

**Scent of Pepper** is sprayed with the fragrance of Indianness and is peppered with the life of her region, Coorg. In handling of the three major fictional devices – story, plot and narrative, she follows different approaches in her novels. Her presentation of **The Hills of Angheri** in the form of Bildungsroman fiction helps her to express effectively her theme of empowerment of women by being assertive.

Nambisan's fiction is not a dry spring but it has variety in it. There is variety in characters and the fictional devices employed. Though the women characters are divided into three main patterns of women, who accept, rebel and assert, there are contradicting characters within every pattern. She has also skillfully handled the devices like symbolism, imagery, personification, humour, and other figures of speech. Narrative technique also varies from novel to novel and shifts within a novel depending on the development of the plot. Her art of description is picturesque and lively. This doctor's description of various diseases and the surgeries done on the patients is precise and perfect. She has finely mixed up both medical and colloquial languages. Nambisan's fiction is both entertaining and instructive. The end of all her novels is open and thought-provoking making the readers brood over the themes.

#### Chapter – VII

#### SUMMATION

The Biblical verse, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of god created he him; male and female created he them,” (Genesis 1:27) may address the disagreements raised by the feminists over the concept of Biblical creation of woman from the rib of man. It conveys a sense of equality that God created all the living creatures male and female. It is neither male nor female alone. The concept of creation itself suggests that without one sex the other cannot exist. So both have to coexist. Jasbir Jain observes, “The social fabric is a weave of human relationships in which men and women relate to one another in different ways” (102). Kavery Nambisan in her novels analyses how the social fabric can be made strong and durable. She mainly focuses on how man and woman relate to each other in weaving the social fabric.

Man and woman relate to each other in different ways. Of all the relationships, husband and wife relationship forms the basic unit of the family, which is the nucleus of a society. If this relationship is not twined fair and fine, the fabric of society cannot be woven. But Jain feels, “Despite the fact that men and women need each other, compliment each other, it is the woman who is left wanting and wholly dependent on the man who she marries” (105). As woman, due to various factors has to depend on man, she is exploited and oppressed in the society.

Many feminist writers have written against the oppression of women, and about the liberation of women. They blame men for oppressing women and the

women for accepting oppression. Many writers advise women to revolt against patriarchy and existing social norms. But Nambisan takes a natural and a neutral stand in considering man-woman relationship. She does not harp on oppression and liberation. She neither blames men nor women. Instead she analyses various factors – physiological and psychological that work behind man woman relationship and also the factors that will strengthen it.

Nambisan being a female writer writes with a female consciousness and speaks in a female voice through her female characters. Her characters are divided into three major categories of women, who accept, rebel and assert. The themes of her major novels have also been classified under these categories based on the quality possessed by the protagonist of each of the novels. **The Scent of Pepper** deals with the theme of acceptance – woman accepting a life of hardship and difficulties. Nanji, the protagonist of the novel voluntarily undergoes all sufferings and troubles in maintaining the family. Nambisan, not blindly accusing the patriarchal society for Nanji's trouble, puts forth other biological and psychological factors, which make her accept such a life. She accepts this life without any grudge and derives pleasure in pain.

It has been discussed in the second chapter, "Acceptance" that due to a desire for maternity and motherhood women yield to heterosexuality, which is possible for

them only with men. Their heterosexual experience leads to child bearing, child rearing and further into a family life full of woes and worries. It has been discussed in the same chapter that Nanji would have accepted that kind of life due to the desire for maternity and motherhood. There are a lot of women like Nanji, who accept life in this manner.

Nambisan, judiciously analyses the concept of not accepting, that is, rebelling. Questioning the need for heterosexuality and maternity, some women reject such life. They neither want to experience the sexual pleasure in heterosexuality nor undergo the troubles of maternity and motherhood. They are mainly non-conformists and radical feminists. They neither want to abide by the established social norms nor want to bear the yoke of the family. They want to be free from the clutches of patriarchy. But they are branded as rebels.

Nambisan, in **On Wings of Butterflies** discusses various types of women, who can be categorized under different feminist movements. She not only ridicules the feminist movements but also proves that such movements cannot do anything fruitfully by simply rebelling. In the same novel, she voices her opinion that merely by hating men, women cannot achieve anything. She tries to prove that in the pretext of avoiding troubles, if women hate men, human race will be wiped out from the face of the earth. So in this novel she advises women to love men.

Nambisan, also considers another hitch in man-woman relationship in a different angle in **Mango-Coloured Fish**. The protagonist neither rebels nor yields but withdraws from where she is. Shari does not want to yield to the pressure of her mother in choosing her husband. She wants to be on her own. So just a few days before her marriage, she escapes from her home. Though in a way it is rebelling against her own parents, she is unlike Evita of **On Wings of Butterflies**. She does not join any feminist movement like Evita. She flees to her brother's house in Delhi, where she learns a lot about life. Nambisan seems to project an idea that an individual's withdrawal is better than rebellion.

Nambisan, through the novel, **Mango-Coloured Fish** conveys the idea that it is the inadequacy of the spouse that leads to trouble in the family. Without taking side with any sex, Nambisan striking a balanced stand talks in favour of both man and woman. If the expectations of any one of the partners are not fulfilled by the other, the relationship is strained. Unfulfilment is inadequacy and it is caused mutually.

