
CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN WOMEN TO ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Women authors from India have paved a new path for the country's literary canon. By challenging the long-held masculine perspective, they have left an indelible influence on English writing. There has been a shift in perspective among modern women. Men have been directing their sexist comments against women for centuries. Myths, tales, traditions, and history give voice to all the negative perspectives. If a guy doesn't have a woman in his life, it's like he's a flower without scent, a ship without a rudder, or a body without soul. A woman is the backbone of her household. A male and female expression of congratulations. Women are proving their mettle in every profession, often outperforming males. Women are no longer men's marionettes. They're just as effective as guys.

It is Indian women authors who most often address issues of male ego and female independence. Women writers often use their work as a way to protest male power. Women authors in India write on the cruelty, pain, and hopelessness they experienced living in a patriarchal culture. Many of the works represent a rebellion against the constraints that society imposed on women. Arundhati Roy, Geeta Mehta, and many more are just a few of the many passionate women authors that India's English literature has produced. All of these women authors are well-known for the strong opinions they expressed in their works. Their work has shaped the experience of women in English literature and beyond. To sum up, we may say that the protagonists of their stories are women who are marginalized by male-dominated culture. As a result, it's hard to fault them for their overall contribution.

Keywords: Indian women writers, Indian Literature, Indian Classical Literature, English Novels, Ivory Towers.

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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. 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, 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 Despande'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

constructs, they are more likely to band together with other women to fight for change. The 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.

The Rebel Feminine: Roots and Shadows follows a young lady who breaks away from her conventional and authoritarian joint family. Indu ran away from home at a young age to pursue her education in a major city. She is now a successful journalist and is happily married to the man of her dreams. However, she has come to the conclusion that her independence is illusory. To fit in with the "clever young set" of the city, Dr. Pooja Goel: The Function of Indian Women Authors in the Levitation of English Literature rejects the traditional values of rural life. When Indu's childless aunt receives a large inheritance, she moves back in with her family after an absence of twelve years. As the protagonist assumes control of her family's heritage, she learns to appreciate the fortitude of the villagers she previously had written off as feeble. According to G. S. Amur, "women fight, in the framework of modern Indian culture, to identify and keep her identity as wife, mother, and most important of all, as human being was Shashi Deshpande's primary concern as a creative writer," and this preoccupation is evident in all of Deshpande's significant works.

One of the most influential modern Indian authors writing in English is Anita Desai. She prioritizes internal processes above external ones like doing things and learning new things. Relationships between men and women have been shown as situational by Desai. Most of her first works focus on the dynamics between male protagonists and female protagonists. She wrote mostly on contemporary women's plight in heteronormative Western culture and the devastation that may occur at the altar. In contemporary Indian English writing, Anita Desai is often regarded as the forerunner of the psychological novel. Her skill in bringing her characters to life is a defining feature of her work. She delves deep into the psyches of women and displays their responses.

Maya is unable to communicate her feelings to her husband Gautama in "Cry the Peacock," Desai's debut book. Anita Desai has used a female protagonist in an effort to reveal the postmodern era's fundamental reality. Maya had a difficult time adjusting to her new life with her older husband Gautama and their little son in a culture where men predominated. H. M. Williams's "Cry the Peacock" purports to be an introspective monologue detailing the terrible

mental collapse of a young Indian woman named Maya. The book "Cry the Peacock" is about Maya's cry for love and romance at her loveless wedding with Gautama, and it's set in a family drama that focuses mostly on the issue of mental disease between the husband and wife. Anna Lowry Weir, a brilliant critic, correctly interprets Maya's character in the context of the male-female dynamic as reflected in Indian ethos and culture. According to the critic's analysis, Maya is an Indian and her disoriented ideas nevertheless retain an Indian quality. She is evocative of the Indian climate, vegetation, and animals, as well as Indian mythology and religion.

As a serious Indian English woman writer, Anita Nair has written on many various elements of women's lives, notably those of middle-class women. She considers herself a storyteller and author of literary fiction who works to combine literature and narrative from a non-feminist, universalist perspective. As Elaine Showalter puts it, "it was through the movement for the liberation of women that we began to draw links between our own jobs and our own lives, and to recognize the disparities in the identifications as well as ambitions that had drew us, along with countless other women, to the research and teaching of writing" (Showalter). Feminism had the ferocious immediacy of a revelation or a tremendous awakening when it addressed our life and the literature we had encountered.

Fundamental Feminism in Literature: The book 'Ladies Coupe' is a striking depiction of the female psyche. It focuses on problems that pose basic challenges that not only undermine the intellectual foundation of men's patriarchal position in conventional society but also suggest the possibility of an alternate reality. To rephrase, the book raises the topic of whether Indian women, as a representation of all women living under oppressive and patriarchal system, should be limited to roles of spouses and mothers when it comes to cultural resistance. In this society, a woman's only purpose is to have children, regardless of the woman herself or her own wants and requirements.

The 45-year-old 'spinster,' daughter, sister, aunt, and only breadwinner for her family following the loss of her father is the Brahman heroine Akhila, whose life has been robbed from her without her will. She becomes weary of playing all these roles and chooses to take a train trip away from home and her obligations, a trip that will transform her into a new person. In little ways, she strives to alter her family and her life. Neither her ambitions nor her fantasies can be made actual without her freedom. Akhila longs for freedom and distance now that she is a widow without a husband, children, or a house. She embarks on her adventure hungry for new experiences and a want to be fulfilled.

