

FATHOMLESS OCEAN

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U. ANAMICA



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
JAYARAJ ANNAPACKIAM COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
(AUTONOMOUS)
PERIYAKULAM, TAMILNADU, INDIA

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Foreword



"A word after a word after a word is power" – Margaret Atwood

Voices of women should be heard. While women are integral to the fabric of our history and half of the world's population consists of women, till recently, women were denied access to education and the power of expression. Until the beginning of the 20th century, even literature had been the domain of the male writers where women's writings were greatly outnumbered or even entirely absent. From the condition of women being illiterate, overlooked and undervalued to women becoming consumer of men's literature, we have now come to the times where women are able to present their own perspectives and express their potentialities. After much struggle of many brave and bold women writers all over the world, now finally the voices and opinions of women are heard in the realm of literature, bringing out the strength, spirit and speciality of womanhood. Special importance, hence should be given to women's literature to categorize and create an area of study for the group of people who had been marginalized long by history. It becomes essential to explore and celebrate through their writing, their lives as they occupy a unique socio-political space within culture.

The Department of English has taken up the noble duty of celebrating women's writings and lives and this book, *Fathomless Ocean* explores varied facets of women's writings. The release of the book, *Fathomless Ocean* on the day of UGC Sponsored National Seminar- titled "**Women in Literature**" offers an erudite platform for the research scholars and lovers of literature to delve deep into new insights on women's writings.

I am proud of the achievement of the department and offer my appreciation and wishes to the efforts by the editors and the contributors.

God Bless You!

Principal
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Sr.Dr.B.J. Queensly Jeyanthi, SAT.,
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Felicitation

She is worth far more than rubies (Prov.31:10)



Woman- God's masterpiece, the crown and grand finale of creation, a perfected version of man, a beautiful enigma, soft yet strong, passionate yet practical, the nourisher, caregiver, ever so precious, spiritual, energetic, radiant, friendly, efficient, terrific, fit to be adored... but in reality, ever 'the weaker sex', the second fiddle, slighted, trampled, lonely, used and abused in this man's world! Woman was supposed to adorn an honourable and important place in God's plan but everywhere we find her oppressed and her voice suppressed. Literature in recent years has given back the women their voice and helped them reclaim their place in the world.

The UGC Sponsored National seminar, "**Women in Literature**" conducted by the English Department is a fit tribute to the tenacity and perseverance of women world-wide as they strive to not merely survive but thrive and be a blessing wherever they are planted. The book *Fathomless Ocean* that is to be released on the day of the seminar is another bright feather to the cap of the illustrious department. I give my hearty congratulations to the editors on their labour of love. Their tireless efforts and the enthusiastic cooperation of the contributors are truly commendable. I offer my blessings and prayers for the success of the seminar and the book release.

Secretary
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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We thank **Miss.Jaya Queenslin** for her boundless help.

Our special thanks to **Mrs.Angeline Sorna** who exerts a wave in all hearts.

We express our deep sense of gratitude to all our well wishers who stood by us to publish the book *Fathomless Ocean*.

EDITORS

Preface

Fathomless Ocean is a unique collection of articles, which give wings to the mind and fill the hearts with stimulating thought and intellectual development. Passionate in their search and work, Women round the globe were gorgeous and gracious as Ocean. They were in their own sunshine, basking in the golden glow of the Ocean. Their contribution explores the structure and texture of their choice. They wished to rise with sincere hands and touch the blue dome of the sky. They broke barriers, dived deep into the Ocean of riches, evolved with treasure hunts which enabled them to gather more which gave them greater ability and courage to express with determination, trying to fathom the oceanic hearts. This book palpitates with living human heart and reflects the quest of never resting human spirit.

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THE IDEAL WOMAN IN CHRISTENDOM

G. PETRICIA ALPHINE NIRMALA

The Scripture, as the word of God, can have real influence on those who read it with faith and humility. By some supernatural influence, God enlightened the minds and moved the wills of the writers so that they wrote all that he wished and only what he wished. Because inspiration left the writers free, anyone can find in the Bible various kinds of literary forms. There are three broad schools of thinking which challenge the orthodox, scriptural, apostolic and reformed position in relation to the authority and inspiration of Holy Scripture. The value of textual studies is not questioned, since original texts correct errors in copying, give right readings, light up obscurities, and give force to the expressions used. The new concentration on biblical studies, greater freedom has recently been shown in this regard. The Roman Catholic Church is completely trustworthy, not only from the point of view history, but also from that of doctrine.

