

MOTHER'S ROLE IN INDIAN CULTURE, WITH REFERENCE ANITA NAIR'S

LADIES COUPE

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ABSTRACT:

The social roles associated with motherhood are variable across time, culture and social class. Historically the role of women was confined to some extent to being a mother and wife, with women expected to dedicate most of their life taking care of their home. An Indian culture mother is a Goddess who represents to a personification of motherhood. Mothers fulfilled the primary role in raising their children. Anita Nair's Ladies coupe the story of Akhilandeswari is the protagonist of the novel, her mother is Chandra a selfish giant exploiting her daughter's life till her age of forty - five. Akhila was a spinster by her mother and, she had to suppress her emotions, wishes and feelings. In the end, she decided to find a way out of her tortured bondage by her mother.

The Mother - around whom the whole world revolves is the maker one who keeps the whole human race thriving. Mothers in Indian mythology are those special women who reveal enormous strength and character displaying exceptional love and courage in the worst and best of situations. There is a significant aspect though, motherhood is not merely worshipped as the divinity but considers the living mother as a God for each of us through the concept of the Mother Goddess. When *Kovalan*^[1] fell in love with *Mathavi*^[2], he saw her dancing debut in the court of the *Prince Karikaal Cholan*^[3], they lived happily for some time. Unexpectedly during that period, *Mathavi's* mother stole all the wealth of *Kannagi*^[4], the wife of *Kovalan*. After three years passed, *Kovalan* knew the truth, he grew angry with *Mathavi* and again returned to *Kannagi* with the empty hand. After *Kovalan* left her, *Mathavi* came to know of her mother's theft. She showed her moral worth by returning all the wealth of *Kovalan*. *Kovalan-Mathavi's* daughter *Manimegalai*^[5], followed her mother's footsteps as a dancer. Hence her physical beauty persuaded her *Chola Prince Rajathithan*^[6]. Her mother, *Mathavi* advised her properly. She refuses him and frees herself from human ties. *Mathavi* taught her daughter Buddhist Mantras to free herself from fears.

The world is today progressing by leaps and bounds. It has opened up new vistas of knowledge for the modern man. The family in India during the last few decades has been under a process of social changes, particularly affecting the relationship between blood - related bond of daughter or son. Here Anita Nair's Ladies Coupe express the relationship between mother and daughter and the story of a woman's search for strength and independence. The protagonist Akhilandeswari, the eldest daughter of Chandra and Pattabi Iyer. She is unlucky because to be the firstborn of the family of four children. Their way of life in Brahmin tradition strictly followed *madi - aacharam*^[7]. Akhila is an educated woman and who has a working lady as a clerk in an income tax office. Unfortunately, Akhila's father died in an

AN ECO-CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LARRY'S PARTY BY CAROL SHIELDS

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Abstract:

The novels of Carol Shields chiefly explore themes like individual identity and interpersonal relationships. But, one of her works, *Larry's Party* explores the setting of nature and its beauty very vibrantly along with other themes like man's relationship with Nature and the sync between creativity in nature and the human mind. In this work, Shields has portrayed the character of Larry as a lover of nature and her mysteries and natural as well as man-made wonders in landscaping. There is a meeting of landscape and mindscape in Larry's passion for designing and growing labyrinth gardens. This paper analyses this creative mindset of Larry and his attachment with Nature, which makes him break the boundaries of domesticity and familial affinity to follow his new vocation with passionate involvement and single minded devotion. This silent pursuit enables him to bulldoze all impediments, overcome all inhibitions, break loose from restrictive ties and realize his own self and potential. He finds in solitude and communion with plants, a congenial ecological niche for his survival and success.

Keywords: Eco-criticism, Cultural Ecology Ecological Niche, Restrictive ties

Eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment and it is also the intersection between environment and culture, believing that "human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it".-Cheryl Glotfelty(*Beginning Theory*, p-248)

Cultural ecology is an off-shoot of eco-criticism. It analyzes the analogies between ecosystems and imaginative texts and posits that such texts potentially have an ecological function in the cultural system. "Cultural ecology is the study of human adaptations to social and physical environments."(Tribe,1962)

According to Joralemon(2010), this human adaptation refers to both biological and cultural processes that enable a population to survive and reproduce within a given or changing environment. It applies ideas from ecology and systems-theory to explain the adaptation of humans to their environment. These cultural ecologists focus on flows of energy and materials, examining how beliefs and institutions in a culture regulate its exchanges with the natural ecology, as they do with all living organisms.

