



International Journal of Advanced Research in Arts,
Science, Engineering & Management (IJARASEM)

Volume 11, Issue 4, July - August 2024



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

IMPACT FACTOR: 7.583



Indian English Women Writers and Changing Approaches

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ABSTRACT: Indian literary scene has seen a complete change as far as women writings are concerned. It has got quite richer in the span of time. Writers like Shashi Deshpande, Kiran Desai, Anita Desai, Gita Mehta, Shobha De, Gita Hariharan, Harati Mukharjee, Kamala Das, Mahasweta Devi etc have made feministic and women writing popular in the world. The paper highlights the contributions of these female writers.

KEYWORDS: Indian, writers, women, English, changing, approaches

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a concerted effort in Indian English literature to record and analyze all the authors see and experience in the world today. Although many male authors have broached the subject of gender in their works, the contributions of female authors in this area are particularly noteworthy. By the middle of the nineteenth century, women in India were beginning to write in English. Women authors from India have paved a new path for the country's literary canon. They will always be remembered as giants in the history of English literature. Most female authors have sought to liberate female readers from men's historical hegemony over their gender in their works. Wherever questions of gender become relevant, whether they are traditionally feminine or feminist in nature, they are relevant everywhere. As a result of their marginalization, women authors often rebel against the mostly male literary canon. Poems, tales, and novels written by women in English became more common and sometimes controversial. Women have a crucial role in society. Without women's full and equal involvement in society, no nation can hope to advance. Although women's roles have changed throughout time and between cultures, one constant is that they have never been seen as fully equal to men. The fact that she gives birth to human beings makes her an important person in society, and she is normally only expected to perform domestic duties. It's safe to say that women have been struggling for recognition in this conservative culture since ancient times. [1,2,3] Men and women alike are happy for one another. As one proverb puts it, "a man's existence without a woman is like a flower without scent, a ship without a rudder, or a body without energy." Women are constantly depicted in Indian classical literature in connection to men. Marriage is valued more highly than other close relationships, including those between parents and children. A good wife has long been equated with a decent woman. A good woman, like Sita or Savitri, must be pure and devoted to her husband. The vast body of literature written in English and set in India adequately deals with feminism. Cultural, economic, and political groups that seek to guarantee women's legal rights and full equality are all considered examples of feminism. Women authors in India have made an effort, however little, to assess the current social climate. Several Indian writers have written works that expose the discrimination and inequality that women face in Indian society. Many books written in English about India accurately portray the lives of women in Indian society. Women should rely on their fathers as children, their husbands as young adults, their children as adults, and their son or daughter-in-law as retirees. No woman should ever try to achieve independence if she has no sons or the close kinsmen of her spouse; if she has no kinsmen remaining among her father's relatives; or if she has no paternal kinsman among the sovereign. Relation between language and literature: The English language and English literature are not the same thing but are yet inextricably linked to one another. Georges Bataille,[4,5,6] cited by B. P. Roy, contends, "Literature is either necessary or nothing"; without the other, the former does not make much sense. Kalyan nath Dutta provides some insight into the connection between the two when he writes, "The language that is discovered to precede literature everywhere, no doubt, produces the latter." A strong literary work, however, may foster, grow, and even subsidize a language. The literature and language go hand in hand, in reality. When you have a wonderful language, you can create great literature, and vice versa. According to Amiya Bhushan Sharma, "knowing the society and the significant social events of the time in the back of your mind makes reading of literature more interesting and thought stimulating." This is yet another "prerequisite" of language. In light of these considerations, the essay that follows will go deeply into a topic that has gained acclaim as a result of the work of numerous women authors since independence.

The Rise and Spread of English in India: Although it was established in 1882, the Indian Education Commission seems to have ignored efforts to promote the study of contemporary Indian languages and lessen the hegemony of English.



