Thematic concerns in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy.  
A Critical Study

Synopsis
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CHAPTERISATION

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Chapter I

Introduction

In practically every last trace of the written works of the globe the women writers are transcending the borders and making their presence felt. The function of women in the cutting edge expositive expression is not confined just to show. Opposite the globe the women writers have earned a notable distinction for themselves. They have effectively secured equality of women with the men in the enjoyment of rights. English being the second dialect in India the volume of Indian writing composed in English is more minor than that composed in the different territorial dialects, and compasses a humbler extend of time, having just initiated with the spread of the English language and training. However lately there has been an amazing blossoming of Indian women composing in English, the written works of this period being distributed both in India and in other parts of the world The authors are mostly western educated, middle-class women who express in their writing their discontent with the plight of upper-caste or class traditional Hindu women trapped in repressive institutions such as child-marriage, dowry, prohibitions on women's education, arranged marriages and enforced widowhood. Women writers in India are moving forward with their strong and sure strides, making headway with their solid and beyond any doubt strides matching the pace of the world. They can no longer be guaranteed as the elite property of only India. Their work and their symbolization have a place with the globe.

Bapsi Sidhwa is the finest English fiction writer from Pakistan. She deals with both the pre- and postcolonial period of the Indian subcontinent. She has written four novels in English that reflect her personal experience of the Indian subcontinent’s Partition, abuse against women, immigration to the US, and the Parsi community. She was an active women’s rights spokesperson, representing Pakistan in the Asian Women’s Congress of 1975. She has also been on the advisory committee to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Women’s Development. In 1991 she was awarded the Sitara-i-
Imtiaz, Pakistan’s highest national honor in the arts. She has also received a variety of grants and awards for her fiction, including a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1987, a New York Times Book Review Notable Book of the Year award for Cracking India in 1991, and a Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest award in 1993.

She was born in an eminent Parsi family of Karachi in 1939, soon after her birth the family shifted to Lahore. She gained her early education at home. Being a lonely child she build affection towards reading. Books were her only companion. Later she did her graduation from Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore. In 1957, she was married to Gustad Kermani, a businessman from Bombay. After her divorce from him she re-married in 1963 to Noshirwan Sidhwa. She presently lives in the US.

As Bapsi Sidhwa, Arundhati Roy has also highlighted the women issues giving equal significance to the prevalent social and political conditions in the Indian subcontinent. Arundhati Roy broke open on the literary stage with the publication of her novel THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS. Born in Kerala and based in Delhi, she made the country proud by winning the most prestigious Booker Prize in 1997. Susanna Arundhati Roy was born on 24 November 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya, India to a Keralite Syrian Christian mother and a Bengali Hindu father. She is known not only as an Indian novelist or writer but also as a social and political activist. She grew up in very similar circumstances to the children in her novel. She spent her childhood in Aymanam, in Kerala, schooling in Corpus Christi. Leaving Kerala she went to Delhi where she led a homeless life. She later studied architecture at the Delhi School of Architecture, where she met her first husband, the architect Gerard Da Cunha.

the life of Phoolan Devi. Since The God of Small Things, Roy has devoted herself mainly to nonfiction and politics, publishing two more collections of essays, as well as working for social causes. She is a spokesperson of the anti-globalization movement and a vehement critic of neo-imperialism and of the global policies of the United States. She also criticizes India's nuclear weapons policies and the approach to industrialization and rapid development as currently being practiced in India, including the Narmada Dam project and the power company Enron's activities in India. Her other acknowledged political activities are - Support for Kashmiri separatism, Sardar Sarovar Project, United States foreign policy, the War in Afghanistan, India's nuclear weaponisation, Criticism of Israel, 2001 Indian Parliament attack, The Muthanga incident, Comments on 2008 Mumbai attacks, Criticism of Sri Lanka, Views on the Naxalites and Criticism of Anna Hazare. Roy was awarded the Sydney Peace Prize in May, 2004, for her work in social campaigns and advocacy of non-violence. However, much of Arundhati’s recognition on the literary scene was achieved when she received the Booker Prize for The God of Small Things. The novel sold six million copies, and has been deciphered into forty dialects.

Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy, both are feminist writers who belong to Indian subcontinent. Quite alike and distinctively different at times they both have written about the new age woman who is aware of her rights and duties. The scriptures of both these new age writers redefine the role of modern age women.

Chapter II

Feminism in Literature

Until late Feminism was considered as an expression of anger at the unfair treatment meted out to women. It was like a declaration of war against the hostilities suffered by females. Authors told and retold the struggle of women facing the hardships, neglect and social discrimination. Their female protagonists were submissive, suffering and sacrificing lot. Women then strived to be their true selves. But feminism today is an improved version of women’s life. Her cry for rights is clearly visible in her writings.
The existential struggle of women’s is no longer confined to the emotional plane alone. It extends to materialistic front as well. The refusal to accept the wrong and the spirit to fight for equality and justice is the core of feminism now. The change in the social status of women has greatly been reflected in the writings of modern age authors. In the context of Indian subcontinent, feminism is a revolt against prevalent patriarchal social conditions. However, feminism in the literature of Indian subcontinent has recently undergone a change. Independence, freedom struggle and education has given birth to new and aware women. She is aware of the desire for liberation from mythical and social values which constrain women as well as men. The modern generation writers like Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Rama Mehta and others have portrayed this modern woman with full vitality. There is a noticeable change in the images of south Asian women from sad suffering women to optimistic and assertive. The women writers have redefined their role and have made their presence felt. Though crafted with modern outlook their fictions are equally sensitive towards the complexities of life with particular focus on the lives of women.

