

# Portrayal of Women in Indian-English Women Novelists

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## Abstract

This dissertation aims to elucidate the varied images of women presented by Indian-English women novelists. Independence, the quest for character, combat, and the spirit of resistance have all remained outsider thoughts in Indian culture and heritage when it comes to women. However, with the advent of women's rights, Indian women's essayists have intuitively recognized the concerns and introduced women as a person who fights against the concealment and abuse of a man-centered culture. Their works depict how the advanced-age Indian lady, in the process of deeply developing her life and identity in her own unique way, is torn between tradition and innovation.

**Keywords:** Corrosive, Existentialist, Iconoclast, Immigrant

## 1. Introduction

We can see the emergence of Indian-English ladies writers after Independence, with the spread of education and attention to women. The majority of these authors deal with the issues that an Indian woman faces in a male-dominated generalization society. Dr. Anupma Shrivastav offers her thoughts on the Indian English book's journey.

It is widely agreed that the novel is the most appropriate artistic form for the exploration of current events and thoughts, and the Indian English novel occupies a proper place in the field of writing.

The female authors have taken up issues that are ostensibly centred on those who are living in the traditional atmosphere of male-dominated society. These novels deal with a variety of self- and societal issues, including how the Indian woman has been denied access to education, equal rights, the right to work, and the ability to choose for a long time. As N. Krishna swami points out.

Regardless of religion, country, ethnicity, or the period in which they live, ladies have generally been considered as inferior and unequipped for any serious reasoning. In language and literature, a similar insight and sex-generalizing may be observed.

Anita Desai is a rumoured writer who, strangely, has a lot of photographs of women. Through Maya in her first novel, *Cry, the Peacock*, she paints a portrait of a bizarre metropolitan Indian lady. Maya has a masochist rationality and a great creative imagination. She kills her better half in a fit of rage, and her miserable life comes to an end with self-destruction. Maya's portrayal as a metrosexual Indian woman married to a strange man is unusual in Indian English fiction. Desai presents the images of young females Monisha and Amla in *Solicitations in the City*. Anita Desai illustrates the corrosive effects of a harsh

metropolis on sensitive individuals. Monisha is the centre point, through whom we get a clear picture of a woman whose marriage is completely shattered. Without a doubt, she has a security and dejection inclination. Her search for true meaning in life ends in emptiness and meaninglessness. She ends up taking her own life near the end. *Black Bird*, I bid you farewell. Adit Sen's English wife, Sarah, is depicted in this photograph. Sarah, like Maya and Monisha, is a Desai existentialist. Sarah is an oversensitive woman whose married life has only brought her isolation and despondency. Anita Desai portrays the images of women who require their unfilled space with loads of solitude and despair, as well as their search for reality and character, through Sarah. Along these lines, we see various images of ladies in Anita Desai's work who are clairvoyant, disappointed, melancholy, odd, and so on.

Shashi Deshpande is a well-known Indian English woman author. Her novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* explores the personality of Sarita, who defies convention in pursuit of her own goal and self-character, which she finally recognizes later in life. In her work *Roots and Shadows*, she portrays a woman named Indu who is torn between her family and calling, as well as between tradition and male-dominated society. In her daily existence, she has been the victim of social and sexual mistreatment. She's a writer who's trying to figure out who she is as a person and how to reach singularity. However, she recognizes that she has once again lost her opportunity and originality as a result of her marriage. Despond portrays an ordinary Indian woman who is caught in the web of marriage and unable to fly with her individuality.

Bharati Mukherjee's ingenious Tara Banerjee Cartwright is portrayed in *The Tiger's Daughter*. While she is young, she encounters two distinct societies: America and India. She has a good attitude toward the elderly and communicates effectively with others in general. In comparison to other Indians, she is extremely liberal. She visits the ghettos in India and also calls Calcutta home during her tour. She is completely devoted to her better half. Tara, as portrayed by Mukherjee, is a lady who successfully mixes the two civilizations. In *Jasmine*, Mukherjee portrays the character of a courageous lady who travels to many main lands to fulfill the wishes of her deceased husband. She confronts hunger, violence, abuse, assault, and murder on her journey, but she never loses sight of her main purpose. Jyoti is her real name. She then changes her name to Jasmine, then to Jase, and eventually to Jane. With each new moniker, we can witness a complete shift in her demeanour and personality. Jasmine dispatches her assailant without hesitation. In this vein, Mukherjee portrays Jasmine as a woman who, no matter what obstacles she faces, never loses sight of her true objective.

Karuna, the protagonist, is portrayed by Shobha De in *Socialite Evenings*. She writes journals to relieve herself of the monotony of everyday life. Her name and acclaim grow as her journals become more effective. She achieves celebrity status and prepares a television series. This book portrays a woman who is imprisoned in her daily routine in a very effective way. De portrays Aasha Rani in *Starry Nights*, who has fought for a long time to become a heroine in the Indian film industry. Her mother urges her to make blue films in order to gain recognition in the entertainment industry. Her sweetheart then extorts money from

her because of her pornography star status. She, too, has a beef with a feature writer. She finally puts an end to it all. She is a young lady with a low moral compass who will take any route to the top. Amrita Aggarwal, a stunning young supermodel, is featured in *Odd Obsession*. Her majesty is the talk of the town. She encounters a strange lady named MeenakshiIyengar. They establish a lesbian bond between them. De depicts the images of ladies affiliated with the Lesbian relationship with the utmost realism. Maya, a charming Calcutta-based young lady, is eager to get away from her mundane normal existence and achieve brilliance in Mumbai in *Qualms*. After her marriage, she relocates to Mumbai. Maya is irritated by her better half's stern or moderate nature. In Mumbai, she is beginning to feel despondent. She seeks solace in her next-door neighbour, but he deceives her. De paints an excellent picture of a young lady enchanted by the existence of Mumbai.

