

## THE TRAJECTORY OF FEMINIST IDEALS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Many feminist theories originated in the West and therefore reflected the social and cultural background of the writers and the nature of social configurations within which they sought explanations. More relevant for us are the family—immediate and extended—with its hold over loyalties of its members, a deeply hierarchic society stratified by caste and class, and persistent conflicts over religion, language, ethnicity and other differences.*

*Studied here are two novels, both translated from Malayalam—one “Fire, My Witness” called ‘Agnisakshi in Malayalam, written by Lalithambika Antharjanam, and ‘The Scent of the Other Side’ called Othappu’ in Malayalam, written by Sarah Joseph. The first one was published in 1975 and the second one in 2005. This paper traces the trajectory of feminist ideals over the span of 35 years and concludes that women have always tried to grapple with the question of women’s subjectivity and agency. They have been victims of patriarchal systems and are partial collaborators. Women sometimes wear the marks of their subordination and their inferiority with pride.*

*Devaki in Fire, My Witness and Margalitha in The Scent of the Other Side are the two characters studied to work out a conclusion.*

*The Indian woman has indeed achieved success in half a century of independence, but if there is to be a truly female empowerment, much remains to be done.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Feminine Qualities, Social and Political, Class, Caste, Antiquity and Prestige, Namboodiri, Christian.*