Sexual colonialism has been prevalent since ages. Females were treated as an object for pleasure by the rulers. Female exploitation was has been inseparable from colonialism. Much of feminist analysis concerning gendered violence has focused primarily on patriarchal systems of power, taking for granted that all women experience violence in the same way and to the same extent. Sexual violence is not new to the female society. A lot has been said about Delhi Gang Rape which evidently is a clear demonstration of extreme of violence on the female class.

The colonialism view to the rape states that rape is culturally taught behaviour and not rooted in biology. Focusing only on a gender-based analysis of oppression is insufficient, as doing so further marginalizes women, including Women of Colour, by failing to address the context through which their oppressions manifest. Another consequence of this conceptualization of Native bodies as polluted is the view that, because they are unclean, they are sexually violable and rapable. In Western culture, only the rape of clean, virginal bodies counts. The consumption of females by white masculinity remains a social and cultural reality today.
Feminism has been aptly problematized by all currently. The Gender equality is neither a state of affairs nor a list of entitlements; rather it is a discourse, a framework of meaning, filled with complexities and ambiguities. The current scenario is well exhibited by our female writers today. The protagonists of majority of written works survive all the adversities. The new age woman is well reflected by our female writers.

The feminist became conscious of their rights and duties. Their demands were no longer restricted to security from female oppressions but roused high to equality, liberty and full development of their individualities. The feminist target creating consciousness in women to encourage them redefine themselves as they aspire and not as man does. Various modern feminist writers like Shobha De, Namita Gokhle, Nayantara Sehgal, Shashi Deshpande, Kamla Das, Kamla Markandaya, Anita Desai, to name a few, write about the women of today searching for their identities. Their writings are strong statements of feminism. Feminism is a cry of women writers questioning their inferior status in the society. Gender identity is culturally conveyed through generations determining the sexual differences in the society. Gender identity is not influenced by biological aspects of science or by sociological theories. The psychology alone plays a vital role in developing gender identity and its representation in the literature. In the postcolonial Indian sub-continent the status of women was further marginalized. Women suffered dual thongs of colonialism and patriarchy. Both affected women of different cultures in different ways.

Rape, the crime of forcefully having sex with someone against their wish, has been portrayed in many works of literature. Feminist recognized rape as much more than just sexual assault; that usually involving sexual intercourse, which is initiated by one or more persons against another person without that person's consent. It’s not just a criminal act but also a moral sin. The feminist writers well projected rape motivated by an impulse to hurt the victim; rather than by sexual desire only. Indian literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is full of mythological and epic stories about venerated heroines abducted and/or violated by villainous, if not demonic hands. The capitalists treat it as their right and enjoyment of victory to enjoy the pleasure of flesh, treating women as mere body. Bapsi Sidhwa she reflects on the Partition's victims of rape. Her protagonists emerge as a survivor of this heinous act. Our feminist
writers of today have been impartial in discussing violence against male and children. The flashbacks and nightmares of the rape combined with snippets of images from an unnatural childhood. Not following of Love Laws of the society is often considered as rape. The misery and pain of a rape victim cannot be written with adequate feelings. It’s a matter of death of dignity for the victim. Laws have to be reformed. But, legal reforms alone cannot reduce the extent of sexual assault. The struggle against racism must go hands in hands with social and legal justice for the rape victims of all classes.

Chapter III

Autobiographical impacts

Fiction is also more or less a reflection of one’s experience in life. One has to feel love to write about love as one needs to experience pain to write about deceits. Paramount accreditation is acclaimed to the writings that are written from the core of heart.

Bapsi Sidhwa, childhood was very much identical to Lenny’s life in Cracking India. Seeing and experiencing a lot at a tender age Bapsi had matured early and so have her characters of childhood. Arundhati Roy’s childhood was very much identical to the children Rahel and Esthappen of her novel. Both our novelists have used child narratives very often in their writings. They want to share with readers their childhood experiences that give a personalized autobiographical dimension to their writings.

Seeking for self has been exhibited as a search for identifying themselves with the life of women in the Indian subcontinent. Bapsi wrote about her aspirations and desires, her experiences and her emotions. Her inhibitions vent through her writings. She shared her life with her readers. An in-depth study of Arundhati Roy’s novels brings into view her feminist aptitude. Through her novel she gives vent to her desire of establishing an identity that breaks open from all the discrimination observed in the society.