*The Thousand Faces of Night*, Githa Hariharan's first novel, depicts the personality of Devi, Sita's daughter. Devi returns to Madras from America to live with her mother. Devi has a hard time changing since she feels forced to change her radical beliefs. When she visits India, her fantasy of visiting America comes to an end. Sita, her mother, generally supports her. Devi finds a buddy in Mayamma, the house's longtime family worker. Devi exemplifies the modern educated lady in general, although she must deal with disappointment, as well as forlornness and estrangement. Devi must also be a good wife and mother. Finally returns, but only after experiencing the world to its greatest extent, which meant nothing to her. According to K. G. Maheshwari:

*The Thousand Faces of Night* is a story about three women, Sita, Devi, and Mayamma, who walked on a tightrope and strove for balance and a means of endurance that they might devise for themselves.

*The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy depicts three generations of women who struggle to survive in a male-dominated society. Mammachi, a regular housewife, addresses the original. She bears it as if she were a caged bird in the hands of her better half. Amu deals with the age after that. She also had a lot of encounters with her significant other, such as her mother. In any case, she valiantly fights and emerges from her married life to preserve her moral qualities and dignity. Rahel, who continues to live a wholly insubordinate existence, addresses the third period. Her dreadful, permanent memories obliterate her life completely, but she manages to get by somehow. Her expulsion from school had no effect on her. Following this line of thought, each of *The God of Small Things*' three major female characters portrays women whose voices are silenced in a male-dominated world. *The God of Small Things*, as Rashmi Rajpal puts it:

It is commonly referred to as the story of Baby Kochamma, Mammachi, Ammu, and Rahel's hardships. They all had different experiences. In a country like India, where the patriarchal structure is quite strong, women struggle intellectually, physically, and emotionally.

Jhumpa Lahiri is a well-known Indian diasporic author who writes in English. She portrays the personality of Ashima, a nineteen-year-old young lady from Calcutta, in *The Namesake*. Ashok Ganguli is her

husband. They relocate to the United States after their marriage. Ashima makes a valiant effort to preserve their own culture. She is a common immigrant woman who wishes to preserve the virtues of her own country. Jhumpa Lahiri, like Ashima, has featured images of women remembering their immigrant status and changing with dejection and distance in the majority of her writings.

We see a rich cosmic system of urban working-class girls in Manju Kapur's writings who need to question society and male-centric methodology. She portrays the personality of Virmati, a vigilant young lady who requires her own room, in her very first original *Difficult Daughters*. She needs to focus even more. Shakuntala, her cousin, is her ideal. She has to imitate her. Despite this, she weds her favoured partner, who is now a married man, in order to achieve opportunity and control over her life. Her situation worsens after she marries. As a subsequent spouse, she moves into her in-laws' home. Reena Mitra declares correctly:

Unfortunately, the self-assured and resolute Virmati never blooms indefinitely Nisha is her third ingenious Home. Nina is introduced in *The Immigrant*. Shagun and Ishita are the protagonists of her most recent novel, *Custody*. This vast percentage of her heroes are married and educated. With a middle-class family, everyone has a place. In her works, Manju Kapur has included a lot of beautiful photos of women.

In her works, Kamala Markandaya has featured a variety of female figures. She has introduced two types of ladies in her novel *Nectar in a Sieve*, one common and the other, in some way or another, insubordinate. Rukmani bears everything that comes her way, but her tiny kid Ira rejects the traditional norm, but not fully, and sells her body for her loved ones. According to A. V. Krishna Rao:

Rukmani's peaceful acceptance of the truth is more in line with an Indian lady's practice.

Despite the fact that Nayantara Sahgal exposes the political elite in her works, she has also presented countless stunning images of women. Her first original, *A Time to Be Happy*, paints a realistic image of Kusum's Indian traits. Sehgal is deeply concerned, both as a woman author and as a human, with the need for women to have opportunities and to become more aware of themselves as individuals. Apart from Kusum, Nayantara Sahgal has also portrayed important female characters such as Rashmi, Nita, and Maya. Amrita is a sophisticated Bengali young girl in Ruth Praver Jhabvala's first novel, *To Whom She Will*. Jhabvala's image of Amrita shows a young Indian lady who isn't conventional or constrained by tradition. In this book, Amrita is introduced as a formidable expert on insurrection. One more clever idea from her Nimmi is depicted in *The Nature of Passion* as an advanced little girl who believes wholeheartedly in women's liberty, going to clubs, playing tennis, keeping flowing hair, dating, dressing brilliantly, and attending talks on English Romantic writers. As a result, Jhabvala paints a portrait of an ali-condemned young Indian lady.

## **2. Conclusion**

As a result, these photographs of Indian women introduced by Indian women designers indicate that Indian womanhood is at a crossroads. A growing number of female essayists are challenging the status quo. They

aren't satisfied with 'roti, kapda, and makaan.' Something else is required. The investigation of the ladylike mentality is really important. To comprehend female society, one must evaluate their deepest longings, perspective, and distinctiveness in the correct soul. Indian men, in order to create an exclusive community of individuals, must understand the value of fair sex. It should not be assumed that women should be granted a higher status than men. It is necessary to remove the orientation bias and provide them with equal opportunities and freedoms to succeed.

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