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REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IMAGES IN INDIAN ENGLISH
WOMEN NOVELISTS

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Abstract

In Indian English Literature, a stride change comes to be seen in the image of woman from ancient to Modern period. In early writings of women in Indian English literature, women are shown downtrodden, humble and come to see adapting stereotypical role in the society. But, in postcolonial literature a stride change comes to be seen in the projection of women images by women writers as it comes to be seen in the writings of Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Githa Hariharan, Shobha De, Manju Kapure, and Mrinal Pande etc. It seems that it might be feminists try to give practice to the Indian society to accept women as human.

Key Words- *Image, Postcolonial, Feminists, Feminism Stereotypical*

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Indian English Literature has varied changes from Vedic to Modern period. As Indian Literature is a part of South Asian colonial literature, one can find many aspects of different territories like marginality, subaltern, and women's problem focused as the overpowering issues of the society. Women's problem is the most focused and concentrated issue in modern literature. As we all are aware that Women's subordination is a Historical fact; many Indian women novelists have tried to represent it through their wide writings in order to justify various issues such as femininity, masculinity, patriarchy, and women's status in India. The women writers like Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, Anita Nair, Githa Hariharan, Mrinal Pande, and Shobha De all they have a strong focus on women and their various problems. Their focus is on gender issue; as they wanted to transcend the theme 'Feminism' into the society in order to create equal status of women in the country like India, where patriarchy is still existed.

Though, we Indian people have found a stride change in the image of woman from ancient period, we could not wipe out the influence of patriarchal set up thoroughly from the society. In order to imply the solution over the problem, Indian women novelists never suggest the isolating role of women by encouraging them to go away from the community, rather they suggest going equally with the help of male counterpart in order to create a good society. They never tried to adapt fully the angle of western feminists as they know the fact that Indian context is totally different than the western society. They became quite successful to define the concept like 'Indian Feminism', which had no more significance before. Their writing traces the proper definition of feminism and its need to imply it into the Indian society. It also traces women's changed images in to the changed context of India. India was a colonial country

and so it reflects many colonial aspects. As feminism and colonialism are co-parallel things, it becomes quite necessary to find out an emerging image of woman in post-colonial Indian English Literature. So, as per the attempt to go to the topic, here, along with different angles and attitudes towards feminism; I am going to present the image of woman in Post-colonial Indian English women novelists. Before, in the writing of women novelists like Anita Desai, Nayantara Sehagal, and Shashi Deshpande, we come to see the women images in humble, polite, obedient, and insignificant manner. But, the situation is totally different in today's literature as we come to see the dashing, liberal and self-decisive image of woman. Shobha De's *Second Thought*, Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughter's*, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*, Mrinal Pande's *Daughter's Daughter*, and Githa Hariharan's *Thousand Faces of Night* all reflects the changed image of woman in Indian changed scenario.

The women in today's literature never like to accept the stereotypical role as they found them self-identified and self-decisive. The young women protagonists like Akhila, Maya, Devi, and Ammu are shown as the rebellious characters, who wanted to find out their own identity by rebelling against the patriarchal set up of India. Though many of them have failed to make their life happy; they all have the courage to break the boundaries. At least they tried to go against the tradition. Many women protagonists like Tinu's mother, Kasturi, and Mayamma are shown as the carriers of the stereotypical roles. They neither tried to fight against traditions nor tried to break boundaries. Moreover, they like to react mutely. Their mute resistance shows women's sufferings in Indian cultural scenario and thus, again focused on the patriarchal set up of India. Women are shown in different roles such as mother, wife, sister, grandmother and beloved. They all are shown obeying their role very honestly. As a mother Mayamma, Tinu's mother, Kasturi all have the same feelings towards their son's and daughter's. The term 'motherhood' is presented very aptly concerning the Indian scenario. As a wife Devi, Ammu, and Maya suffered from the same agony and found themselves trapped in the patriarchal set up. In reaction, they tried to fight against the traditional norms, which make them quite different than the ordinary women in the novel. Thus, through the

message of making women strong by finding their own identity; women novelists tried their best to go to the equal status of women in India. Their attempt to make women think about themselves and to think over their problems becomes quite successful in the writings of the postcolonial women novelists in India. Even different territories like lesbian relationships and strong female bonding also comes to be seen in their writings as it comes to see in the novel 'Ladies Coupe' of Anita Nair. In female bonding, the various relationships like mother-daughter; grand-mother-grand-daughter; and female-female relationship are shown in a very skilful way as it helps one to understand the whole psyche of women.

Women's various roles and women's whole study considering every angle of their lives makes Indian women novelists successful projecting the appropriate image of Indian woman in Indian context. In early Indian English writings the terms like womanhood and motherhood were not focused as much as in today's writings. Thus by stressing the terms, postcolonial Indian English women novelists make them capable showing women's real sufferings and suffocation. Though it is quite impossible to wipe out the patriarchy thoroughly from Indian society; the writing seems quite helpful to further process. Even, though the stands of morality are different for men and women; by projecting women's casual attitude towards the things like divorce, lesbian relationships, and extramarital relationships, to some extent, Indian English women novelists judged women equally with the male counterpart. As all we know that the above things were once only the male's monopoly; here the novelists tried to challenge male's monopoly by projecting women in that way. The stride change in the writings of Indian women writers is really a grand starting in Indian English literature. Let's hope for the good and see whether the feminism has transcended into the Indian society or not.

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