Sidhwa first had written a couple of brief articles about the appeal of the Karakoram hills. Her novels functions as a record of history. History telling meant a lot her as she
believed that one can learn lessons from it. She poured all she saw and experienced in her novels. Partition of India, her life in Lahore, Parsee culture and all she experienced was showcased in her writings. Similarly, Arundhati Roy as a story teller believes that story is the best way of telling true incidents related to history and the community. In addition to her commentary on Indian history and politics, Roy evaluates the Indian postcolonial complex, or the cultural attitudes of many Indians towards their former British rulers. Roy reveals a complex and longstanding class conflict in the state of Kerala, India, and she comments on its various competing forces.

Novels transcend their readers from fantasy to reality. Moving in the fairyland of desires and aspirations Bapsi’s novels take us on a journey on harsh realities of earth as well. Romance is evident in her writings but at the same time the practical approach is no where missing. Sexual exploitation, political influences, role of power and social distrust is vividly exhibited in all her novels. However fantasy in The God of Small Things gives the reader a deeper understanding of all of the different dimensions of love. Al romantic love in the novel relates closely to politics and history, it is possible that Roy is stressing the interconnectedness of personal desire to larger themes of history and social circumstances. The storytelling mode she used is the one identify broadly as realism. She narrates a lot of real life events that connects to the fantasy of love in her novel in a broad spectrum.

Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy, both are hard core feminist. Their novels details feminist perspective in various events including the Partition, caste discrimination etc. Bapsi Sidhwa’s attitude is highly feminist and at the same time her women protagonists are not miserable sufferers of patriarchy. They are not submissive to men in the family and society. They are confident and fighter by nature. She whether consciously or unconsciously brought into light the problems and discrimination women face. Bapsi also highlighted the dreams and aspirations of women at large. In The God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy, challenges and awakens the spirit of feminism. The focus in Arundhati Roy’s novel is on the irrationalities and injustices of domestic and social life regarding a woman. The novel initiates, empowers and solidifies a tradition which is capable of articulating and confronting social and
political issues from feminine perspective. In Arundhati Roy’s novel we can see the oppression faced by women in the male dominant society.

The vision of the novelists Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy is panoramic. They are not only feminist in tone and objective but give a panoramic view of various historical and social events. Transcending various generations they surpass various social, political and economic impacts of the time. As a Parsee and being a member of a small minority group, Bapsi saw the events as an outsider that include the Partition, racial discrimination, conservatism and transgression. The premise of Bapsi’s novels is wide. Arundhati Roy’s inclination towards discussion of various socio-economic-cultural issues is widely evident in her novel. Various social discrimination including the caste system, economic class struggle, religious discrimination and racial discrimination all are clearly described in The God of Small Things. Also, the female struggle against patriarchy is an important theme of the novel. Thus the wide spectrum of themes is portrayed in the novel.

Chapter IV

Love for Native Land

Place holds a significant position in the plot of any novel. Detail provides the color and texture of the story and helps it resonate with a sense of place. Good novels have a setting which doesn’t appear superficial to the story but becomes an integral part of the story like an important character around which the story revolves and takes new forms. A novelist often paints the portrait of “place” while portraying other characters.

Lahore was not just Bapsi Sidhwa’s native place. She holds a great affection for the place. She spent most of her life in the city of splendor. She always tried to show the many facets of Lahore. Even after moving away from Pakistan to America she resettled in Lahore. She gained dual nationality as she was not willing to forgo her Pakistani citizenship. This in itself states her love for Lahore. Bapsi Sidhwa has herself several times exclaimed that “I am Pakistani”. Similarly, The God of Small Things is set in the lush green village of Ayemenem that nestles next to the Kumarakom lake-
resort on the Vembanad Lake, the largest backwater in Kerala and it is here that Roy’s mother’s family has lived for generations. In order to explore the sense of place portrayed in any literary work, it is essential to explore the geographical location, culture, language and history of the place evoked within the work.

The effects of Parsi ethos on the writings of Bapsi Sidhwa cannot be ignored. Parsis got absorbed in the country they resided without allowing conversions to their faith. They became hybrid adopting the culture of the place they resided. They have considered the sub-continent as their home irrespective of it being ruled by Hindus, Muslims or Britishers. Being a Parsi, Sidhwa has to explain her lineage as a Pakistani. The rituals and rites of Parsis are so well explained in her writing relevant to the place she inhabited. Arundhati Roy is no far behind in describing her minority religious group, the Syrian Christian. She depicts the complex intermixture of her faith with the local Hindu social structures.

The social status of women has always been in question. Her want for equality and justice has always been described by various writers. The cultural differences and their disadvantages on the society have been well projected by Bapsi Sidhwa. The ill treatment of the woman by the patriarch society is the main theme of the Pakistani Bride. The sufferings of women and her cry for justice id distinctively exhibited in all the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa. Social impacts are equally well explained in the writing of Arundhati Roy. Because of her ingrained understanding of Ayemenem’s diversity and cultural paradoxes, Roy allowed her imagination to run wild in the familiar landscape. Various social practices of the land like Hinduism, untouchability and the caste system form the major reasons for the events in The God of Small Things. Love Laws of the land were to be followed by all. The central theme of the novel is the continuation of these caste inequalities in the post-independence Kerala.

