THE ASSERTION OF SELF THROUGH SACRIFICE: A STUDY OF R.K. NARAYAN’S THE DARK ROOM

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ABSTRACT
A human being is born free. Freedom consists of the ability of a person to live a life of physical well being and mental development. Humanity has advanced very far from where it had started. Nature has made man and woman differently in their physical and mental make - up. The equality of man and woman in respect of their position and status is far from truth. Women constitute half of any country’s human endowment; still women are treated as second class citizens and as property of men. Experience justifies the statement, that from the beginning of the man’s existence on this earth, man is considered to be the labourer, preventer and woman has been neglected and she has acted as a slave, subordinate to man. She is totally and forcefully subjugated to the male superiority, physically and intellectually. The world which woman inhabits is a consumer society, where there is no place for her to establish her ‘self’. She is still not considered capable of making her choice. The thoughts of asserting her rights, displeasing her father and husband are considered to be repugnant in the society.

To state that all women are virtuous and that all men are tyrants, is far from truth. But to expose the dirt, murkiness and immorality in the society so that a blow may be struck in favour of woman’s freedom and her right to equality is the aim of modern Indian women. The women in our society has been either venerated as a goddess or rejected as a siren. The modern Indian woman has to compete against these two extreme images. She is striving to lead the life of a normal human being with normal desires.

This paper entitled “The Assertion of Self through Sacrifice: A study of R. K. Narayan’s The Dark Room” deals with the pitiable plight of a young, submissive wife in a middle class family of the society, where the old double standards are still valid. This paper is also an attempt to bring out the attention on the woman’s awakening consciousness and the obvious necessity of women’s liberation.

KEYWORDS: Assertion of Self