



CONSCIOUSNESS–RAISING IN SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN’S FICTION IN ENGLISH: A FEMINIST CRITIQUE

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Abstract

The Freirean notion of inculcation of critical consciousness in masses for the transformation of social structures became a guiding principle for the women’s movement to raise the consciousness of women in the 1960s. Fiction by South Asian women writers not only provides a detailed insight into women’s dilemmas regarding their situation but also highlights their efforts to break free from the dominating and constricting cultural patterns inhibiting their development as self-conscious independent beings. This paper attempts to analyze the fiction of South Asian women writers in English in order to investigate how their fiction contributes in consciousness-raising of women in predominantly patriarchal South Asian cultures. The paper discusses how by portraying the lives of women in South Asian society, these authors have attempted to dismantle the culture of silence, challenged oppressive traditions, and thereby helped women to reflect on their subjectified identities and marginalized positioning in their society. Thus, women’s fiction from this region contributes significantly in furthering the feminist agenda of consciousness-raising of women by voicing their concerns for the establishment of a more equitable society.

Keywords: Praxis, critical consciousness, women’s representation, South Asian women writers, women in South Asian societies