The political decision of Partition of India and Pakistan had adverse effect on the harmonious lives of people residing in both the countries. Political absurdities resulted in unprecedented devastation and deranged social sensibilities. A lot had been written and said about partition by various writers of Indian sub continent. Bapsi Sidhwa narration of the event is of relevance as she has viewed Partition from the western side
of Indo-Pak border. The discussion of the miseries of residents is the core theme of the novels written by her. Arundhati Roy does not fail us at the time in describing the political situations of her native land. Kerala is the first state to bring a democratically elected communist party to power. She clearly describes the political legacy of communism in her novel.

The novels written by Bapsi Sidhwa are about real events – political, social and cultural. It is significant to note that they are a representation of reality and not the reality itself. Symbolism is used to not only portray the contemporary society but also the place, which adds significance to the understanding of that era. Her writings are allegorical tales of partition and the Parsi community. The skillfully interwoven plots give each other substantial meaning. Her narrative technique is personified. She shows us vividly with graphic clarity. With a sprinkling of humour, parody and allegory Bapsi Sidhwa conveys a sinister warning of the dangers of compromising with religious obscurantism and fundamentalism of all categories. Arundhati Roy’s novel has a tight thematic unity. Symbolism adds to the beauty of the scripture. The stream of consciousness technique used by Roy, beautifully interweaves all the elements of the novel. Her use of native language adds connectivity with readers.

The native land of Bapsi Sidhwa is Lahore. It forms the geographical location of most of her work. As often stated by her, the ambience of Lahore lends itself to romance and it arouses an intensity of feeling which craves expression. Sidhwa first wrote a couple of short articles about the beauty of the Karakoram Mountains from where she went on to write her first novel. Later all her works clearly depict her affection for City Beloved. Arundhati Roy suffers from equal admiration for her home town. The lush green scenery of Kerala that gives it the name of “God’s Own Country” is illustrated with a touch of agony rather than nostalgia. The flora and fauna of Kerala presented with great gusto is overshadowed by a brooding reflection. A vivid scent, colour and smell of rural Kerala are conveyed through her novel. Roy's novel is a treasure trove of rare similes, metaphors and idioms. The God of Small Things clearly depicts Roy’s affection for her native land.
Chapter V

Existence of conflicts at diverse stratum

Political influences can be well seen in the novels of both the writers – Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy. The timing of writings is almost equivalent to the Partition of India and Pakistan of most of Bapsi Sidhwa’s novels. The time: when communal frenzy rose to its height, when man became a communal beast. Bapsi Sidhwa’s Earth is considered as the political allegory of Partition. As a Pakistani Parsi Woman she effectively summarizes the horrifying reminisces of Partition. Her partition writings are deeply pre-occupied with the problem of masculinity and the dehumanization of women, from a perspective that is feminist. Partition of India and Pakistan devastated both the nations. Communal riots took place throughout the countries destroying lives, wealth and resulting in a bitterness that was hard to wipe out. In The God of Small Things too, conflict exists at the individual and the societal levels. The novel graphically shows that people are helpless to resolve these levels of friction. Velutha, the outcaste can never co-exist peacefully with the "touchable" communities for as long as there is the stigma of untouchability attached to him and countless others like him. Both our writers Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy belonged to the non-participating minority community – Parsi and Syrian Christian respectively; thus they narration is unbiased. Both have written about the Andolans and witnessed massive bloodshed and arson. Major impacts of Partition as mentioned by Bapsi Sidhwa included communal mass devastation, the two-way migration of refugees, and the failure of administrative machinery to control the dehumanizing aftermaths. Arundhati Roy’s book is also deeply informed by rhetoric of separation and demarcation, where boundaries are patrolled, policed, and piously preserved, and where transgression is efficiently repressed in the society. Sidhwa and Roy raise serious questions and doubts regarding mankind's culture and refinement in the course of their fictions.

Violence against women has been accepted and even condoned throughout history. Be it the episode of Partition of India and Pakistan or the adherence to Social Love Laws, the victim is always women. Unfortunately, violence was close to women and they were afflicted by the riot situation directly. They became victims of kidnapping and
rape. Woman has always been the victim of her circumstances. Women in majority of 
the communities are treated as a symbol of dignity. Because of this mindset, women 
specifically their bodies become targets for enemies to prove their victory. Therefore, 
kidnap, rape, sexual abuse and other defilements of women within these societies are 
et yet common.

People are murdered or mutilated, women abducted or raped, and both men and 
women beaten, discarded, and left for dead. Unfortunately, such vicious acts are not 
only enacted upon adults; children are also exposed to the same violent and angry 
world. Children who are lucky enough to escape alive are condemned with the 
memories that forever changed their lives both physically and psychologically. 
Children not only witnessed the brutal deaths of their parents, siblings, and relatives, 
they were savagely beaten, struck down by unimaginable objects. Although children 
suffer the same tortures and fates as others victims of violence, they pay the ultimate 
sacrifice in form of their innocence. At the psychological level, Bapsi Sidhwa suffers 
most intensely because of her encounters with Partition. The events left a scar on the 
psyche of the child Bapsi. After such traumatic events, there was no way of returning 
to the life they had once known. Arundhati Roy’s children characters also had a 
difficult childhood. They were abandoned by their father and became the victim of 
social norms and unaffectionate living. Whether children suffered physically or 
psychologically, the result was the same: trauma, misplaced identity, and confusion. 
Both our novelists have often used child narrator to tell their story through children’s 
point of view.

