



**Epitome : International Journal
of Multidisciplinary Research**

ISSN : 2395-6968

AN EXPLORATION OF FEMINISM



Dr. Sandu Paigavan,

M.A., SET, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English, Dnyanopasak College, JINTUR
Dist. Parbhani - 431 509 (Maharashtra)

E-mail: sspaigavangmail.com

ABSTRACT

Simone De Beauvoir aptly comments that woman in a patriarchal society is the socially sanctioned other. Feminism an epistemology critiques the patriarchal hegemony and dominance. Since the

inception of human civilization patriarchal social order is dominant in every society, even though some rare exceptions of matriarchy are observed.

RESEARCH PAPER

One is not born but rather becomes a woman
---it is victimization as a whole that creature
intermediate between male and eunuch,
which is described as feminism."

Simone De Beauvoir (Second Sex, 1988:295)

Feminism, an ideology has two dimensions i.e. one philosophy knowledge epistemology and second on that philosophy of feminism the practical feminist activism. Both this aspects are interdependent and cannot stand and work in isolation. The roots of feminist activism lie deeply in feminist epistemology.

The western Christian Theology through the history of genesis pinpoints the inherent Otherness, subjugation, and subordination of woman Simone de Beauvoir (i 988:172) highlights this phenomenon:

Eve was not fashioned at the same time as the man -----she was taken from the flank of the first male. Not even her birth was natural. God did not spontaneously chose to create her as an end in her-----she was destined by him for man. and it was to rescue Adam from loneliness.

The Oxford English Dictionary that first uses the term feminism, in the latter part of nineteenth century describes it in terms of as qualities of femaleness But now it means a "theory of political, economic, and social equalities of the sexes. "Having found this definition inadequate Barbara Berg in The Remembered Gate Origins of American Feminism defines

Feminism a broad movement embracing numerous phases of woman's emancipation
Feminism demands the acceptance of woman's rights to individual conscience and judgment, (Bell Hooks : 1984 : 194)

Not only women but many radical and liberal men thinkers like John Stuart Mill contributed significantly to women's emancipation. The Western feminist movement originated with Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) are literary contributions to feminism. Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan contributed to female psychoanalysis. Historian Geida Leimai, Bell Hooks's *Theory from Margin to Center* (1984), Cheri Moira and Gloria Anzaldúa's *This Border/Clashed My Back* (1983), Barbara Christian's *Black Feminist Criticism* (1985) and *All the Blacks Are Men, But some of Us Are Brave: Black Women Studies* (1982) are some of the works of black feminism.

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) is a social and philosophical analysis of how women came to be defined as other from men who are held to be as norm. Mary Ellman's *Thinking About Women* (1968) and Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970) both expose negative stereotypes of women in male-dominated texts. Elaine Showalter coined the term gynocriticism. French critics Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray's feminist project of writing the body is particularly strong revolutionary effort. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1969) and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* (1970) stimulated and caused a debate of feminism. The personal became political.

Feminist activism more dynamic in its second phase during the 1960s. The western or the First world feminism is totally different from the Third world feminism found in developing and underdeveloping countries in India and countries in Asia.

REFERENCES

- Beauvoir, Simone de. 1998. The Second Sex. London : Picodoi' Press Elirank,
Mary; 1 969. Thinking About Women. New York : Harcourt Brace Javanovich
Friean, Betty. 1974. The Feminine Mystique. New York: Dell Press hooks, bell. 1986 Feminist
Theory From Margin to Center. Boston South End Press
Hull, Gloria T et al 1982 All the Women are White, All the Black are Men But Some of Us
Are Brave. New York: Feminist Press
Millet Kate 1978 Sexual Politics New York: Ballantine Book's Moiga, Cheuie and An7albua
Gloria. 1981 Editors. The Budge Called My Back Writings by Radical Women of
Color. Watertown Masseusseds Peisethone Press
Walker, Alice 1984. In Search of Our Mother's Gardens. New York A Harvest / HBJ Book,