This may be carried out diachronically or synchronically. The central argument is that the natural environment, in small scale or subsistence societies depend in part upon it, as a major contributor to its social organization.

Cultural ecology represents the "ways in which cultural change is induced by adaptation to the environment." A key point is that any particular human adaptation is in part historically inherited and involves the technologies, practices, and knowledge that allow people to live in an environment. (Steward, 1955) This means that the environment influences the character of human adaptation.

In this way, Steward wisely separated the vagaries of the environment from the inner workings of a culture that occupied a given environment. This can be interpreted in another way, which means that environment and culture are on more or less separate evolutionary tracks and that the ability of one to influence the other is dependent on how each is structured.

Cultural ecology points out that ecological locale plays a major role in shaping the cultures of a region. Steward used different methods to study various cultures and their adaptations to the environment. He documents the technologies and methods used to exploit the environment to get a

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Abstract:

The novels of Carol Shields chiefly explore individual identity and interpersonal relationships. They consist of deep psychological studies of characters of various dimensions. Naturally her characters can be analysed using trait theory as enunciated by Gordon Allport and Eysenck. This paper analyses the character of Norah in Carol Shields' *Unless* from the angle of traits theory. It is traits that determine temperament, personality and finally identity. In *Norah* we have a highly sensitive individual seeking to come to terms with the harsh sensitive realities of life, especially from the female and feminine angle. Her hyper sensitivity reduces her nervous wreck in need of psychological assistance. The novel concludes saying the protagonist as age on her side and hoping time will heal her mind and help find an identity.

Keywords: Trait theory, Introversion, Extroversion, Neuroticism.

Carol Shields was born on June 2, 1935, in Oak Park, Illinois, in a suburb of Chicago. The daughter of a school teacher and a candy factory manager, she has described her childhood as an essentially stable and happy one. She attended Hanover College in Indiana, graduating with B.A. in 1957. During a semester studying at Exeter University in England, she met Donald Shields, a Canadian graduate whom she married upon completion of her college degree. The couple lived in Canada, and Shields worked as a housemaker, raising their five children while her husband pursued an academic career in Engineering. During this time, Shields wrote several journalistic stories, which were sold to the Canadian Broadcasting Company(CBC) and the British Broadcasting Corporation(BBC). At the age of 33, she enrolled in the graduate program in English at the University of Ottawa, where she completed a thesis on the nineteenth-century Canadian writers. Then, her career as a fiction writer started and developed in two distinct phases. Her early novels and short stories were conventional in form, exploring themes of individual identity and interpersonal relationships. *Small Ceremonies*, *The Box Garden*(1977), *Happensince*(1986), and *A Fairly Conventional Woman* (1982) all belong to this first phase. In the second phase of her career, she developed a wider international readership. The works written in this phase were *Mary Swann: A Mystery*(1987), *A Celibate Season* (1991), *The Stone Diaries*(1993), *Larry's Party*(1997), *Unless*(2002).

Shields is best known for her highly celebrated novel *The Stone Diaries*(1993), for which she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award and Canada's Governor General's Award. Shields, whose novels have achieved best-seller status, has been recognized for her experimental use of narrative form in fiction that examines the everyday lives of average men and women with honesty and compassion. *Unless*(2002), is the final novel of her. It is semi autobiographical and the capstone to Shield's career. This work was widely acclaimed and nominated for the Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction, and received the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. In 2011, it was a finalist in the Canada Reads competition, where it was defended by actor Lorne Cardinal. Like many other works of Shields, *Unless* explores the extraordinary that lies within the ordinary lives of ordinary women. Her recurring thematic concerns include personal identity and self-perception, as well as love, marriage, and family.

Trait-theory is an approach to the study of human personality. After all, traits are what make us who we are, they are relatively permanent aspects of each of us evidenced by the consistency in our

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