Abstract:

The present thesis is a critical analysis of Indian writing in English with the perspective theme of ‘Self’ and cultural identity in the fiction of Manju Kapur and Jhumpa Lahiri. The thesis emphasizes the plight of Indian women in the post modern era. The present study is aimed at analyzing in detail the massive change in ultra modern contemporary Indian socio-economic and socio-cultural context. Manju Kapur and Jhumpa Lahiri manifest the changing culture in Indian society.

The main objective of the study is to analyse the ‘self’ and cultural identity in the fiction of Manju Kapur and Jhumpa Lahiri. ‘Self’ means something about me’. It is a psychological phenomenon. ‘I’ refers to something about ‘oneself’. The present study aims at analyzing ‘oneself’ in the social scenario. And cultural identity refers to a particular group or social class that shares the same culture.

Manju Kapur is closely observed the craving of woman for her identity. Her work expressed the plight of Indian woman in present scenario. Difficult Daughters, A Married Woman and Home reflect the struggle of woman for identity. The novelist does not forget to reflect the cultural displacement in The Immigrant. Every character in her fiction struggles for searching ‘oneself’.

Jhumpa Lahiri, a post modernist writer closely observes the plight of immigrant in foreign country. The Namesake deals with the culturally displaced protagonist Gogol. The novelist presents the ‘self’ syndrome and cultural displacement of the protagonist. The novelist minutely observes the cultural difference and suffocation of the character. Interpreter of Maladies also relates towards the searching of ‘self’. It is a collection of short stories dealt with the struggle for identity of characters. Jhumpa Lahiri, through this collection propagates the cultural difference and craving for self. The stories like ‘Contemporary matters, ‘Interpreter of maladies’, ‘This Blessed House’ and ‘Sexy’ dealt with the cultural displacement of the protagonist. And the remaining stories like ‘Boori Ma’, ‘A Treatment of Bibi Haldar’ and ‘When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine’ commemorates about searching of ‘self’.

Thus, the present study elucidates the ‘self’ and ‘cultural’ identity in the fiction of Manju Kapur and Jhumpa Lahiri.