Therefore, English brought about more significant alterations in the state of Indian languages than was originally anticipated. It filled the shoes of various official tongues and served their purposes. The upper class spoke English, while the regular people spoke their native tongue. Furthermore, it acknowledged the dissemination of European knowledge through the English language in the context of higher education. So, covertly, a plan was hatched to start learning English much sooner than usual. There was discussion on whether or not learning English should come first, or whether or not it was more important to become fluent in current Indian languages. The Government Resolution on Education Policy in 1904 favored the former, with the recommendation that English not be taught to elementary school students. However, despite efforts to popularize modern Indian languages, English has continued to be the medium of instruction, especially at the higher levels of education, and its popularity has spread unchecked, even if it means English will continue to dominate and subdue the Indian education scene. Education and the English language also benefited from the national independence struggle in India. Surprisingly for a group that advocated for a position to drive the British out of the nation, its members were split on the issue of English use in India. Lala Lajpat Rai stated that familiarity with contemporary European languages and literatures was necessary for understanding contemporary scientific developments. Lala Lajpat Rai will follow in the footsteps of Raja Rammohan Roy in this regard. However, Mahatma Gandhi strongly objected, saying that it was abnormal for English to be so widely used as a language of education so young in children. "I want the culture of all the regions to be blown about my home as freely as possible," Gandhi is quoted as saying by Bhattacharya. But I won't let myself be knocked off my feet by just any...However, I do not want any Indian to lose touch with or feel embarrassed of his own language, or to believe that he or she is incapable of having the finest ideas or expressing them in their native speech. After India won its independence, the country's founders enshrined several provisions, including: (1) recognizing Hindi as the official language; (2) establishing a transition period during which English would serve as the official language for 15 years before being replaced by Hindi; (3) mandating that efforts be made to better the Hindi language. The Constitution was originally written with a three-language formula, but over time, English became the most widely used. As a result, many Indians, like Karunakar Jha, believe that English's rising popularity in India demonstrates a desire to expand their horizons beyond the boundaries of their own states. Like flesh and blood, literature gives language life. Aside from Karunakar Jha's assessment, it can be claimed with epistemic certainty that the people of the nation kept their zeal and enthusiasm for literature even after being under to British Rule for over two complete centuries. In truth, words, not bullets, were the first means of expression in the fight for independence. The fast increase in both the number and quality of Indian English Literature has long been a source of worry and perplexity, but it is now a source of joy and satisfaction. There is no denying the success of Indian English writers, both men and women, since several Indian authors have won important literary honors such as the Booker Prize, Commonwealth Fiction Prize, and Sahitya Academy Prizes. In this respect, males are not alone; women have equaled and even exceeded them as writers. English Fiction in Contemporary Women Writers in India: Many Indian authors were inspired to put forward their works by the sincere hope of giving western readers a true representation of India. Some of India's most influential authors wrote in English rather than their native language. Included in this group are Taru Dutt, Kamla Das, Bharati Mukherjee, Shashi Deshpande, and more contemporary Indian authors like Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai Indian fiction composed in English is quite impressive as well as has attracted wide attention over the years. It has also undergone a rapid transformation, from being profoundly influenced by the Raj to vernacular, fantasy, which is an attempt to convey the most intimate awareness of life and society. The Indian English fiction does the same thing, conveying ideas, feelings, and emotions in a logical and entertaining way, and shedding light on a variety of changes in its own unique style. As a result, the relevance and value of Indian imaginative writing in English are made clear by the way it reflects change in all sectors of Indian society. From its earliest days, Indian English literature has chronicled the social, cultural, economic, and political transformations that have shaped our country. At the time, many Indians were striving to emerge from the shadow cast by British authority over their country's destinies. However, the British persecution did not stop there. These were the first moments of the Trip to Hell. Shocks from the Bengal split tormented the Indians. Colonialism exacerbated religious tensions between Hindus and Muslims and stifled nationalist sentiment. Emerging New Women in Modern Indian English Fiction : The next generation of famous ladies As readers of contemporary literature, we are often presented with women who are financially reliant and who breach sexual norms. This couple rejects the conventional view of marriage. Literature has always been a potent tool for conveying the author's thoughts, feelings, and perspectives, and as a result, it has been a source of enormous healing for any culture. The English literature that originated in India was a curious side effect, and it has yet to prove its worth internationally. A novel is a work of fiction in which the author use both imagination and intelligence to convey some aspect of life via narrative. More than romance or excitement, it is interested in men and women. Indian women authors ushered in a new era that promised women in India more agency in public life. By uniting the book with a tool for social change, they have established themselves as a powerful group. It would seem that modern issues facing women are a major focus for Indian authors, particularly those who identify as female. Women's emotional and social struggles are being examined by Indian authors writing in English. As feminism spread over the continent, it provided women with new outlets for expressing their emotions. She now had a platform to promote her work, since women authors make significant contributions to



