

Contribution of Indian Women Writers in English Literature

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indian women writers have given a new direction to the Indian literature. They have made an everlasting mark in the field of English literature to change the point of view from the long hold of male over them. Now we can see a new awareness in women in all walks of life. Since ages women have been the point of acrimonious remarks. All the negative views find place in the form of myths, stories, legends and history. A woman plays a pivotal role in her family. Both man and woman are congratulatory to each other. Women are showing their spirit in every field, and in some respect, far better than the men. Now, women are not a marionette in the hands of men. They are equaled efficient like men. Our Indian English literature has gifted numerous enthusiastic women novelist as –

Arundhati Roy is one of the most celebrated authors of India, best known for her novel *The God of Small Things*. The novel talks about how small things in life can affect people. The novel won the 1997 Booker Prize for fiction and it was one of the bestselling books at that time. Roy was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 2006, for her collection of essays, *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* but she refused to accept it.

Anita Desai is one of the most reputed writers of India and was nominated for the Booker Prize at least three times. She was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award in 1978 for her novel *Fire on the Mountain* and the Padma Bhushan in 2014 for her contribution to Indian Literature. Her stories have an exemplary implication that strikes the human heart besides being humorous at the same time. The author has also won the British Guardian Prize for her novel, *The Village by the Sea*.

Jhumpa Lahiri has gained international acclaim for her writing which mostly deals with NRI characters, immigrant issues and problems people face in foreign lands. Her pen touches the soul with her simple and metaphorical writing focusing on the day to day nuances and the hidden dramas in every person's life. In 2006, Mira Nair directed a film based on her first novel *The Namesake*. Her book *The Lowland* was a nominee for the 2013 Man Booker Prize and the National Book Award for Fiction.

Kiran Desai is known for her book *The Inheritance of Loss*, which talks about the pain of migration and living between the two separate nations. She touches the readers' heart via her writings especially when it comes to *Make it In America*.

Shashi Deshpande is an award winning Indian novelist best known for her book *That Long Silence*. She won the Sahitya Akademi Award for the novel *That Long Silence* in 1990 and the Padma Shri award in 2009.

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the long hold of male over them. Since ages women have been the point of acrimonious remarks. All the negative views find place in the form of myth stories legends and history. Feminine or feminist issues transcend all limits of geography and provide wherever the issues of gender become pertinent. Women writers reflect feeling of marginality and in return express their revolt against the purely masculine world. They tried their hand almost every genre of literature. Basically, their novels are the novels of protest and outburst of emergent and contamination. They explore the feminine subjectivity and apply the theme that ranges from childhood to complete womanhood. They spread the message of what feminism actually is by the help of their novels. Most of the female novelists are known for their bold views that are reflected in their works.

Our women writers have grappled with complex issues such as sensuality, servility, subjugation and society. They have handled them with a sense of balance, never disregarding our Indian traditions, yet discovering that there is more in the offing. Women writers in India can no longer be claimed as the exclusive property of India. Their work and their art belong to the world. Majority of the Indian readers comprising both male and female read the novels of the Indian women authors with certain expectations. They look for some 'Indianness' in the write-ups. Only the women novelists of India are capable of conveying the messages of feminism in an Indian way. In India, the women writers are doing very well and their contribution is immense.

But it was very difficult path, as the women had to break through years of male dominance, taboos and beliefs that had heavily impregnated the society. Women writers have interpreted the recurring female experiences in their writings and it affected the cultural and language patterns of Indian literature. The Indian women writers expressed the role and position of woman through their writings in English, have enlightened the literature with quality and vividness. Majority of the Indian leaders read the works of Indian women writers with certain expectation and on the women fiction authors of India are capable of conveying the messages of feminism in an Indian way. The work of Indian women writers is significant in making society aware of women's demands and desires, and in providing a medium for self expression and in this way, rewriting the history of India. The feminist criticism has become a vital aspect in literature in contemporary society and the female perspective, expressed through women's writing of all kinds is considered to be more than a valuable connective to an all-male view of the universe.

Undoubtedly, it is understood that they have perceived a good job in exposing the fallacies of the male-dominated society and letting the public beware of the various rigid boundaries that were laid on them by society. Women's Writing in India is about 2600 years old but it is really started with women questioning the images of women presented by male writers and seeking to combat them through their writing and bringing in a more humane and cultured way of conduct and behavior. Before women emerged as a major literary force, men created women in their perspective, prescribing norms for women to follow and displayed patriarchy that insisted on preserving sexual inequality between men and women. Women's writing emerges in shape by creating new opening for female novelists and writers to bring female literary tradition. A woman as a subject matter in Indian fiction in English is not something recent but the approach of the novelists is certainly different. Women writers in Indian can no longer be claimed as the exclusive property of India only but their talent and art belongs to the whole universe.