Sidhwa as a writer encourages women to transgress the line of marginalization. In 
Pakistani Bride, she captures the conflict of pride and kindness. An American Brat is 
about the age-old conflict between generations dealing with the real tension of religion, 
fundamental beliefs. Crow Eater, another novel of Bapsi Sidhwa deals with the desire 
to transgress the line of community. In all her writings Bapsi Sidhwa represents a 
modern outlook where especially the expatriate ones strive hard to strike a balance 
between tradition and modernity, past and present, dependence and freedom. 
According to Bapsi a women to stand for her rights must transgress the through the 
social norms. Indeed transgression is one of the most important elements in The God
of Small Things as well, in theme and in method and style. Transgression in various forms can been in the novel including – breaking of Love Laws, signifying the social taboo of untouchability. The novel at the same time gives a glimpse of the impact of social regulations and the consequences of breaking love laws.

Chapter VI

Anti-patriarchal rage and Divided Consciousness

Literally migration is the movement of people across a specified boundary for the purpose of establishing a new or semi-permanent residence. It actually implies crossing of boundary that separates the two spaces and that has to be crossed during the migration. The boundary is usually artificial, like the border between two nations, but can also be natural, like an ocean, a river or a mountain range. Metaphorically migration can mean shift of emotions from a place, object etc. to another. Our writers beautifully capture the emotion of migration – literal and creative in their novels. In all works of Bapsi Sidhwa various patterns of migration can be observed. These can include migration from one place to another as in American Brat or Ice Candy Man; migration from traditional norms as again in American Brat; or struggle for migration from miseries to freedom as in Pakistani Bride. Similarly various shades of migration can be noticed in The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy. Several of the characters in her novel show one or the other facet of migration. Ammu moves on an aimless journey from one place to another after being expelled from Ayemenem. Estha on the other hand is forced to migrate with his father and then returns back after 23 years. His sister Rahel moves to America with her husband but returns back to see her brother. The topic of migration is diverse in the God of Small Things. There are actual migrations and figurative as well in the novel. Crossing of river symbolizes the crossing of social norms of Love laws. The consequences of this migration are narrated grave.

In the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, stories are intricately woven in the realm of various small and big communities. Her characters show invincible courage in breaking loose
from the customary and traditional practices of the community. Far from ridiculing the Parsis, the novel celebrates their community, and in turn, celebrates the all encompassing idea of community. Sidhwa highlights the predicament of the Pakistani people in general and of the Parsi community in particular. She does not intend to criticize a community but its orthodoxy and out-dated values. She employs irony to expose fundamentalism Sidhwa’s indictment of fundamentalism is not restricted only to the Muslim community but also to other communities. She also exposes the parochial attitude and narrow-mindedness of American society. Arundhati Roy also lays the foundation for a modern community in her novel. Her characters also break the fundamental laws of the community. The caste system is invariably challenged in her novel. The traditional system of untouchability is broken by the protagonist. The Love Laws are tempered by all. The community represented in The God of Small Things is Syrian Christian. She is from a caste ridden, extremely traditional community. Any attempt on her part to see life independently threatens the existing order. Both our novelists belong to the minority community in the part of the society they live. They not only represent their community in vibrant colours but also describe the country they reside as a larger community. Their novels search for a modern community that’s makes world a better place for all.

Patriarchy literally means rule of the father in a male-dominated family. It is a social system in which the institutions of male rule and privilege, and entails female subordination. In the novels written by Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy, women are not only treated as subordinate to men but are also subject to discriminations, humiliations, exploitations, oppressions, control and violence. Sidhwa shows her females as strong and capable enough to run the affairs of daily day to day life without spoiling their identity. She talks about the marginalized persona of indigenous society whose position is cowed to the absolute minimum. She counters the domineering patriarchal discourse of Pakistani literature by providing an alternative image of a strong and confident female. The world of Arundhati Roy’s novel is caught in a state of flux where the values of the patriarchal society are under attack from a new world in which modern women enjoys social equality. She exposes the double standards of morality in society regarding men and women, the passive, docile role of a wife in a
man-woman relationship, and the malicious role of a woman in perpetuating the humiliation of another woman by a male.

Marriage in Indian sub-continent is the most celebrated event of an individual’s life. But it is not untouched by patriarchy and culture. Marriage generally is not allowed outside one community. However the new age writings have motivated protagonists who challenge these social norms. They know no limits of caste and/or boundary. Sidhwa has added a new dimension to the existing theme of expatriate experience by exploring the cultural influences on an individual in a new place. Her descriptions of expatriate experiences are comprehensive and not limited only to the adjustment problems on account of racial prejudices. She has incorporated her own expatriate experiences in her fiction. In the God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy is has mentioned the caste system, political affiliations, and marriages as “Big Things”. She throws light on the inherent desire of a girl to get married and also on the social implications of dowry system, inter caste marriage and female rights. Her protagonists are not unknown with the expatriate experience which is not just in terms of movement from one political boundary to another but also relates to the movement from the native land of Ayemenem. Her inability to settle in the unknown land and desire to return back to her home town is well exhibited in The God of Small Things.