modern Indian literature written in English. "Woman's have trouble, in the setting of modern Indian society, to find as well as preserve her identity as spouse, mother, and most significant of all, human being is Shashi Deshpande's primary concern as a creative writer, and this shows up in all her essential stories," as GS. Amur so aptly puts it. Indian Women Authors in English Literature: These days, women are no more passive objects to be controlled by males. They've finally come to terms with the fact that they're not helpless and weak, but rather capable just like men. They are no longer relegated to the role of housewife, and they earn as much as men do. They've carved out a niche for themselves almost everywhere else. Arundhati Roy, Nayantara Sahgal, Geeta Mehta, Rama Mehta, and many more are just a few of the many accomplished Indian women who write in English. They experimented with writing in a wide variety of styles. The way men think will change because of their works. Their books are, essentially, protest and outburst tales about emerging and contaminating cultures. They apply the concept from different stages of a woman's life, beginning with infancy and ending with old age. Their books assist to disseminate the true meaning of feminism. Female authors, in general, are celebrated for their outspoken opinions. In 1997, Arundhati Roy, a woman from India, received the Man Booker Prize for her book *The God of Small Things*. She included female protagonists into her book. As a result of this book, Arundhati Roy has firmly established her place in the academic community with her unique take on society. When women realize that they are a minority, that they have been discriminated against as a group, and that their subservient status is not inherent but rather the result of societal oppression of women and the marginalization of their voices may be found in both real life and fiction. Arundhati Roy's "*The God of Small Things*" is regarded as a modern masterpiece in Indian literature. She describes a dysfunctional household in Kerala, a southern Indian state. The novel's female protagonists refuse to allow themselves to be restricted by the rules and legislation of the novel's awe-inspiring moderate society. In "*The God of Small Things*," we follow a Christian Syrian family over four generations. Baby Kochamma, Mammachi, Ammu, and Rahel are all great examples of how the book challenges the traditional gender roles that have been upheld in Indian culture for centuries. The book revolves on Ammu. She is Rahel and Estha's mom and Mammachi's daughter. She fell prey to the biases of a mostly masculine culture. Her parents had disgraced her, her husband had abandoned her, the police had ridiculed her, her brother had left her penniless, and her mother had shown her no love or concern. All these people believed in patriarchal culture, which denied Ammu her basic human rights as a daughter, wife, sister, and citizen. Shashi Deshpande's career as a writer started with her short tales and progressed to her novels. She has written five books, the most prestigious of which, "*Roots and Shadows*" (1983), won India's prestigious Thirumathi Rangammal Prize for Best Novel. The protagonists in Shashi Deshpande's books are women who are trying to find themselves. Being of Indian descent herself, she has portrayed this characteristic of Indian women with more nuance and intuitive knowledge. Her books are on the struggles, frustrations, social agitations, and silences of Indian middle-class women

II. DISCUSSION

A world of words, lost and found: a brief overview of women's literature in India from the 6th century BC onwards
by Sherin Koshy

The Vedas cry aloud, the Puranas shout;
"No good may come to a woman."
I was born with a woman's body
How am I to attain truth?
"They are foolish, seductive, deceptive –
Any connection with a woman is disastrous."
Bahina says, "If a woman's body is so harmful,
How in the world will I reach truth?"

[Bahinabai (1682-1700)]

Mutta's works, translated from Pali, offer an explanation through their interpretation. Religious escapism was the only way out for many women who were frustrated with a life inside the home. They chose to join the Buddhist sangha (religious communities) in their attempts to break away from the social world of tradition and marriage. Thus emerged poems and songs about what it meant to be free from household chores and sexual slavery.

Although the early forms of writing addressed the issue of personal freedom, the poetry that followed later was a celebration of womanhood and sexuality. The Sangam poets that dominated the era between ca. 100 BC-AD 250 wrote extensively about what it meant to have a female body. The translation of Venmanipputi Kuruntokai's 'What she said to her girlfriend' reads'

The content of the poem is bold for its time because it is expressing a woman's pleasure in sex. The poems written around this age echo a sense of sexual liberation.



S. S. Kalpana says that the 'commentaries that accompany these poems mention songs women used to sing while transplanting seedlings, drawing water and husking paddy' [Tharu and Lalita p.71]. Women apparently sang to keep vigil on the ripening grain and to ward off spirits. These songs took the form of poetry when written down.

