

Questions of Subjectivity in Establishing Plurality in Indian Women's Autobiographies

Authors : Angkayarkan Vinayakaselvi

Abstract : This paper aims at unpacking the questions of subjectivity and their role in altering and redefining the constructed images of self and community as represented in chosen Indian women's autobiographies. India is a country of plurality and this plurality is further extended by diasporic explorations. As the third world feminism questioned the Euro-American views on homogenizing the socio-cultural condition of women of all over the world, Indian feminism needs to critique the view that all Indian women are one and the same. Similar to the plural nature of nation, the nature and condition of women, too, are plural in India. Indian women are differentiated by caste, class, and region. A critical scrutiny of autobiographies written by Indian women belong to different socio-cultural groups - Northeast Indian, Dalit and Diasporic categories - will assess the impact of education, profession and socio-cultural and economic status on Indian Women. Such a critique would highlight the heterogeneous subjectivity of Indian women. The images/selves of women as represented through these autobiographies are chosen with an aim to unmask and challenge, through ordering and positioning, the capitalist politics of literary representations of Indian women's formation of 'her-self'. Methodologies and subjects associated with literature are considered essential for understanding and combating women's oppression and empowerment. The representation of self in personal autobiographical history could be treated as the history of entire nation as personal is always political in feminist writings. The chosen narrators who are well-educated, well-settled, professional women of letters are capable of assessing, critiquing and re/articulating the shifting paradigms of women's lives. Despite these factors, the textual spaces possess evidences to establish the facts that these women undergo sufferings, and they counter design cultural specific strategies for their empowerment. These metafictional self-conscious synecdoches extend to include the world of entire women. Thus these autobiographical texts could be reinterpreted as a searing critique of Indian society based on woman's personal life.

Keywords : ethnicity and diversity, gender studies, Indian women's autobiographies, subjectivity

Conference Title : ICLLCS 2018 : International Conference on Language Literature and Cultural Studies

Conference Location : San Francisco, United States

Conference Dates : June 06-07, 2018