



Feminism in Traditional bases of Indian Society: A Review

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Abstract

Observing from ancient times it seems that there have been many changes in the situation & role of women was created in the mail-dominated culture and gradually women's rights began to decline. It was then that feminism was born.



In the mail- dominated society a woman is a commodity that migrates from one house to another, often sold in the name of dowry. Therefore it is imperative for women in Indian society to consider feminism in that regard. Feminism involves changing the deeply rooted practices of society & making women aware of their existence. They are also expected to realize their devaluation & exploitation. “Feminism is awareness of women's oppression & within the family & conscious action by women & men to change this situation.” Feminism is the notion that all humans are equal regardless of their gender. Feminism is uplifting women so that men and women are treated equally. It's not about demeaning men or declaring them inferior. It's not based on women having power over men; rather, the idea is that women should have power over themselves.

Keywords: Feminism, Mail-dominated, Devaluation, Power, Indian Society etc.

Introduction

The task at hand is twofold: first, to present a schematic account of feminism in India; second to bring up some theoretical and methodological issues entailed in representing it. This decision to problematize the process of narrating has been prompted by the fact that writing in the second decade of the 21st century implies that we take into cognizance some of the developments in the preceding decades that impinge in a very fundamental way on both the practice and theory of feminism. In other words, I seek to flag some of the changing features of the contemporary context within which I as a resident Indian scholar write about feminism for Western academia.

- (i) A rich and complex body of feminist writings has emerged over the last forty years which in many ways have become institutionalized within academia as well as within policy making, whether of various states or of international agencies;



- (ii) the rise of multiculturalism and postmodernism in the West since the 1980s gave way not just recognition but celebration of diversity and plurality including that of divergent feminisms;
- (iii) the rise of postcolonial studies, articulated in the writing of non-Western scholars located in the West on one hand and a predilection towards poststructuralist theory on the other;
- (iv) finally the greater visibility of India and Indian scholarship in the recent decades of globalization. My central contention is that these developments are not extraneous but constitutive of Indian feminism.

As a resident Indian feminist scholar I feel an acute sense of disquiet when what I have to say is readily slotted as yet another instance of burgeoning postcolonial writings, one more voice of diverse feminism. My discomfort is that postcolonial theory principally addresses the needs of Western academia. “What post-colonialism fails to recognize is that what counts as ‘marginal’ in relation to the West has often been central and foundational in the non-West”. Thus when I privilege British colonialism and Indian nationalism this is not a belated deference to postcolonial theory but a historical fact which Indians have lived and battled with and one within which the story of Indian feminism emerged and grew. Further, the theoretical shift to textual analysis that accompanied postmodernism and post structuralism led to a gross neglect of a historical and concrete analysis of the constraints of social institutions and the possibilities of human agency therein.

History of Feminisms

India is large, diverse and unequal. The stories of feminism are likewise different. What however binds them is a history of a colonial past, despite the fact that the spread and impact of colonialism was uneven and differential. And subsequently, almost 65 years of development under a reasonably pro-active Indian state despite the fact that class, caste, region and gender implications of its policies has not been uniform. It is not surprising therefore that Indian feminist writings have been intersectional from its very inception. My effort here is limited to marking key moments in the emergence and growth of the women’s movement in India. An attempt to squeeze in so much history in so little space is hazardous.

Differences with other kinds of Feminism



The three main aspects of cultural feminism that are critiqued by other kinds of feminism have been essentialism (the idea that male and female differences are part of the essence of male and female), separatism, and the idea of a feminist vanguard, building the new culture rather than transforming the existing one through political and other challenges.

While a radical feminist might critique the traditional family as being an institution of patriarchy, a cultural feminist might work to transform the family by focusing on the nurturing and caring that a woman-centered family can provide in life. Echols wrote in 1989, “Radical feminism was a political movement dedicated to eliminating the sex-class system, whereas cultural feminism was a countercultural movement aimed at reversing the cultural valuation of the male and the

Feminist Beliefs and Feminist Movements

The term “feminism” has many different uses and its meanings are often contested. For example, some writers use the term “feminism” to refer to a historically specific political movement in the United States and Europe; other writers use it to refer to the belief that there are injustices against women, though there is no consensus on the exact list of these injustices. Although the term “feminism” has a history in English linked with women’s activism from the late nineteenth century to the present, it is useful to distinguish feminist ideas or beliefs from feminist political movements, for even in periods where there has been no significant political activism around women’s subordination, individuals have been concerned with and theorized about justice for women. So, for example, it makes sense to ask whether Plato was a feminist, given his view that some women should be trained to rule, even though he was an exception in his historical context.

Conclusion

For thousands of years our Indian society had two side thinking above women on one side they worship the women on the name of Goddess, on the other hand they treated her worse than animals. The constitution was also amended to give women exclusive rights. Feminism is group of many movements & ideologies that define, prove, and demand equality for women. It is the flow of gender discrimination toward men & women. It is a social & political awareness for women. It is the platform to step out & assert own rights. Feminism is the key for equal opportunity. When feminism covers the entire universe a new world is created. Many movements, seminars, conferences, workshop have tried to change the positions of women in our



society but the aim of feminism cannot be achieved until or unless women herself not understand her own important & position in society.

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