According to A. K. Ramanujan, who translated most of the poems of the Sangam age, disparities in gender are evident in the way women have written about their experiences. Some of the poems echo the need for bodily love and passion, the foolishness of war and the 'spears' that men left with to wage wars.

The ten anthologies and eight long poems of the Sangam age are the oldest and most prominent body of secular poetry extant in India. According to S. S. Kalpana, the absence of mythological references and Sanskrit words suggests the possibility that they were written before the Aryan take-over of northern India. This was also the time when the University of Nalanda was set up (c.a. 100 BC), which opened its doors on an equal basis to women. Most of the university records have been lost, but one can assume that the women scholars contributed to the expanding body of literature

Among the poets who wrote in the 12th century AD came the medieval Kannada poet, rebel and mystic, Akkamahadevi, whose life and writing challenged the patriarchal dominance of the world at large. She is supposed to have wandered naked in search of divinity.

The spread of Buddhism and the rapid acceptance of Islam forced Hinduism to rethink the caste system. As Hinduism underwent a revision of spirituality and basked in the new-found outlook of the Bhakti movement, so did the men and women associated with the religion. This is evident in Akkamahadevi's writing as she uses the image of her body to defy her critics when she says,

Brother, you've come drawn by the beauty of these billowing breasts, this brimming youth. I am no woman brother, no whore. [Tharu and Lalita p.79]

As a radical mystic it is no surprise that she uses the image of her genitals to convey her understanding of the Bhakti tradition and the Hindu idea of rebirth when she says,

Not one, not two, not three or four, but through eight four hundred thousand vaginas have I come. I have come through unlikely worlds guzzled on pleasure and pain. [Tharu and Lalita p.80]

Another poet of the Bhakti tradition was Sule Sankavva, who according to Vijaya Dabbe wrote poetry that could startle contemporary sensibility with its combination of the sacrosanct and the sacrilegious. Writing as a prostitute, her sentiments about the duplicity of society at large are strongly echoed in her only surviving poem, in which she says,

In my harlot's trade having taken one man's money, I daren't accept a second man's, sir. And if I do, they'll stand me naked and kill me, sir. [Tharu and Lalita p.81]

The poetry which followed a century later reflected the economic hardships of most women. It was still in the tradition of the earlier poets who used religion and god, and the discriminatory alignment of the oppressive caste system that worked against them, to define their writing.

Among the women who wrote was Janabai, the Varkari saint poet of the low caste Sudra community of Maharashtra, who in defence of her lower-caste status lowered the position of god to that of a fellow sweeper who aids her when she is tired and doesn't mind shovelling dirt for her. The same trend was observed with other lower-caste women who wrote to criticise the Hindu caste system which the Bhakti tradition had failed to eliminate.

This was also the period in India's history that witnessed invasion and gradual settlement by the Persian Empire. The rise of Islam, not only as a religion but also as the framework of the Mughal dynasty that ruled India for almost three centuries thereafter, brought a new set of experiences and influences to women's literature in India. Muslim women had to be literate to comply with the requirements of the Holy Koran which made it mandatory for every Muslim, male or female to pray. Women made use of this rule of the religion to write about themselves and their experiences. One of the earliest to write was Princess Gul-Badan Begum who in 1587 completed the Humayun Nama which details the life and history of one of India's most powerful Mughal kings. She wrote so 'beautifully' in Persian that when translated into English in 1898, her translator Annette Beveridge described it as the first novel-biography ever written by an Indian woman.



In ca. 1730, Muddupalini, a courtesan in the kingdom of the Nayaka kings of Tanjavur in the south of India, was born. Since the rulers of the Nayaka dynasty were scholars and poets, lovers of music and literature and patrons of the arts, they granted extensive patronage to women educated in the art of dance and music. There were other distinguished women poets and scholars in their courts who were recipients of this patronage. One of them, Ramabhadramba, writes about women in the Tanjavur courts who composed poetry in eight languages.

Maddhupalini's Radhika Santwanam consisted of five hundred and eighty four poems about the relationship between Krishna and Radha. In an unusual third section, Krishna complains that Radha insists on making love even though he doesn't want to. According to K. Lalita, no other Telugu poet, man or woman, has written about a woman taking the initiative in a sexual relationship. Her compositions created a stir in the literary world when they were published almost two centuries later. The erotic poems in her most reputed work, Radhika Santwanam, stunned even the most liberal of readers and critics.

