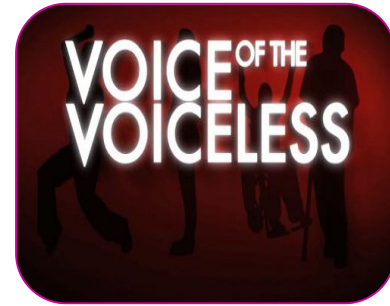


**THE VOICE OF VOICELESS - THE RISE OF INDIAN WOMEN****WRITERS****Pavani Gonnuri**

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**ABSTRACT :**

*Literature can influence society in a way that impacts the person, who is an active participant of change. Women are proved that they are capable of doing anything which is obvious through their writings. The perceptions of women are changing towards the society which is noticeable through the gradual transformation of their themes they are representing. These themes have been travelling from personal psychological turmoil to woman in a broad sense and today they are in position to question and fight against the sensitive social issues of contemporary India. Majority of women writers depict the psychological suffering and oppressed lives of women through their fiction, the writers outstretched themselves from regional to universal level to stress on the universal aspects of colonization, imperialism, condition of subalter. Non-fictional works are the great sources to understand the prevailing social conditions of the day, In general, we say women positions in India getting better by looking at the very few women who succeed but the condition of ordinary women is still in pitiable condition in a typical Indian womanhood rapt in between socio-cultural factors disseminated by patriarchal dominance. The journey of Indian women writers from takeoff to triumph has started glaring.*

**KEYWORDS :** *Literature , personal psychological turmoil , women writers.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The emotional spaces created by the emotional connection between people, which aims and broadly envisaged as interrogation of feelings and impact on various spatial and social contexts and atmosphere. Literature is created out of acquaintance of life. Any rational writer focuses and brings out the dark side and cruder aspects of everyday life of a common man. To know the life at its extent, one should be aware not of only the brighter side but also of squalid surface of the life. Literature enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become. Says C. S. Lewis As said by Judith Caesar, an English professor at the American University of Sharjah (AUS) "Literature gives a clear preview of human experiences and connects at all the levels of human existence, it is a true representation of human feelings" to be a mirror of society. By reading narratives, we can empathize and understand others. Literature is thought provoking; it allows us to raise questions and gives us a deeper understanding of issues and situations. (CLDAS: 20)

As every aspect of human movement started by men, based on their own perceptions, the art of writing is a paradigm of same views of male standards, which gradually inhabit the women to the clutches without even giving a hint of suspicion. The earlier works by women are underestimated and criticized by men at an extent even some of them were banned. Therefore it took many decades to women to come out with their own writings. The early women writers came up with their writings were elite educated class whose works were cut off from the reality as it was. Indian Women writing has been under gone drastic changes, which is evident through the gradual transformation of their themes, which are obviously

representation of their perceptions. Though writings of Indian women have been encountered severe changes from era to era, their writings have been within the circumference of Indian societal norms and moral commitments. Women from different walks of life, ranging from simple housewives to women in the fashion field also started writing prose especially autobiographies. Women writers dealt with so many aspects through their works, ranging from their own personal lives to taking part in Independence struggle during colonial rule and also about the social evils of respective periods. One of the first famous women writers of India is Sarojini Naidu, She has been considered as one of the most noted orators. Her speeches have been collected in *Speeches and Writings* (1914) by Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. He puts it as "Her extraordinary oratory...poured through her like music, silver shot with gold, cataracting from summits of sheer inspiration"(IWE:215)

One can imagine its quality through the process of its survival. Their writings are varied in nature and attempted to portray several issues based on their emotional spaces. Though the suppression of women is identified as the major cause behind their writings, the early women writers stressed on various themes of society like quest for identity, loneliness, alienation, colonialism etc. Writers of Pre-Independence era were Sarojini Naidu, Cornelia Sorabji, and Toru Dutt mostly written poetry touching various issues related to society in general, are the path finder's and inspire the young men and women writers of future generations. Some of the Toru Dutt 's poems, Sarojini's, Harin's Have been highly placed .By good English critics, and I don't think we need be more queasy than English man themselves ... if first class excludes everything inferior to Shakespeare and Milton, that is another matter. I think, as time goes on, people will become more and more polyglot and these mental barriers will begin to disappear (IWE: 6)

There were many prose works written on woman issues and even they written many Biographies and Autobiographies like Maharani Brinda's *The Story of an Indian Princess*(1953), Neera Desai's *Women in Modern India*(1957), Kamala Das's *My Story* (1976) and so on. The emergence of new literary genre Novel during Post-Independence era created a lot of scope for Indian Women writers to articulate their own suffering. Though they are regionally and linguistically vary, they merged together on the same grounds of nationalism and womanism.

Women writers have being presenting themselves as social reformers from the time they began writing. Though they narrow down to personal issues during post independence era, they initiated writing to reorganize the social order. They have taken part in the national and universal issues and tried to explore and manifest the Indian reality. Non-fictional works are the great sources to understand the prevailing social conditions of the day, on which earlier women emphasised more. e.g. *Mrs. Sarojini Naidu: The Life Sketch of Her Life and an Appreciation of her Works* (1914) by G. A. Natsan, *The Autobiography of an Indian Princess* (1921) by Sunity Devi, the Maharani of coach Bihar, Isavani, a Khoja Muslim, who had written about her girlhood and youth in *The Brocaded Sari* (1946), Nayanatara Sahgal's is a Indian novelist and Journalist authored for *Prison and Chocolate Cake* (1954), *From Fear Set Fire* (1961) are both studies of Nehru's family. Her fiction *A Situation in New Delhi* (1977) is the evidence of change of idealism in begging of Independence and decline of morality in Post Nehru India and *Relationship, Extracts from a Correspondence* (1994) and *Point of View: A Personal Response to Life, Literature, and Politics* (1997) are her non fictional works.

