way she writes every detail about her. Virmati seems to be the perfect exponent of Kapur's feminism in the novel. Kapur has done this in very simple and realistic manner. This novel contains the emotional attachment of almost three generations. Amritsar is the place where almost all the events took place from time to time.

II. CONCLUSION

So, this brief discussion about the novel *Home* by ManjuKapur reveals that how difficult it is for a girl to survive in her own home with dignity and to live with her own choice Nisha has to struggle at every step in her life but it is her invincible spirit which gives her immense courage and which is the chief characteristic of ManjuKapur's protagonists. ManjuKapur is always aware about the current happenings around the society and she gives it expression in her novels also. Nisha is the representative of the changing image of woman in the society who is educated and self-confident. As Dr. Ashok Kumar says, "ManjuKapur has joined the growing number women writers from India on whom the image of suffering but stoic woman eventually breaking traditional boundaries has had a significant impact."

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