Nambisan through Yash and Teji conveys that women can endure any inadequacy on the part of her partner but not the inadequacy of love. Sigmund Freud observes that woman's basic fear is that she will lose love. Nambisan goes one step further in proclaiming that men too need love. Love should be shown and shared

between man and woman. A mutually fulfilled warm-hearted sexual life, mixed with love shall form a strong foundation to man-woman relationship. Man or woman should consider the expectation of the other favourably with love and try to fulfill the desire of the other. The inability on the part of one to fulfill the expectation of the other becomes a problematic inadequacy. In such a case only a divine love can save the situation and avoid separation.

For Nambisan ‘the other’ is not the woman alone, as Beauvoir observes. She considers ‘the other’ in the sense of ‘a neighbour’ as defined by Martin Luther King Jr. in his essay, “Who is Your Neighbour?” So, ‘the other’ is the partner, who is in need, expecting something from the mate. Thus, it is the obligation of one of the partners to fulfill it to preserve man-woman or husband-wife relationship.

Nambisan does not blindly expect women to accept a life of Troublesomeness or simply prevent them from rebelling. She projects through her fiction that as heterosexuality meets the biological needs and the psychological desires of women, they are willing to accept family life however difficult it may be. She opines that women accepting life on this ground is also appreciable as it strengthens man-woman relationship.

Similarly, Nambisan does not simply resist women from rebelling. She shows in **On Wings of Butterflies** how Evita's feminist movement, an amalgam of all feminist movements fails finally. Through this she suggests that instead of indulging in fruitless rebellion women can assert themselves. She has this vision about women that they should be assertive. Women should possess the quality of assertiveness which is a constellation of determination, courage, confidence and introspection. If women are assertive with these qualities, liberation is at hand. Betty Ford's observation is quoted as, "A liberated woman is one who feels confident in herself, and is happy in what she is doing. She is a person who has a sense of self.... It all comes down to freedom of choice" (360). The suggestion offered by Boston Women's Health Collective under the heading, "Our Bodies, Ourselves" has been given in the same book, "Women must be free to determine their own life pattern and their destinies without suffering lifelong guilt for not having lived up to society's or family's expectations" (360). Nambisan's Nalli in **The Hills of Angheri** is not up to these expectations. Nalli, the protagonist of this autobiographical novel is an ideal woman. As observed by Ford, she is really confident in herself and is happy in doing what she wants to do. She determines her own life rather than her destiny. She is determined in becoming what she wants to be and so she does not suffer from the guilt of not living up to the expectations of her patriarchal family or society.

Nanji of **The Scent of Pepper** is a prototype of Nalli. She is not mutely accepting the life of Troublesomeness. It is her matter of choice. As Nalli chooses the medical profession, Nanji opts to be a home maker. She too, like Nalli could have asserted herself to become a doctor, if she had wished and determined to do so. As in the case of Nanji, child bearing and child rearing are not child's play. It needs enormous strength and determination to play the role of Nanji. She has to be more assertive. Of course, Nanji is assertive. She is also confident in herself declaring, "A kodavathi is born tough." She is also happy in what she is doing. She determines her own life pattern and her destiny to serve the family of Rao Bahadur and his estate. Nanji's work is equally difficult and challenging like that of Nalli. So, it should not be considered inferior to the profession chosen by Nalli.

Nambisan, not finding fault with Nanji for accepting such a life, justifies her choice of life. According to the author, Nanji's choice is nobler than that of Nalli because it preserves husband-wife relationship and builds up the family. Nalli's life at the end of the novel is uncertain and fruitless. Nalli has achieved in reaching her goal of becoming a surgeon. But in terms of her future, especially regarding her marriage and the personal affairs nothing is certain. Whereas in contrast to her life, Nanji's life is fruitful and fulfilled. So, Nambisan conveys through these women: may the will of an individual be done if their occupation or life makes them happy.

Nambisan is not a feminist advocating rebellion but a feminist working for equality between man and woman. Rotimi Johnson, the literary theoretician of womanism and feminism observes that womanism believes in the freedom and independence of women like feminism. Unlike feminism it wants meaningful union between women and men and will wait patiently for men to change from the sexist stance (28). Nambisan, taking this stand writes about man-woman coexistence and advises men to give up their sexist superiority.

With her new novel, **The Story That Must Not Be Told**, which has been short listed, for Man Asian Literary Prize, Nambisan's fame in the field of Indian writing in English attains a new height. Her fiction becomes a treasure trove offering abundant scope for research. Nambisan can be considered a postmodern feminist writer. Though in many of her novels women play the role of protagonists, in her first fiction, **The Truth (Almost) About Bharat** and in her latest novel, **The Story That Must Not Be Told**, men play the pivotal roles. In the other major novels despite the fact that women play the vital role, men's part is also worth studying. Apart from these aspects, Nambisan's contribution to feminism can be analysed in different angles.

To sum up, the present work on the novels of Nambisan along with other findings has identified the solutions suggested by the novelist for saving human race from annihilation due to male-female discrimination. The novelist, while discouraging

mere rebellion, encourages woman to be assertive for her individual empowerment and advises both men and women to love each other for their peaceful and happy coexistence.

Only an unfailing and unfeigned love can unite man and woman. It is not the love, which is an abstract one, but concrete to be shown in action by both man and woman. It should be the love that does not envy, does not boast, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, does not think any evil, does not rejoice in inequality but suffers long, believes all, hopes all and endures all. This love never fails.

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