It is the teaching of the Church that the human race is descended from one pair of human beings who are called our first parents. Researchers have discovered a universal sameness in ideas of right and wrong: there is a universal mode code, even among the most primitive of tribes. It suggests the origin of humankind from only one pair of ancestors. The sacred author has called the first woman, Eve. This name was derived by him from the Hebrew word for "life" and designates her as the "mother of all the living" (Laravoire 60). In salvation history of the Scripture, a Jewish maiden named Mary is designated as "Mother of the Lord" (Luke 1:43). Mary, mother of Jesus, by her free consent to God's plan, introduced the new era of salvation by bringing new and sinless life into the world. Holy Quran explicitly identifies her as the greatest of all women stating "when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allah hath chosen thee and made thee pure, and hath preferred thee above (all) women of creation" (Qur'an 3:42). Number of apocryphal literature explores more about her.

Man's likeness to God is rooted in his spiritual nature. Only in virtue of his spiritual nature, man is capable of receiving the divine call. Some individuals can be the expression of moral excellence or moral depravity of the whole humankind. The realization of a supreme triumph of virtue is manifested through perfectly pure person, the Virgin Mother of God. According to a 2nd century apocryphal infancy narrative, called *Protoevangelium* (literally 'first gospel') of James, Mary was the child of elderly parents, Joachim and Anna, in Jerusalem. The society in which she lived had repercussions on women's private and public lives that are described in the apocryphal *Gospel of St. James*:

One day when the Virgin Mary was found as usual at the fountain to draw water, there, where the young woman of the Orient cannot elsewhere be seen in public, an angel appeared and saluted her. She was afraid and fled to her house where she started to spin, when suddenly the angel appeared to her again to announce the divine message. (qtd. in Brownrigg 272)

It is likely enough that Mary went to the present well to draw her water since it was the city's only water supply. St. Luke relates the story of the visit of the angel to the peasant girl Mary with consummate artistry. "In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David "(Luke 1:26-27)". In a single sentence, the sender, the messenger and the receiver are introduced: God Almighty, the angel Gabriel, the girl betrothed to the village carpenter. The divine choice of Mary implies her utter devotion and dedication. Even the angel delivers his message with reverence and humility, 'Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God'. She is disturbed and ashamed at such an extravagant greeting. Then comes the burden of the message:

You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end. (Luke 1:31-33)

Momentarily, the divine plan for the redemption of mankind waited upon the consent of this little Jewish girl, before she sealed her acceptance with that stupendously humble fiat: "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her'(Luke 1:38). Mary is the personification of the part of Israel, which was ready to 'hear the word of God and do it'.

The event when Mary promptly set out to visit her cousin Elizabeth at her home in the hill country of Judea, it would have welcomed an opportunity to escape from prying eyes and malicious tongues in Nazareth. The three months' rest with her cousin would have been the most welcome retreat. The older woman, Elizabeth herself going through the same experience, would have been of great comfort and support to the young peasant girl, Mary, plunged so unexpectedly though so willingly into pregnancy. These considerations are on the most ordinary level of personal relations. But in this case there was something far removed from the ordinary that would give each an added incentive to seek the society of the other.

She was the willing and obedient instrument of the purpose of God. She made a home for God, in the person of Jesus, first within her own body and then in the cottage at Nazareth. She carried him and gave him birth. She fed, cleaned, and clothed him over his helpless years. She cared for and cultivated his character through a formative decade of years. Under her influence "Jesus grew both in body and in wisdom, gaining favor with God and people" (Luke 2:52).

Unlike some other members of his family, Mary maintained her love and confidence in him, under seemingly impossible strains. She was found among the twelve disciples at Pentecost, a totally reconciled and responsible leader within his Church, dedicated to his work. Though constantly puzzled and driven to ponder and treasure up her problems in her own heart, she never thwarted the divine process. The last to be written about Mary in the Scripture is found in the vision of John the Divine of Ephesus.

Then a great and mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a woman, whose dress was the sun and who had the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was soon to give birth, and the pains and suffering of childbirth made her cry out. Another mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and a crown on each of his heads. With his tail he dragged a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman, in order to eat her child as soon as it was born. (Revelation 12:1-4)

John illustrates his own theme and tacitly to exclude all heroes of other faiths from the position of world Redeemer. To the heathen nations of the ancient world, the travailing woman would have been a goddess crowned with twelve stars of the Zodiac. The Jew would have seen in her his own people, headed by the twelve patriarchs (Guthrie 1294). John shows that Mary represents the true believing people of God of both old and new dispensations, the Messianic community. Mary, the chaste maid, who reflects the splendor of her resurrected Son, is a portent of victory in the furious struggle against the evil. She is the type of the Church. Her sign looming clearly on the horizon of the age is for the Christian a call to loyalty toward the Church (Haring 676).

Even today, in Jerusalem, Mary is venerated by Christians and Muslims and respected by Jews. The eastern gate into the Old City is called in Arabic the *Bab Sit Miriam*, the Gate of the Lady Mary (Brownrigg 283). "Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted" (Mathew 23:12). Though divine grace is not strictly the result of humility, but of God's loving bounty, only the humble like Mary is disposed to receive it.

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*They were in their own sunshine,
basking in the golden glow of the Ocean*



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