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PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AS THE CREATOR OF ART AND LITERATURE

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Abstract

Art and literature reflect the culture of the society through representing the beliefs, symbols, tradition, and custom of any particular territory. Women played major role in the field of art and literature by creating the great literary works. This research paper focuses on the portrayal of women as the creator of art and literature which paved way for the production of the texts which represents the issues faced by the women in the patriarchal society and also the different shades of women. Art and literature are connected together, great artists have produced classic literary pieces and literary works have inspired the artists to generate tremendous art pieces. In this paper, women writers and artist's contribution in the literature and their creations are discussed.

Keywords: Women writings, feminism, gender roles, power structures.

INTRODUCTION:

The theory of feminism has helped the women creators to understand the rights that a woman deserves in the patriarchal society. The term feminism means the belief that woman deserves equality in social, economic and political structures of the society as men deserves. Feminist literary theory focuses on the contribution of women writers literary texts to the literature. The role of female writers in the literary world to shape the perception of female gender based on their experience and reality. Works produced by the women writers helped the people to understand the sufferings of women in the society. In the past women writer's texts were not considered important and they were not given importance, only literary texts generated by male writers were considered as the significant literary texts. Feminist literary theory helped the female writer's creation to be considered as equal to male writer's texts and

this led to the revival of interest in the women to produce great literary texts which narrate the untold difficulties of women.

In the early centuries when male writers were producing the texts based on their perception about women, it was the women writers who were able to write the exact situation of woman in the male dominated society. Few of the important 20th century female writers include Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar who have represented about the stereotypical description about women in the male writers text. In the text, "The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth century literary Imagination" Sandra and Susan have discussed about the issue in the literary texts of the male writers in which male writers portrays women either as an 'angel' or 'demon'. The extremist approach of male writers to describe women either as angel or demon, created a complete stereotypical appearance of female in the literary texts. Susan and

Sandra talked about the women writers of nineteenth century and their imagination which resulted in the portrayal of different shades of women. Women writers were able to write about the realistic women of the society unlike the male writers who just portrayed unrealistic women of society either as good or evil. In "Second Sex", Simon de Beauvoir have represented the role of women in the male chauvinistic society where women are described as 'what men are not'. Even the great philosopher like Aristotle have defined women as "female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities" and Thomas Aquinas called women as the imperfect man, Simon argued on this and stated that throughout the history women were cornered by the male society and made them think like the submissive creatures of world. Women were made to believe that they are second sex, second society and dominated community by the male community. Simon also points out the error in women who rely on male for her economic stability and secure life. In order to overcome these difficulties women should focus on her individualism and education to stand alone to face all her crisis. Helen Cixous is one of the renowned feminist writer who believed in own style of writing literary texts. She has coined the term *écriture* writing which is also known as the women's writing in her text "Laugh of Medusa". Helen stated that women writers can adopt their own style of writing rather than imitating the male writer's style of writing. As a theory *écriture* feminine focuses on the style of language used by the women writer's to elevate psychological understanding of one's own self. She notes that with this style of writing the female creators can express the brutal reality of life faced by women without concerning about certain language rules created by the male artists.

The feminist writers focused on the progression of female writers and the marginalized women of the society. Elaine Showalter in "Towards a Feminist Poetics" have categorized woman into two types: women as readers and women as writers. Elaine explains that women as readers are the critique of the texts who analyze the texts and generate meaning to it. The problem that Elaine points out in the Women as readers is the fault of women readers to interpret the text of the male

writers based on the ideology and prejudices of that male writer. The actual portrayal of female is not portrayed by male writer and it is also not identified by women readers who are the critics of text. Elaine encourages the women readers to analyze the text based on the reality and realistic approach. She coins the term 'Gynocriticism' as the women who are the producers of the literary text that is the creator or the writer. Female as writer produces a text based on her experience which she as woman has experienced in the male dominated world. Elaine focuses on the importance in rise of female writer's in the literary world to create more and more realistic works for understanding of female psychology, struggles and behavior. Further she explains about the three phases of woman writers in the history which includes; feminine writers, feminist writers and female writers. She explains feminine writers as the imitators of the male writers who copied the style of male writings. According to Elaine feminist writers are the women writers who rebelled against the male writers and their writings. And female writers are women writers who focus on the realistic approach of neither following the feminine writers nor the feminist writers. Female writers wrote in their own style to voice out the sufferings of females. Elaine appreciates the female writers and encourages budding writers to follow the motives of the female writers to produce great literary works.

The power structures in the society are one of the major causes for marginalization of women in the patriarchal society. The theory of structuralism developed the concept of binary opposition; Ferdinand de Saussure the great linguist formulated it. Binary opposition is closely associated to the power structures of the society. In linguistics binary opposition is defined as relation of two things which are contrasted and one is defined by what one is not. Feminist writers rebelled against this and have stated that these power structures have produced the difference and created the gender bias in the society. Kate Millet in her work "Sexual Politics" have voiced out the issue of power structures which made women to believe that they are lower and weaker than men. For many decades women forced to accept the ideology that women needs to be

submissive to the male around her. With the creation of literary texts of women writer's, the hidden hegemony of the patriarchal society is known to the commoners of the world. And people are getting awareness regarding the sufferings faced by the female and truth about the male chauvinistic society. The twentieth century writer Judith Butler has questioned about the gender roles in her work "Gender troubles". She differentiates between sex and the gender roles, according to Judith sex is related to the biological term which categories into male and female. She points out that gender comprises of masculine and feminine nature and argues that sex and gender should not be connected. She stresses on the fact that both men and women carries out both masculine and feminine behavior according to the situation. She defines it as 'performativity' that male and female exchanges their gender roles and perform it in the needed circumstances.

CONCLUSION

The role of women in history, art and literature are marked to the most significant events which flourished great literary works. Women as the creator have voiced against the turmoil faced by women, this helped man women's to speak for themselves. With the creation of literary texts by the great woman writers the truth is known to all. Since ages women were only known for their motherhood, submissive nature, and weak but with the rise of woman creator's different images of women is being portrayed in the texts. The issues are women education, deprivation of women's rights, objectification of female sex, gender role troubles and marginalization of woman were highlighted by the women writers in their texts for the betterment of woman. Thus women as creator in art and literature have brought a huge change in the understanding of women and her struggles. And this paved way for the psychological interpretation of woman characters based on the true events and experience of the women writers and artists.

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