

## PREFACE

My subject is 'Contemporary Gay writings of Indian English Writers; With reference to Hoshang Merchant and R. Raj Rao'. I stress upon the writings by the Indian writers which covers the issues and problems faced by the homosexuals in the country. I have selected the gay Indian English poems and stories from the anthology *Yaarana* by Merchant in order to evade the issues and problems faced by the homosexuals.

In the West, queer theory is already an established discourse within academic scholarship, with Universities introducing courses on the subject, with publications of numerous books and journals, and with the influences of critics like Michel Foucault and Eve Sedgwick.

In India, the subject is still taboo.

My immediate point of reference, which initiated this study, is the publication of two books on Indian alternative sexual identity, published in the year 1999 and 2003 respectively. *Yaraana: Gay Writing from India*, edited by Hoshang Merchant, and *The Boyfriend* by R. Raj Rao. Unlike the West, there is no theory of homosexuality in India. From the vast realm of Western Queer Theory I will discuss Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (the theory of closet and coming out, and homophobia). I have discussed this theory in Indian context and on the basis of this read the poems and stories. I call these Indian English poems as they are originally written in English and called them gay poems, as they are part of an anthology, *Yaraana* that claims to be collection of

gay writing from India.

I have divided my study into four chapters.

The first chapter is called Introduction to Queer Theory in which I have discussed in brief the origin and main theoretical stand of Western Queer Theory, how it began with the Stonewall riot in New York City in 1969, how it flourished in affinity with feminist movements, and how it split from feminist movement on ideological ground. I have also discussed the limited existence of Queer Literature in India.

The second chapter, which I have called *Yaarana*; An usher in Gay literature talks about Sedgwick's concept of closet and discusses the homophobic and anti homophobic accounts in various poems and stories from the anthology *Yaarana*. I have discussed how in the West, homosexuality has achieved an identity of its own and the concept of homophobia. In India homophobia is internalized, Unlike the West. In India, it is reflected upon the person concerned.

The third chapter is called is Caste and Class in Gay Subculture; A reading of *The Boyfriend* which talks about the issues of caste and class in gay subculture.

Chapter 4 is called Indian Queer Theory. Within its structured invisibility, the gay issues have come into a position where one can freely talk about it. But the main structure remains the same; it's only getting sophisticated. But we may hope that in the near future the situation will change.