

## LIBERATED WOMEN

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Women have sensibility. With this they try to understand their self. They want to maintain a status of their own. Suffering and loneliness atrophy them. They want to be individuals with independent bent of mind, which liberates them from unwanted sufferings and sentimentality.

**Key words:** atrophy, *con amore*, depredated, *comme il faut*, walter mitty homme-serieux, mitzwah, figos, pesky, nullification, frounce, nexus

*When I heard someone remark "we never allow our daughter to go out" or "I can't do that, my husband would not like it", it sounded a very peculiar, alien jargon. As if, I thought, women were property, not persons.*

Nyantara Sahgal

Women writers in India try to present the dilemma of women in recent times, especially in urban world. These writers, through their writing, show the awareness of self-fulfilment among women in society. As a result, they try to reject traditional norms and social set up without any mental reservations. They become liberated and prove to be unconventional. Indian women writers like Nayantara Sahgal, Shahi Deshpande or Shobha De portray women as oppressed and suppressed. These horrifying experiences push them to come out of the bondage and try to stand on their own leg. Their blubbling life without *con amore* forces them to come out of their suffering with *deprecation*. Men prove to be *depredated* when they become non - *synallagmatic*. As a result, women fight against established order, resulting divorce or alienation between the spouses. The probing of the mind of the protagonist by these women writers is based on female psyche.

Suffering and loneliness become part of their life and feel that life is not in its *comme il faut*. The protagonists of Indian women writers are not willing to be *deglutition*. Rather, they wish to be individuals with independent frame of mind to the very end. These writers also portray 'a new morality' - a morality which is not confined to physical chastity. This paper tends to analyse how women try to come out of their *ringki dingki* in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, Shahi Deshpande and Shobha De.

The protagonist of these women writers feel that they should try to understand and realize themselves. They try to prove not to be a toy or an object of lust. They wish to be countervail to men. If they are not treated properly by the so called *homme-serieux* in society, they revert to *succussation*. The *heuristic* experience in them proves to be 'lack of holistic'.

Nayantara Sahgal, in her novel *Strom In Chandigarh*, portrays the protagonists as individuals. Vishal Dubey-Leela, Inder-Saroj and Jit-Mara are married young couples in this novel. But their married life is misyoked. Their marriage is likely to fall because of the so-

called compulsions of matrimony. Saroj, young heroine, is caparisoned with freedom. She is brought up in a liberal atmosphere. At the time of her marriage, she expects equality. Her pre-marital affair and her motto of equality prove to be her marriage, a *nocuous* one. Inder, her husband finds it very difficult to swallow Saroj's pre-marital affair. As a result, he tries to exploit her *innocuousness* without *schrecklich*. She longs for friendship, tenderness and frankness from him. But, Inder always considers her pre-marital affairs and thought of equality as a serious moral laps and lack of *mitzwah*. Saroj, like a *Walter Mitty*, longs for communication. When Inder becomes non communicative, life has become not only fulminated coupled with commination. She considers Vishal Dubey, her sister's husband, to be considerate. Out of this, she tells Vishal Dubey about her plight frankly in the following manner.

Inder always shows *figos* in the form of rebuking, torturing or abusing Saroj. It is ironical that Inder torments Saroj for her pre-marital relationship but his extra marital relationship is not *pesky* to him. Inder's indifference brings Saroj about value of freedom. This tendency is partially inculcated by Vishal Dubey, when he says,

*Life, Dubey told her, was bigger than any system. Life could remould or break the system that lacked righteousness and reason. It was life's precious obligation to rebel, and humanity's right to be free, to choose from the best light it could see, not necessarily the long-accepted light.*

(P 193)

Vishal Dubey's advice becomes a sort of *billy - O* on her mind and starts refusing to listen to Inder since then. This makes others to feel that she has become a rebel and has understood the truth of failure in her life. Saroj's departure from her husband is a sort of move towards personal freedom. She tells frankly this in the following manner, "There was only one way to live, without pretence. It would be the ultimate healing balm to the lonely spaces of the spirit, beyond which there would be no darkness". ( P 19). Marian, the protagonist in *The Edible Women* by Margret Atwood, also shows the same spirit Marian does not wish to be a commodity. She tells Peter her quest for freedom in the following words:

*You've been trying to destroy me, haven't you...You've been trying to assimilate me. But I've made you a substitute, something you'll like much better. This is what you really wanted along, isn't it? I'll get you a fork.*

(P 301)

It is clear that women they try to come out of emptiness of their life and such tendency is seen in the case of Saroj or Marian. Sure, they are sincerely striving for *nullification* of emotional void.