The above analysis of women writers in Indian Writing in English suggests that women writers have made rapid development in the field of literature even they have gone up from difficult to tribal and rural areas too, but all of them have expressed their concerns for women and their problems. The image of women in fiction has undergone a change during the last four decades. Women writers have moved away from traditional portrayals of enduring, self-sacrificing women toward conflicted female characters searching for identity, no

longer characterized and defined simply in terms of their victim status. In contrast to earlier novels, female characters from the 1980s onwards assert themselves and defy marriage and motherhood. They have touched the variety of subjects with a great contribution in creating awareness for the modern women all over the world. The selections of themes handled by them considering Indian environment needs an appreciation. They have boldly expressed the social inhibitions and cultural taboos laid down by the society. Indian women writers play all the roles with decency, decorum, discipline and dedication for Indian women.

The Indian women writers tried to stamp their authority in a male dominated environment as best as it is possible to them. Though the Indian women writers try to depict the women as strong and focused in their vision to succeed in lives, they were, however, ablest to succeed in their lives only in the space allotted to them by the men. They know very well that it is a very difficult path, as the women had to break through years of male dominance, taboos and beliefs that had heavily impregnated the society. The Indian women writers expressed their views and agony through their writings in the Postcolonial times for two major reasons. Because of this, it was important for the experiences of women under the patriarchal influence to come out to the forefront and expose the undue cruelty held on them by men. It was necessary for the women to oppose this male dominance over them. We observe that women continued to define the borders of the community, class and race. They tried to express their agony and dissatisfaction of male dominated attitude through their works. In addition, critics argued that colonialism operated very differently for women and for men. Woman has been the focus of many literary works down the centuries. In an age of development and flux in every field, one cannot easily ignore half the population. Indian writers in English have also come out of their cocoons and have started acknowledging the status of the Indian woman in a male-dominated society. The concept of Indian womanhood is as divergent as the country itself and has undergone drastic and dramatic changes from era to era.

There is a fine amalgamation of Indian artistic sensibility and western literary types and genre in their poetry. The Indo-English literature has presented the political, social and cultural crises in India. Social hypocrisies, ugly social practices of caste-system, and superstitions in Indian society have been analysed thoroughly in Indo-English literature. The synthesis of the Eastern and Western literary modes have given a comprehensive perspective to the Indo-English writers and they have successfully analysed the psychological, emotional and spiritual crises experienced by the Indian intellectuals as well as by men and women representing the different strata of Indian society. There are many Indian women writers both novelists and poets, based in the USA and Britain. Some like Jhabvala and Anita Desai are late immigrants while others, like Jhumpa Lahiri belongs to the second generation of Indians abroad. Most expatriate writers have a weak grasp of actual conditions in contemporary India, and tend to recreate it through the lens of nostalgia. Their best works deal with the Indian immigrants, the section of society they know at first hand. Sunithi Nam Joshi, Chitra Benerji, Divakarvas and Bharathi Mukherjee are the oldest, and naturally, the most prolific. Writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Manju Kapoor, Kiran Desai, and Arundhati Roy too have written novels of Magic Realism, Social Realism and Regional fiction, and benefited from the increasing attention that this fiction has received National and International awards. They have probed into human relationships, since the present problem is closely concerned with mind and heart and the crusade is against age-old established systems. In order to make the process of changes smooth and really meaningful, women writers have taken upon themselves this great task. Away from this line of writing the lives of women, the most successful of the Indian women writers is Jhumpa Lahiri who created the difference among all the Indian women writers. She is a dazzling storyteller with a distinctive voice. She is

different from other Indian writers writing in English. Most of the first generation writers of Indian fiction are born and brought up in India.

In the contemporary Indian Literary scenario, Indian women writers in English reflect the truth of Indian reality. They bear numerous responsibilities in the world of literature. They execute with admirable aplomb as the anthropologists, sociologists, novelists, essayists, travel writers, teachers and slip into global responsibility for establishing peace as the ambassadors. These have become the colossal central socio literary figures with the substantial bodies of work drawing the global attention. They also have become the only negotiators to mediate the core social and cultural problems of India and other colonized nations. All their major works have enjoyed immense academic attention across the globe and which have invited and produced a great amount of literary criticism especially on feminism. They have created a wide readership and a strong critical endorsement that reflect the attention of serious academicians and scholars. All the post-colonial and postmodern predicaments are wrestled to demonstrate a high level of self-consciousness, which continue, interrogate the social, philosophical, cultural issues of rape and sexual harassment of innocent women in contemporary Indian society. Their works have initiated the emergence of critique of feminism with nationalism. Their intellectual insights, conceptual, theoretical and textual experiments have engaged and interpreted the complex colonial and postcolonial situations. They have also established a peculiar paradox of reading and appreciation eloquently responding to the issues of sexually harassed women both in post-colonial and postmodern issues of rape and exploitation on the Indian women in the contemporary society.

II. REFERENCES

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