Among Indian women who write novels in English, Kamala Markandaya stands out. After World War II, she was considered "indisputably the most outstanding" ⁹ Indian figure of her time. "the first significant woman author to enhance Indian literature in English was Kamala Markandeya," as noted by Indira Nityanandam. ¹⁰ She has done extensive research on Indian women and discovered that their femininity and philosophy on life have remained mostly unchanged after independence. In "A Silence of Desire," her third and, according to Iyengar, "most ambitious novel," she fictionally depicts how Indian women have absorbed the act of reducing and hiding their personal preferences for the sake of their membership of the societal structures of marriage and family.

As Amar Nath Prasad puts it, "A Silence of Desire" is built around "the layers of the spiritual truth and mystic vision of India." ¹² Dandekar's family life, which had previously been quite peaceful, experiences a crisis. He discovers that his wife has been secretly seeing someone else. Therefore, he starts to wonder whether his wife is faithful to him. He starts snooping around and discovers that she is routinely seeing a god-man. He thinks his wife is having an affair with the god-man. After discovering the fact that she has a tumor in her womb, he becomes a devoted follower of the god-man in the hope that she will be treated via spiritualism. Therefore, she had rejected the doctor's recommendation that she undergo surgery to remove the tumor.

The Marceline Perspective: Dandekar tries desperately to convince his wife to get surgery, but to no avail. He realizes that the only way to free his wife from her faith that the god-man alone can cure her of the tumor infection is to permanently exile the god-man from the town. He finally turns to the collector for aid, and using his influence, the collector has the god-man banished from the town, and his wife agrees to have the procedure done. Dandekar's happiness at having saved his family from ruin by saving his wife not just from the tumor but also from the blind faith of spiritualism serves as a satisfying conclusion to the story. Through the stories of the Dandekar and Sarojini marriage, "A Silence of Desire" author Kamala Markandaya aims to highlight how man continues to gain advantage over woman as well as how woman were unable to become autonomous even after the country had won freedom.

Another author who has shown the plight of women marginalized by patriarchal sexism is Nayanthara Sehgal. In her works, she advocates for a future in which women's strengths are recognized on par with men's. The Indian womanhood portrayed in her novel. The majority of her novel's protagonists are women. Women's liberation is a topic of her commentary. Her dissatisfaction with her marriage has further amplified her feminist message. From "A Time to be Happy" (1957) through "Mistaken Identity" (1988), Saghal's female protagonists have always been on a quest for independence. The role of motherhood is another subject of analysis and evaluation. The greater conversation provides context for Saghal's depiction of parenting. She is especially interested in how cultural norms affect women.

Tacking Complex Issues: Women authors in India are keeping pace with the rest of the world by taking bold, definite steps ahead. We see them opening fully and radiating their own aromas. They are well-known for the fresh ideas, adaptability, and authentic taste of their native soil that they bring to their creations. Anglicized books by contemporary women authors are popular among readers. Both contemporary and enduring societal problems are addressed in their stories, especially as they pertain to women. Sensuality, servitude, subordination, and social difficulties have all been tackled head-on by our female authors. They've managed things sensibly, respecting our Indian customs but also realizing there's more to be had. Women authors from India are no longer just India's intellectual property. Their creative output and artistic expression are universal. The books written by Indian women writers are read with specific expectations by the majority of Indian readers, both male and female. They scan articles in search of authentically Indian content. Women authors in India are the only ones who can write about feminism in a manner that makes sense to Indian readers. Women authors in India are flourishing and making significant contributions to the field.

Women authors had to work hard in a patriarchal environment to expose the mechanisms of sexism and racism. As a result of these preconceived notions, the contributions of Indian women authors have been marginalized. One of the first things these women authors undertook to combat the cultural a mind set in men and women was to structure their works in a more varied manner. These women authors also tackled the tricky subject of "Style in language." Jane Austin created a style of writing that is ideal for the employment of women authors since it is at once natural, graceful, and respectable. Writing by women no longer required the use of balanced and structured sentences like those employed by males.

The bulk of works by Indian women authors focus on the plight of dissatisfied housewives and issues about the pervasive old patriarchal order. Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and Arundathi Roy all embody strong female protagonists who challenge traditional gender roles and establish their own unique identities. They want to make their own decisions in life. They are brave, powerful, and self-reliant individuals. They want to enjoy life without restraint. These novelists are attempting to challenge patriarchal structures that keep women in subservient roles.

CONCLUSION

Women's lives traditional literary works serve as fuel for thought and promote imagination and creativity, and literature not only portrays reality but also contributes to it via depictions of the thinking patterns and social standards common in society. The modern lady understands the complexity of human nature. They are aware that a person's outward appearance does not reveal all about them. The vast oral heritage of myths, stories, songs, and fables was mostly preserved by women. Poetry and play were developed from these tales as literacy spread across society. The past two decades have seen a remarkable proliferation of female Indian authors working in English, with works by these authors seeing widespread publication in India and beyond. The writers, most of whom are middle-class white women educated in the West, express their frustration with the oppression of traditional Hindu women of higher castes and classes through their works.

There is an equal amount of value placed on women's as men's writing. In terms of quality and selection, it has entered the modern era. As a result, women authors deserve much of the praise and recognition due to them. They explore a wide range of topics and approaches, including questions of social class, gender, and personal history and identity. As a result, Indian women authors have made significant strides in the field of the Indian novel written in English.

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