Traditionally the only women who had access to scholarships and the arts of literature and dancing were courtesans. Their status in society was of high standing, and because of the wealth they accumulated due to patronage, their property endowed them with the ability to choose their lovers and friends.

Another courtesan who was raised within the Asaf Jahi Sultanate in the Mughal Empire was Mahlaqa Bai Chanda, who received an 'elaborate education and composed beautifully' [Tharu and Lalita p.120] as a court poet and songwriter. Her poetry was collected and published after her death in 1824 as Gulzar-e-Mahlaqa (Mahlaqa's garden of flowers). According to Afeefa Banu most of her poems are composed in the Ghazal form which originated in Iran.

Around the 18th century, however, a combination of factors led to the decline of women writing in India. The East India Company, established in 1600, whose initial purpose had been to trade, gradually took over as rulers and thereafter the British government established its rule in India. As a result of princes and kings losing their kingdoms, and being restricted by a small privy purse, there was loss of patronage to women in courts. Since these were women with education, the association of educated woman with 'bad' women became common. This led to the loss of education for women and the production of women's literature almost came to a standstill.

The trend of educating women began again in the late 19th century with the rise of the reformist movement in India which saw more women's participation in rebelling against British rule. This led to a new stage in the development of women's literature in India. The body of work produced was often related to the freedom struggle and the reform and nationalist movements. Although there were still women such as Bhabani and Jogeswari whose writings in the early 19th century questioned the patriarchal dominance of their husbands, the majority concentrated on the freedom struggle.

The earliest woman writing during the reformist period was Savitribai Phule, who along with her husband championed the cause of women's education. She was the first woman teacher in modern Maharashtra and together with her husband started the first school for girls. Her writing carries the mark of an activist and scholar who wholeheartedly believed in the cause of the untouchables.

Among the women writers who followed was Pandita Ramabai Saraswati who was educated both in English and in Sanskrit. In her *The high caste Hindu woman* she argues against the patriarchal reading of the Hindu scriptures and early scholarly works of learned Brahmins which encouraged a repressive and demeaning interpretation favouring the suppression of women.

Sarojini Naidu, dubbed the nightingale of India, published her first set of poems at the age of sixteen and went to England where she was educated at King's College in London, and later at Cambridge. Her writings as an activist and as the governor of Uttar Pradesh reflect her honest and heartfelt concerns about the situation of her country.

Towards the mid-nineteenth century more and more women began to write in English. Some of them, such as Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, created a world of feminist ideologies. In *Sultana's Dream* she talks about a world dominated by women; a world which has imprisoned men in a male equivalent of zenanas (women's quarters). She creates a world that is much better than the one men managed. In her woman's world, there are no wars and there is constant scientific progress and love for the environment.

Women's writing in the 20th century moved towards a medium of modernism in which womanist and feminist statements were combined with political messages. The writings of women such as Hamsa Wadkar conveyed an honest



impression of a world of professional women whose careers in television and stage segregated them as a class apart, yet subjected them to the same brutality and force of patriarchy. In her autobiography, Hamsa Wadkar talks about her life as an actor from the age of eleven, her marriage to a suspicious and abusive husband, the birth of a daughter, her life after eloping with another man, the imprisonment she faced at his home along with two of his other wives, and her rape by a justice of peace.

Women writers such as Mahashwetadevi combined women's causes with political movements. In Draupadi Mahashwetadevi creates a world of tribal rebels whose fight against a political system of enforced capitalism has driven them to become Naxalites (supporters of a Chinese-style Communism). Others such as Sashi Deshpande build a platform of universal female experiences. In *Binding Vines* she examines the experiences of women coming from different echelons of society.

Over the years and throughout the political instability which affected Indian society at large, along with a myriad of other influences which have affected culture, language and social patterns, women's literature in India has evolved to show common experiences, a sense of sisterhood and a range of female experiences that question the recurring face of patriarchy.