Like Nayantara Saghal, Shahi Deshpande also brings out the male oppression in her novel. Shahi Deshpande, through her novels, clearly shows that protagonists are treated as *coffle*. When marriage is treated as mosaic, it becomes a shattered one. The protagonists of Shahi Deshpande try to save them from *deprehension* out of their apprehension. In *That*

*Long Silence*, Jaya-Mohan relationship makes the reader to decry. In fact, the relationship is in its *decrecendo*. The masculine attitude to control women is seen in this novel, when Mohan tries to influence Jaya's writing career. The following boastful words of Mohan expresses this when he says, "From the very beginning I've allowed you to write, I've encouraged you, I was proud of you". ( P 17 ). It is clear that Mohan feels Jaya's writings as "extinction of his own status" ( P 17).

When Jaya sees this ego on Mohan, she decides to quit. His male supremacy is further seen when he says, " I am the centre of the world" ( P 17), which is responsible for Jaya's *arret* to quit her world of writing. This should not be seen as submission to Mohan. In fact, it has to be treated as her own decision. She is not for *frottage*. This is not out of fear or out of *gainsay*. She wants to show that women out of splurge are willing to show their leam with a view to attain *gaudeamus igitur*. When there is a clash between them in their nuptial relationship, she knows pretty well the people around, her including her family members are willing to witness the *gaudium certaminis*. She is not for *frushing* of her life, but only for *fruition* of life. Quitting the realm of writing is not to *frounce* but to fulgurate her life. This is to be viewed as *fidus et audax* decision.

Shobha De's Karuna, in *Socilite Evening*, proves to be determined protagonist. In this novel, Shobha De tries to explore the psyche of Karuna and her problems. The writer herself puts this in the following words, 'I did write with a great deal of empathy toward women. Without waving the feminist flag, I feel very strongly about the women's situation'.

Karuna was born in a remote village in Maharashtra; she comes to Bombay as a young college girl. Anjali, a middle aged sophisticated, is her mentor. She only introduces her into the world of fashion, designing and advertising. Karuna's parents do not approve her friendship with Anjali. From her childhood she was problem to her parents and to her teachers. She visits US, which gives her 'sense of superiority and assertiveness'. Her break up with Bunty, a loving and caring companion for four years, came when she discovered his 'ordinariness'. She is married to Shetti, and he too proves to be an average Indian husband, who is "unexciting, uninspiring, and untutored. He was not made for introspection" (P 65).

It is clear that marriage is like 'a skin allergy' to her. Further, she considers marital life has 'an exhausted generation of wives with no dreams left'. Karuna's frequent clash with her husband paves way for her '*nexus*' with Krish, a hot blooded Bengali. They have affair for three years which has lasted for three years. She develops a phobia, and in it she feels all her predicament is due to 'divine justice' ( P 224). Karuna's desire to have a job, which comes out of her independent thinking. She confesses that she is 'sucked into a ruthless world without scruples'. Karuna develops relationship with Ranbir Roy, a reporter from Washington Times. He invites Karuna to go with him to Washington as an assistant, but his efforts to involve Karuna in a project involving, 'the status of urban Indian women - an Indira Gandhi angle', failed to draw her out into any intimate relationship. So he gives suggestion to her that she can bring out the life of her own story and this pushes her to sit before her personal computer. She is a modern new Indian woman with independent

thinking. She defies the conventional world including the dress, manners and her ability to keep away from devouring men, who have leering expressions.

Thus, Indian women writers are compelled to justify fears, tension, conflicts and observations through their protagonists. Though these protagonists are women belonging to Indian society, they try to subvert dogmas which are prevalent in society. These writers focus on search for sexual freedom and self realization. These tendencies made the protagonists of Nayantara Saghil, Shahi Deshpande and Shobha De to be a liberated one. They show the sufferings of their protagonist in their married life, and how they decide to come out of suffocating bondage. The protagonists of Nayantara Saghil, Shahi Deshpande and Shobha De shows that they are not mere sex object, but an individual in their own life. For this, they try to retain selfhood try to come out of the loveless marriage which proves to be a suffocating one.

Thus, the writers chosen for topic clearly shows their marriage without emotional involvement, love without respect and sex without passion are the reasons for the failed marriages in their novels still, they struggle to change this existing predicament and try to bring new order, where they are not ready to compromise with pretensions, hypocrisy or dual morality.

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