The marginalized treatment of women is not biological but is culture driven. Women experience discrimination and unequal treatment in terms of basic right to food, health care, education, employment, control over productive resources, decision-making and livelihood not because of their biological differences or sex, which is natural but because of their gender differences which is a social construct. Bapsi Sidhwa reveals the treatment of a western, upper-class woman in the male-dominated society of the novel. She sheds light on the idea that only by embracing the idea of cultural the concept of national identity can be understand. She herself belongs to the new hybrid having a Parsi youth identity. She describes the concept of "cultural hybridity. The treatment of women is equivalent in the God of Small Things. There are different sets of rules for male and female regarding the cultural identity. Twins in the novel are hybrids in reference to their religion, because their father is a Hindu and their mother is a Syrian Christian. The same treatment is not meted to the hybrid of cousin of twin
who is the progeny of male – the head of the family. In The God of Small Things, Kerala is hybridized in many aspects in relation to language, religion, politics, economics, and so on reflecting the hybrid elements of Indian multiculturalism

Chapter VII

Buoyant Women - Feminist but not Anti male

Differentiation of gender is not only biological but bears social imprints as well. For majority of women their gender has had some effect on their experiences, and their perceptions of the world, and this is reflected in the nature of the work they, produce. The feminine imagination in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa is presented with an incongruous humour to discuss serious socio-political issues. Being a writer who is not gender-conscious, she relies more on her imagination than on values. Sidhwa skillfully links gender to community, nationality, religion, and class, demonstrating the ways in which these various aspects of cultural identity and social structure do not merely affect or reflect one another, but instead are inextricably intertwined. The voice of feminism is far more loud and clear in Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things. The novelist analyzes the gender oppression through the examination of the marital and inter-gender relations. In her novel women protagonists are victims of the prevalent gross gender discrimination. At times little exaggerated her novel is a mirror of contemporary society in the remote village of Kerala.

It’s true that women have suffered and her suffering is well reflected in the contemporary literature. Caught between patriarchy and tradition on the one hand, and self-expression, individuality independence on the other, women protagonists feel lost and confused and explore ways to fulfill themselves as a human wishing for one day, a single moment, that is free from suffering, boundaries and prejudice. Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy both describe ongoing journey of woman towards freedom, journey towards the land of dreams of liberty and of freedom from age-long conventionalities. One experiences freedom from the restraining traditions, the disturbing ordinances, sight of poverty, the insecure social ties, the oppression and discrimination against
Although women suffer from the patriarchal mastery but her struggle for freedom unhesitatingly delineates her from the marginalized position. In quest of autonomy and freedom, the different women characters are placed at different levels in their march towards emancipation. They take the bold step to transgress the defined boundaries of the traditional societies.

The relationship of woman with the woman is often thought to be of understanding. However, woman is woman’s worst enemy and the best friend as well. Sidhwa paints alive how discrimination against woman is practiced inside house. This is not necessarily meted by man alone but often by woman on woman. It is mother who discriminates between her siblings on account of gender to begin with. However, this is also true as inferred from Bapsi Sidhwa’s novels that woman often comes forward to rescue other woman in the patriarch society. Sidhwa makes a clear statement about the feasibility and facets of feminine power. The woman-woman relationships in the God of Small Things are very complex. They are jealous of each other and are trying to avenge each other. Characters in her novel do not overtly believe in the rights of women as well as subalterns and makes a distinction between self-interest and those of other women. Four women in The God of Small Things, interrogate indigenous norms, customs, laws, values and structures connected with patriarchy, class, caste and feudal-capitalist economic structures. These women also interrogate, through all their actions, the “Love laws”. But, interestingly enough, these women do not advocate for the forces of global inequality masquerading as globalization. Women try to bring about change through resistance. Thus, the roles of women in societies can be both empowering and oppressive.

Man has proclaimed himself as superior to females. Because of superior physical strength, the patriarchs considered themselves superior to women. Men are by nature territorial and gradually they usurped all rights over women’s bodies and lives. This is the history of the man/woman relationship according to Bapsi Sidhwa. Women are equal to men intellectually and they are wiser. They value peace and are the glue that holds societies together. Sidhwa brings into light the sufferings of women by the male dominated society in her novels. The male characters of Bapsi Sidhwa novels demand female subordination. The characters of the God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy
influenced by the patriarchal structures lay different set of rules for woman. What is considered right and necessary for Chacko is treated as a sin for Ammu.

Bapsi and Roy, their women as they themselves are the seekers longing for freedom and allocating spaces for them. In their struggle lie their victory and self-pride. Like the ‘new women’ they are in search of their self-identity and liberation. The virtuous woman is portrayed triumphant and successful. They have properly painted the powerful world of female characters. Their novels are the best illustrations of the superiority of women. Through their protagonists they have proved that by no means, women are inferior to men. And if we give them chance, they, with their potential, can prove themselves as able as men, and sometimes better than men. However, their women are not anti-male. While demanding justice and equality for themselves, modern women want companionship also of their male partners. They believe in love and respect for each other.