III. RESULTS

Some Prominent Feminist Women writers in India 1. Shashi Deshpande's writing Shashi Deshpande is the second daughter of the famous Kannada dramatist in Karnataka and Sanskrit Scholar Shriranga. She did a graduation in Journalism at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Mumbai and worked for a couple of months as a journalist for the magazine 'On Looker'. Her first novel 'The Dark Holds No Terror' was published in June 1999. She is a winner of the Sahitya Akademi award, for her novel 'That long silence'. Her third famous novel is 'Roots and Shadows'. She has projected objectively a new female face with subjective experiences with a geocentric vision. She reflects on the problems and concerns of the middle class Indian women. Her writings are rooted in the culture in which she lives. Her remarks are sensitive to the common everyday events and experiences and give an artistic expression to something that is simple and mundane. Her feminism is particularly Indian in the sense that it is borne out of the predicament of Indian women placed between contradictory identities. The women characters are with traditional approaches trying to tie family and profession to maintain the virtues of Indian culture. Shashi Deshpande's novel 'A Matter of time' is a continuation of her exploration into the many facts of the feminine experience in writing. In this novel, she has displayed the themes of silence, gender differences, passive sufferings and familiar relationships into much deeper realms. It is a story encompassing three generations of women coming to terms with their life in and all female worlds. The relation women characters share with their men is homered with silence, absence or indifference. The pain of disintegration of the family troubles Aru, who consider herself for her father's action and sets out to undo it. It is in this stifling atmosphere the characters evolve and come to a newer understanding of their lives. The role of fury and destiny are playing as main themes around which Deshpande weaves her tale. The underlying theme in Shashi Deshpande's novels is human relationships especially the ones that exist between father and daughter, husband and wife, between mother and daughter. In all relationships, the women occupy the central stage and significantly, the narration shifts through her feminine consciousness. In her novels, three types of suffering women characters reoccur with subtle changes. The first type belongs to the protagonist's mother or the mother figure, the traditional woman, who believes that her place is with her husband and family. The second type of woman is bolder more self-reliant and rebellious. She cannot conform to mythological, submissive and surrender vision of womanhood. As radical feminist, ideology expressed, for example, Sarah's friend Nathan in the 'Dark Holds No Terror'. 2. Arundhati Roy's Writings The other famous and renowned novelist under the study is Arundhati Roy, born in 1961 in Bengal. Arundhati grew up in Kerala; she trained herself as an architect at the Delhi school of Architecture but abandoned it in between. She believes that, "A feminist is a woman who negotiates herself into a position where she has choices." The International community knows Arundhati Roy as an artist with her debut novel *The God of Small Things*. 'The God of small things' won Britain's premier Booker prize, the Booker McConnell in 1997. [7,8,9] Roy is the first non-expatriate Indian author and the first Indian woman to have won this prize. Roy's major essays 'The End of Imagination' and 'The Greater common good' are available online. She is between the two Indian writers writing in English 7 who has won the Booker Prize (the other one being Salman Rushdie for his 'Midnight Children'.) Arundhati has never admitted that she is a feminist but 'The God of Small Things', reveals at many places her feminist stance and her protagonist represent feminine sensibility Roy seems to be iconoclast in, 'The God of Small Things'. The stylistic innovations make the novel unique and bring vitality and exuberance to the novel. The novel is unique in every aspect and it is a linguistic experiment with the English language. The stylistic writings include the use of words, phrases and even sentences from vernacular language, use of italics, subject less sentences, faulty spellings, topicalisation, deviation from normal word order, single word 'sentences,' change of word classes, clustering of word classes and a variety of other techniques. She



has given prominence to ecology and subalternity as the major themes in the novel. Roy's close observations and the minute aspects in the creation of her literary skills are observed in her other works. Her two important articles on the net are 'The end of Imagination' and 'The Greater Common Good.' In the End of Imagination, Roy criticises nuclear policies of the Government of India.