Bharati Mukherjee's *The Sorrow and The Terror: the Legacy of the Air India Tragedy* (1987) describes the bombing and crash of Air India, it touches even Hindu-Sikh relationship, Shakuntala Narasimhan's *Sati: A Study of Widow Burning in India* (1990) describes how women are forced to burn along with the funeral pyre of husband which is been a tradition of India for many decades , Geeta Mehta's *Snakes and Ladders: View of Modern India* (1997) the collection of essays of this work explain the struggle of India to become self sufficient and to establish its' own identity after India attains independence and *Karma Cola* (1980) illustrates the impacts of westerns on Indian soil as well as on its' economic conditions, Dina Mehta's *Brides are not for Burning* (1993) describes the harassment against the women who fail to bring dowry to their respective husbands in Indian context.

There is a big list of present day activist and non-fictional women writers in India who are fighting for societal cause like Mahasweta Devi. She is an Indian social activist and writer, whose writings are known for the depiction of social issues existed in the society. Her work *Water* (1972) is a story surveys the blending of dynamics of rural poverty with the plotting of the local land lords in collusion with police and local officials. And *Aajir* is noteworthy works deal with oppression and inhumanity. Maria Aurora Couto is an Indian non-fictional writer. She is an educationalist and historian from Goa. Major themes of her works are ethnography, culture, religion and politics. Her works are *Graham Greene: On the Frontier, Politics and Religion in the Novels* (1986) is a personal exploration to understand the history of author's own community and the gradual change from time of advent of Portuguese into Goa, *Ethnography of Goa, Daman and Diu* (2008) etc.

Shoba De is a columnist and novelist, known for her depiction of socialites and patriarchal hegemony. Her works lead to many controversies because of depiction of provocative, erotic and thought provoking content. *Strange Obsession* (2005), *Snap Shots* (2006), *Socialite Evening* (1989) are some of her novels. She does not accept the thought that women are slaves under men; hence she does not portray her women characters as lower than men. Arundati Roy is a social activist and known for her booker prize winning work *The God of Small Things* (1996) which is semiautobiographical in nature and is about the victimization of women in a patriarchal society. One can come across the child sexual abuse and its impact on children. She overtly discusses sex and homosexuality in this work.

Taslina Nasreen is a Bangladeshi writer, though she is Bangladeshi, she is internationally acclaimed for her work. She stresses on various themes like equality of women, secular humanism and freedom of thought. A Hindu family is prosecuted by Muslims in one her novels entitled *Lajja* (1993) is a description of communal riots aroused Bangladesh soon after Babri Masjid demolition and religious discrimination which lead to controversy and she even attacked by public after its publication. Adra Nomani is an author of two books *Standing Alone in Mecca: An American Woman's Struggle for the Soul of Islam* and *Tantrika: Traveling the Road of Divine Love*, she is a Indian- American journalist and also an activist who took part in Muslim reform and Islamic feminist movements. Sagarika Ghosh is an Indian journalist and author of two books *The Gin Drinkers* (1998) emphasises on the Metropolitan city and pub culture of urban areas. It is a post modern novel characterised with female body as a cause of literary inspiration. And *Blind Faith Worldwide* (2004). Ayesha Jalal is known for her non-fiction *The sole spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the demand for Pakistan* (1994) and *Nationalism, democracy, and development: state and politics in India* (1997). Majority of her works deal with the Muslim identities created in modern south Asia.

Dr. Monica Das's *Her Story of So Far: Tales of the Girl Child in India* (2003) draws an attention to the issues of socio- economic impact of underage marriage, bigamy and polygamy on the Human Development Index through her works and *The Other Woman* (2014). *Sex and Power: Defining History, Shaping Societies* (2008) by Rita Benerjee is a result of five years historical study of sex and sexuality in India. She is a gender activist. She is the originator of The 50 million missing campaign which works to create an awareness about the female gendercide in India. Pinki Virani's works *Aruna's Story: The True Account of Rape and its Aftermath* (1998) Telegraph says "Pinki Virani has narrated Aruna's brutalization through meticulous and persistent research. The structure of the book is notable in the way it resists sensationalism", *Once was Bombay* (2000) is described as "... a brave, outspoken, unsparing book about the decline of a city..." Urvashi Butalia. The Hindu. *Bitter Chocolate: Child Sexual Abuse in India* (1999) and *Deaf Heaven* (2006). Though she always writes by highlighting any one of the issues in her books, every book of her despite her major concern, reflects on many issues of present day society, through which she wants to create awareness among the masses. "...unwitting combination of Humbertian passion and clichés worthy of Charlotte Haze is blisteringly effective" (Albina 24)

The foregoing study reveals that many Indian women writers in English have reached a remarkable height of achievement. They have understood the techniques, tone, graft and structure and have applied them in their writings. They have chosen various themes like their male counterparts, but they have given

special prominence to the role of women. They have understood the very problems and predicaments that have come in the way of the progress of women. Their works reveal various aspects of modern women's feelings and exhibit the fully awakened feminine sensibility and feminist views. These women writers are bold, frank and have shown realistic attitude towards love, sex, lust and man-woman relationships. They have created a new tradition in the Indo-English literature. Their achievements are evidently remarkable and they have gained an outstanding place in the Indo-English literature.

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