**Chapter VIII**

**Conclusion**

The novels are a mirror of contemporary life. One shares her/his experiences through novels. The same doctrine holds true for the novels under study. In her fictional tale Sidhwa retells the tale of her community. The multiple streams of fact and fiction, history and myth meet in harmony representing the story of a community and people who have endeared through rough times and trying situations, overcoming obstacles and emerging triumphant. Patriarchal structures and its indoctrinations are discussed and criticized. Arundhati Roy, as she is in true self, severely criticizes several socio-cultural issues that include the Patriarchy, untouchability and the caste system. This internal war that she speaks of is the practice of cultural indoctrination and all of the assumed prejudices and normalizations that accompany it. The twins in the God of Small Things are caught in the internal struggle of the nation as caste, discrimination, and politics.
Each woman protagonist feels marginalized in her own socio-cultural location and ultimately tries to locate herself in the central position. The novels of Bapsi and Arundhati are undoubtedly an inward thought as well as a personal release from Indian socio-cultural and political boundaries. Our novelists are modern women who want to vent their personal emotions through their novels. Their achieve affirmation of self through their writings. The women who are pressurized in the male dominated society struggle to achieve their identity as an individual.

Various emotional factors including the experiences of an individual in a life time play a vital role in the expression in form of written literature by women writers. The autobiographical impacts can be clearly seen in the writings of the novelists. Being a woman themselves, the writers focused on the condition of women by exploring the collective repressed situations and by giving a voice to female victims. They are oppressed, suppressed and marginalized in the matter of sharing the available opportunity for fulfillment of their lives, despite the fact that every woman slaves for the development of her family, her husband and children. This is predicament of women all over the world. From a theoretical point of view, the complicity between feminist commitment and post colonial theory is obvious. Women has always been a victim as the object of racist, abusive behavior, and at the same time, by traditional sexist role models that tended to assign to women subaltern positions inside their own family and local community. Their position is still as members of a dependent, impoverished society necessarily unaltered. Women have suffered histories of oppression and appropriation.

Feminism is not just a movement or a protest in literature, it is the cry of modern women who has been oppressed for years and is now fighting for justice and equality. Various social, cultural, political and psychological factors have influenced our novelists in shaping their manuscripts. They narrate their experiences with truth and boldness. At the same time they demand equality in the male dominated society. They just don’t criticize the systems but are fair enough to understand the male point of view as well. They truly expose some of the hypocrisies and irrationalities of patriarchy. Both our novelists hemmed in by the patriarchal structure of language and culture. There are various characters in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy who
want to live within the structure and some other who want to break the unsaid laws and bear the consequences of their actions. They in vibrant language give the glimpses of life women in particular and their community and nation in general. The novels written by Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy are extensively influenced by the various psychological factors evidently reflected in their feminist writings.

Our novelists share their life’s experiences in their works which eventually are the major themes of their novels. Major themes covered in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy includes History and truth telling, anti-patriarchal rage, communal frenzy and management of relationship. The themes of their works range from showing their affection of their native lands to their concerns of communal harmony. The themes move from personal relationships to the national issues, very often crossing the boundaries of countries. The expatriate experience of our writers is often clearly reflected in their works. However, feminism forms the mainstay in their works. They share their feminist perspective on all issues including man-woman relationship and woman-woman relationships. This feminist perspective is also clearly exhibited even in the narrations regarding the national and international concerns. One striking aspect that is clearly visible in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy portrayal of buoyant woman - A woman who is not anti-male.
PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH WORK

Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy are two eminent novelists and political personalities from Pakistan and India respectively who have focused on the marginalization of women and other socio-political aspects of community in their novels. Literature cannot be separated from reality as novelists are human being having feeling and emotions. The main purpose of the study is to explore the mental and psychological reasons for the reflection of sexism in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy in particular and other feminist writings in general.

Two diverse personalities have been selected for the study to explore the psychological effects that influence the sexism in the novels more objectively, subjected to almost equivalent socio-political and cultural circumstances. There are very few women writers who have selected English as a medium of expression in forms of novel in Indian subcontinent. Our literary study goes beyond the national boundaries to explore facets of feminism in Indian English Fiction.

The research will present psychoanalysis of the factors that influence women in her struggle against patriarchy, disintegrated marital life, violence and subordination as represented in the novels under study. It analysis various factors that motivate a women to narrate her journey towards self awareness. The child narrative technique adds to the authenticity of these writings. The research explores the psyche of modern women who is buoyant and independent, who is feminist but not anti-male; her desire to break free from subordination but her connectivity to her roots.