3. Anita Desai's Writings Anita Desai, the other great novelist of the Indian English fiction was born in 1937. Anita Desai is unquestionably one of the celebrated Indian - English fiction writers. She holds a unique place among the contemporary women novelists of India. She has to her credit a large number of creative works and a coherently growing readership throughout the world. She has published ten novels and other literary works of immense value. Anita Desai's women characters in her novels rebel against patriarchal community in order to explore their own potential or to live on their own terms, regardless of the consequences that such a rebellion may have on their lives. They take the position of outsiders to fight and criticize those cultural ideologies that come in their way of becoming free individuals, self - chosen withdrawal, for these women, takes on the form a weapon for survival in a patriarchal community. Desai's women, thus, want freedom within the community of men and women, as it is the only way that will succeed in fulfilling them. In fact, Desai's model of an emancipated woman, Bimala in the novel *Clear Light Of Day*, is an unmarried woman. Her married women characters like Maya in *Cry, a Peacock*, Monisha in *The City*, Nanda in *Fire in the Mountain*, and Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* Become depressed, violent or self-destructive. They either lose their sanity or kill others, or they kill or destroy themselves. The nemesis of these women is not a private one but an outgrowth of the complex social context, immediate family environments and the relationships with their men. Many of Desai's protagonists are portrayed as single women. Desai does not neglect the institution of marriage or support alienation from society. Some of her women characters, like Tara in 'Clear Light of Day', do achieve fulfilment in their marriages. Instead, through Bimala, Desai points to a kind of feminist emancipation that lies in not limiting women to their traditional roles but in expanding and awakening them to several other possibilities. Their kind of life, apart from being invigorating, also frees them from dependence on men. As Anita Desai says, "I don't think anybody's exile from society can solve any problem. I think the problem is how to exist in society and yet maintain one's individuality rather than suffering from a lack of society and a lack of belonging." Anita Desai's first novel, 'Cry, The Peacock' is concerned with its chief protagonist Maya's psychological problems. As a young sensitive woman, Maya wish to love and to live. She makes up the mind of her father, Gautama who is much older than she is. Maya is haunted constantly by the rationalistic approach of her husband to the affairs of life. Maya loves Gautama passionately and desires to be loved in return; but Gautama's coldness disappoints her. [2,3,4] The root of the entire novel lies in the prophecy of albino astrologer, who creates a fear psychosis in Maya's mind. Anita Desai works on revealing the varying mental states, psychic observations, inner motives and existential pursuits of man. She succeeds fully in breaking nongrounds for her fictional art among her contemporary while dealing with the predicament of man and his social and moral dilemmas.

A new form of writing Novels: Whenever a new form of writing emerges, there are a lot of changes in the society which influences it. For example, when the form of 'novel' came into the literary canon in the eighteenth century, it wasn't just the form which emerged but it represented a whole lot of people who thought the way a 'realistic' protagonist in the novel did. In Britain, the shift from epics to novels came gradually as more and more people from the working classes and women started reading. This could be related to the growing economy where goods started being available in the market, which meant that women didn't have to produce those goods at home, giving them a lot of luxury time. Reading was also considered a luxury and to show off their wealth, the aristocratic men gave a lot of free time to their women. It slowly became a status symbol. However, when women and the working class started reading, the novels had to be about something they understood. They needed a more vernacular language and a much easier content without fancied language and techniques. Result of these numerous political and social changes was the emergence of novel. The novel now had a simplistic approach and authors wrote about people from daily lives. The Indian context too has witnessed critically acclaimed novelists who brilliantly mentioned about the Indian society and showing its realistic face. One such novel which mentions about the reality of a poets life is Anita Desai's *In Custody*. The novel was immensely popular and won The Booker's Prize as well. A bollywood movie too, was based on this novel. In 1993, her novel *In Custody* was adapted by Merchant Ivory Productions into an English film by the same name, directed by Ismail Merchant, with a screenplay by Shahrukh Husain. It won the 1994 President of India Gold Medal for Best Picture and stars ShashiKapoor, ShabanaAzmi and Om Puri. A number of women novelists have arrived on the literary scenes, they have set out making new forays into the world of women. [5,6,7] The fiction of the nineties is dominated by women writers like Gita Mehta, Shobha De, Gita Hariharan, Anita Desai, BharatiMukharjee, Kamala Das, Mahasweta Devi etc. among others. Mahasweta Devi, winner of Padmashree and Sahitya Academy Award, is not professedly a feminist. In her novels, the fight is not against male chauvinism, but men and women fight shoulder to shoulder against a common foe-the establishment. Her female characters symbolize abundance and



motherhood. From the grueling poverty of village life, these women emerge as sources of simple strength and indomitable rural courage to their men. Some of them become legends in their lifetime.

IV. CONCLUSION

Literature not only describes reality but also adds to its literary works are portrayals of the thinking patterns and social norms prevalent in society, they women's life classical literary works serve as a food for thought and encourage imagination and creativity. Today's woman realizes the true depth of human emotion and behavior. They understand that there is more to a person than what they display on the exterior. Women were the chief upholders of a rich oral tradition of story — telling, through myths, legends songs and fables. Once literacy began to filter through society, those stories were transformed into poetry and drama. In the last two decades there has been an astonishing flowering of Indian women[8]

who express in their writing their discontent with the plight of upper caste and class traditional Hindu women trapped in repressive Institution.[9]

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