



INDIAN WOMEN WRITING IN ENGLISH: A TURBULENT STORY OF RESISTANCE TO IDENTITY

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Abstract

An attempt has been made to address the characteristics and tendencies of Indian women who write in English in this article. One of the main contemporary genres in Indian English literature is Indian women writers. In their paintings, they portray a wide range of agonies and pitiful situations that people have faced over the years. Indian women who wrote in English quickly made significant progress in expressing their own emotions and issues. They began to doubt the main social norms that patriarchal society upheld. They have demonstrated their value in the field of literature in terms of both quantity and quality, even without any obstacles to this day. Following the feminist or women-centered approach, which enables writers to speak from the point of view of feminine consciousness, there has been a significant advancement in the field of Indian women writing in English. Numerous Indian female authors have tackled various psychological facets of women-related issues that have been long-suppressed, all while addressing female subjectivity as a means of constructing identity. In the realm of Indian English literature, authors like Nayantara Sahgal, Geetha Hariharan, Kiran Desai, Manju Kapur, Bharathi Mukharjee, Kamla Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and others have made a significant impact. Therefore, the goal of this research work is to identify the technique of resistance used by Indian women writers when writing in English.

Keywords:

Emotion, Patriarchy, Tradition, Gender Equality, Identity

The discipline of English literature has benefited greatly from the contributions made by Indian women writers. Numerous Indian women writers, both poets and novelists, produce large amounts of writing in an effort to gain recognition in society. Particularly in postcolonial Indian women writers' works, narratives underwent significant stylistic and thematic shifts. Through their art, they attempted to communicate their annoyance and displeasure with the patriarchal structure of society. Their long-ago accumulation and gathering of repressed emotions and muted wants is reflected in their writings.

The present scenario among Indian women writers is to raise awareness of the status of women in society. Historically, female writers have been prioritised over male writers and their works have been consistently undervalued. In order to forge their own identities, post-colonial women writers, nevertheless, exhibit a more oppositional literary style. They have produced a wide range of works that have illuminated the literature. It develops into a significant genre in Indian English writing that is indisputable. It accurately portrays Indian history, customs, and culture, along with all the variations needed to make literature more insightful. Like their counterparts, Indian women have made remarkable literary contributions. The identities of the post-independent Indian women writers are varied. They are not traditional writers, uninfluenced by myth, epic, or folklore, in contrast to past authors. On the other hand, they adapted contemporary topics and challenges, particularly those pertaining to women, to create their own writing.

Women writers highlight subjects pertaining to women generally and societal challenges specifically. Writers such as Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Bharati Mukharjee, Nayantara Sahgal, and Ruth Pravar Jhabvala depict the struggle, man-woman interaction, and identity crises in their books set shortly after the end of colonialism. Women authors' novels from the 1960s began challenging the conventional narrative form. The Nector in the Seive (1954) by Kamala Markandaya paints a picture of the protagonist Rukmini, who struggles to get by on a daily basis in a rural area of India. Anita Desai depicts the protagonist Maya's battle to fit in with society over the entirety of her story in Cry the Peacock. This Time of Morning by Nayantara Sahal exposes the narrow-minded Indian society that forces arranged marriages. The writers of these stories exhibit a resisted, long-suppressed style of writing.

The 1970s saw the emergence of female novelists who expanded the storyline. During this time, Indian women novelists won numerous prominent honours. The 1975 Booker Prize-winning novel "Heat and Dust" by Ruth Pravar Jhabvala explores the female characters' ongoing fight to survive in society. Olivia, the main character, felt constrained by the propriety and expectations of her position as a wife in civil society. Novelists like Geeta Hariharan and Rama Mehta produced a wealth of literature in this era to elevate women's status in Indian society. Through her books, Geeta Hariharan examines the search for roots among educated women.

The linguistic, stylistic, and thematic maturity of Indian women writers peaked in the 1980s. In this period, female protagonists in novels are searching for identity and self-realization. Particularly, writers such as Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande discuss the challenges and predicaments faced by middle-class families.

Significant feminists in Indian literature have emerged throughout the past three decades. Commencing with the work of Shashi Deshpande will indicate the beginning of resistance writing in India as a whole. Her writings are rooted in the culture she lives in and are based on her personal experiences. Roots and Shadows, her third book, features a new female face and focuses more on middle class issues. Her characters' independence and defiance of all conventional rules are clearly seen.

I knew that these women had their own standards for judging people. Nothing about me..... my academic distinctions, my career, my success, my money None of these would impress her. To her I was just a childless woman. To get married, to bear children, to have sons and then grandchildren. they were still

for them the only successes a woman could have. I had almost forgotten this breed of women since I had left home. Now seeing them was like discovering a new world. Each one of them, riddled with ignorance, prejudice and superstition, was a world of darkness in herself. And even more amazing was their ignorance of their own darkness (Deshpande, p116)

The outstanding characters(Protagonists) of Deshpande are the perfect example of self-awareness, self-improvement, and self-fulfillment. They all disapproved of the norms and traditions of their community. Her book *A Matter of Time* explores gender roles, women's sorrows, and the female psychology. Her works are characterised by a striking topic of human relationships, particularly those between father and daughter, husband and wife, and mother and daughter. Nonetheless, Sashi Deshpande gives women characters the main role in each of these partnerships, and the stories are told from the viewpoint of the female consciousness.

Manju Kapur is another well-known novelist who wrote extensively about the experiences of women. The female protagonists of Manju Kapur's works serve as an example of women who aspire to break free from societal expectations and practices. Since most of her female characters have advanced degrees, this aids in their ability to think for themselves. The protagonists in the majority of her books battle intensely to discover who they truly are. Her literature has always addressed the issue of patriarchy and gender inequality.

Another talented Indian woman writer, Anita Desai, pictured the way of portrayal of the pitiful and depressing entire state of women before society and produced a clear distinction through her narratives and writing. She consistently focuses on highlighting the inner emotions of her heroes, the majority of them were female roles. She essentially exposes the misery and hardships faced by contemporary women in the patriarchal culture that currently exists. Desai is a prolific writer who released her debut book, *Cry of the Peacock*, in 1963. In most of her books, the main characters go through a profound She then resumed her literary career with *Clear Light of Day* (1980), which she considered to be her most autobiographical work because it was set in her age range and in the environment she lived in. She soon published *In Custody*, a book about an Urdu poet that was one of the books shortlisted for the Booker Prize.

In addition to these stories and fictions, Desai is the author of other novels that have received praise from readers and authors worldwide. Anita Desai's characters in particular demonstrated a desire to revolt against the patriarchal social structure. Her female protagonists have to deal with a variety of annoyances and difficulties in order to regain their individuality. Her writings are a complete eradication of cliched portrayals of women as outsiders. Another remarkable and well-known person in this tradition is Kamala Markandaya, whose book *Nectar in Sieve* received praise from all around the world for its subject matter. In the book *Nectar in Sieve*, the author depicts the identity dilemma of the female lead, Rukmani. The majority of her books cover topics pertaining to women. Lastly, a large number of Indian women writers have developed the feminist writing style in an effort to combat the general victimisation of women.

Indian women writers are among the innovative brigades that greatly encouraged the sword in order to heal and reclaim one's identity. Throughout their writing careers, they have raised their voices in an attempt to find a place in society. They created their own literature, challenging the patriarchal rules and regulations, as well as the clichéd portrayal and limited role of women in literary works. They eradicated these views and conceptions of

society by establishing their own identity as individuals and by portraying women as having roles that are equal to those of males.

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