



Identity Through Recalling And Connecting The Memory In Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*.

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Abstract

The paper entitled "Identity through Recalling and Connecting the Memory in Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*" analysis the book in a how protagonist and other characters in the novel identity themselves through memory. Anita Nair, a prolific Indian writer, who lives in Bangalore, is a well-known for her famous works and especially *Ladies coupe* (2001). The novel structured in parts with some stories interwoven in it. It deals with the life of protagonist Akilandeshwari or Akhila who is an forty-five years old, unmarried and income tax clerk. Her father's death made her to start a earning for the family. She had sacrifices so much for her family members, who in turn have no concern for her. She feels that her own life was left in the hands of her family and society. She realizes that she is living without an identity of her own. She decides to take up a train journey to Kanyakumari all alone and through the life incident of her co-passengers and will power to lead her own life.

Introduction

Personal identity is the philosophical confrontation with the ultimate questions of our own existence: who are we? This theory helps to find the answer through the memories, which one carry in our mind. John Locke states, “Personal identity is a note of psychological continuity”. He examines the personal identity on a self and to be generated on the consciousness (viz. memory) and not on the material of the soul or the body. Locke’s memory theory defines that a person’s identity as far as only their memory expands into the past. Personal Identity defines that one is cynically upon what one remembers. When person’s memory starts to vanish, so goes his identity.

Anita Nair writes and creates wonderful works at ease and she is one of the bestselling fiction author. The way and style of writing is modern and her perspective are comprehensive appealing. Her character traits were visible in her work. There will be a bold message to the world in all her works. Her works had presented with great recognition from readers to critics. She holds a distinctive writing style and she knows her readers taste and expectation.

Anita Nair was born at Mundakottakurisi near shomur in the state of Kerala. She finished her B.A. in English and Literature in Chennai. She wrote her first book, a collection of short stories called *Satyr of the Subway*, when Anita Nair was functioning as the creative director of an advertising agency in Bangalore. The book achieved her a fellowship from Virginia Center for Creative Arts. Every time she had a harmony for writing and the guts, she holds to face all situations to achieve it. Anita Nair connects herself to the many women character in their lives, and it is obvious in her works. Post-colonial feminist literature has transported the huge loads of transaction with plies of traditional and religious misunderstanding.

Anita Nair unfolds the tale of six women traveling together in a train's Ladies Coupe (2001). It portray the essentially crisis of social standards and the internal desire for freedom. Akhila bears the burden of her family after her father’s death. Her brothers and sisters were grown and married; rarely think of the require and desire of Akhila. Akhila never lived her life and lost her own identity. “For twenty six years, I gave all of myself to this family. I asked for nothing in return. And now when I wish to make a life of my own, do anyone of you come forward and say- It’s time you did this, Akka. You deserve to have a life of your own.” (206)

Akhila meets five different women on her way to Kanyakumari — Janaki Prabhakar, Prabha Devi, Margaret Paulraj, Sheela Vasudevan, and Marikolunthu. They meet for the first time, though, to share the experience of their life with each other. Although they contrast in age, education and cultural upbringing, their stories have a common thread, the tragic dilemma of Indian women in a patriarchal social order.

Janaki, the oldest women in the Coupe, grows up as an obedient daughter, a loyal wife and a caring mother in the traditional family. She has always had a man to protect her. Someone who was first protected by her father, then by her brother, and then by her husband, would be her son after him. She recognizes the vanity of being an obedient wife and a caring mother and the necessity of asserting self-identity and freedom to live one's life.

Sheela, a fourteen years old and youngest in all of them, who address about male abuse of the female child. Sheela feels ashamed and get hurt at Hasina's father Nazar's unwanted touch. When once Nazar knotted the bows in her sleeves, Sheela makes the right decision as a means of her self-protection. Nair had emphasize the abuse of women by men through this character. Margaret Shanti, another Ladies Coupe woman, is a successful chemistry teacher who is engaged in an unhappy marriage with Ebenezer Paulraj, the head of the school in which she works. He is strong, self-absorbed and indifferent to his wife. Margaret wants to divorce him, but because she is afraid of society, she does not. Her way of revenge is to feed him with oily food, making him a sluggish person she learns about women's life through her grandmother. Sheela remembers her grandma's lesson to her "The only person you need to please is yourself. When you look into a mirror, your reflection should make you feel happy"(67-68) later, she advise Akhila saying " ...you'll discover that once you stop worrying what the world will think of you, your life will become that much easier to live...just remember that you have to look out for yourself. No one else will" (136)

Prabha Devi is an accomplished woman whose embroidery was done with stitches were so fine that you barely could see them. After her marriage, after her fortieth birthday, her life gets shifted past in the blur of insignificant days until one day a week. When she realizes that she has established herself a good wife, a good daughter-in-law, and a good mother somewhere in the process. Prabha Devi forgets how to be herself, and that's when she learns to strike a balance between being what she wants to be and being what she is expected to be.

Marikolunthu, thirty-one years old and an unwed mother who is a victim of a man's lust, is the most heart-rending tale: her poverty forcing her to do things that violate traditional social, moral injunctions. She is now a mother to an unlawful child. She's been through poverty, rape, lesbianism, and physical torture. One night at the Ladies Coupe and her interaction with the five women helps Akhila realize that she is extending the society an unnecessary power to govern her life. These women and their stories help Akhila find the answer to her biggest question, Can a woman stay single and be happy, or does a woman need a man to feel complete?

Conclusion

On witnessing the life stories of five women, Akhila steps down at Kanyakumari as a transitional woman. While staying there in a resort she has a physical relationship with a boy named Vinod. It is Akhila, who initiates this relationship and she thinks this physical binding has nothing to do with her individual identity. She overcomes the fear of the society and discovers herself. Akhila at the end realizes her identity, not isolating herself from the male in the society but by living in co-operation with them. Happiness endures where self-awareness is achieved. People carry tons of memory in their life and how those memories help an individual to vent their sorrows.

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