The proposed 8 chapters, first as Introduction, and the rest seven are based on various psychological factors that have influenced the feminist writing of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy. Our novelists through their protagonists vent their desire to end the subordination of women in the society. They demand for justice and equality for women. The women of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy are fighter and achieve success through their determined efforts. They demand for a new women identity.
The study will present psychological study of new age women who is independent and free from bias against the male society. It throws light on the factors that motivate her in her struggle against violence and subordination. Our study explores the emotional state of woman in transition from a traditional to modern role. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy are guides of avalanche of confusion and emotional upheaval of the post-colonial woman in the Indian sub-continent. The study celebrates the noticeable change in the images of south Asian women from sad suffering women to optimistic and assertive.

To the best of researcher’s literature survey, not much work worth name has been done so far on this subject. The purpose of the researcher is to explore various social-cultural-political and psychological factors that influence the psyche of woman. It also studies facets of modern woman yearning for individuality. It aims at explaining the transition state of women in achieving modern identity from conventional identity.

Hence, the focus of research is to study the feminist literature with their strong commitment to change the status of women in modern societies.
A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE WORK

In practically every last trace of the written works of the globe the women writers are transcending the borders and making their presence felt. Feminism was earlier considered as an expression of anger at the unfair treatment meted out to women. However, feminism today is an improved version of women’s life. Her cry for rights is clearly visible in her writings. Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy, both are feminist writers who belong to Indian subcontinent. Quite alike and distinctively different, they both have written about the new age woman who is aware of her rights and duties.

Bapsi Sidhwa is the finest English fiction writer from Pakistan. She has written four novels in English that reflect her personal experience of the Indian subcontinent’s Partition, abuse against women, immigration to the US, and the Parsi community. As Bapsi Sidhwa, Arundhati Roy has also highlighted the women issues giving equal significance to the prevalent social and political conditions in the Indian subcontinent. Arundhati Roy broke open on the literary stage with the publication of her novel The God of Small Things that made the country proud by winning the most prestigious Booker Prize in 1997.

The themes of novels written by Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy is generally feminism that highlights the role of women in the modern society, her subordination in the patriarchal structures of society, the expatriate experience of a woman, the hypocrisy of the male dominated society, Partition, study of their minority community, the caste system, economic class struggle, religious discrimination and racial discrimination all are clearly described in their novels.

The present study is an attempt to explore various psychological aspects that shape the scripts of feminist novelists. This work will explore modern woman’s psyche which compels her very often to strive for self-actualization in the hypocrite and oppressive patriarchal world of subordination. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy portray woman as a fighter, who fights against all odds to develop her individuality and who is aware of her rights for liberation from mythical and social values.
NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTION IN THE FIELD OF PROPOSED WORK

Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy are eminent novelists having a lot of illustriousness to their accreditation. Their novels though feminist in tone and theme throw light on various social, cultural and political situations of the contemporary Pakistani and Indian societies.

Bapsi Sidhwa has written four novels. Her first novel, The Bride (also in print as The Pakistani Bride) is a robust, richly plotted story of colliding worlds straddled by a spirited girl for whom escape may not be an option. The protagonist of this novel fights against the harsh realities and emerges as a survivor. Her second novel, Crow Eaters is a lively and humorous story about the Parsi community of Pakistan. However it was her third novel Cracking India that brought her international fame. Cracking India or Ice Candy Man is a tale of the bloody partition that led to the creation of independent Pakistan and India as the British left the subcontinent. Her latest novel The American Brat is both remarkably funny and an acute portrayal of America as seen through the eyes of a perceptive young immigrant.

The noteworthy books and articles on Bapsi Sidhwa and her novels are:

1. South Asian Woman’s Writings The Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa edited by R. K. Dhawan: Novy Kapadia
2. Bapsi Sidhwa by Randhir Pratap Singh
3. Bapsi Sidhwa’s Ice- Candy Man A Reader’s Companion, Edited by Rashmi Gaur
5. Post-Colonial Women Writers: New Perspective by Sunita Sinha
6. Unsettling Partition: Literature, Gender, Memory by Didur
Moving on to Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things is the debut and only novel written by Arundhati Roy. The story is about her childhood experiences of twins in the village of Ayemenem in Kerala, India. A lot have been said and written about Arundhati Roy since she received the most acclaimed Booker Prize. Appreciation and criticism goes hands in hands for her. Following are few of them:

1. Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things: A Critical Appraisal By Amar Nath Prasad
2. Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things by Alex Tickell
4. Arundhati Roy - The Novelist Extraordinary - Edited by R K Dhawan
5. The Fictional World of Arundhati Roy edited by R. S. Pathak
6. Explorations Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things Edited by Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam
7. Social and Sexual Hierarchies: Male-Female Relationships in Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things, Seminar Paper by Eleni Stefanidou
8. Reading Arundhati Roy Politically by Ahmad Aijaz in Frontline
9. The Critical Studies of Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things edited by Jaydipsinh Dodiya and Joya Chakravarty
10. The God of Small Things: A Reader’s Guide by Julie Mullaney

However, it is felt that much more is yet to done to study the psychological aspects of feminist novelists. Bapsi Sidhwa surely deserves to be discussed more in light of various psychological aspects that influenced the writing of her novels. The fame Arundhati Roy earned by winning the Booker Prize made all the critical studies to be focused on the novel only ignoring the psychological factors responsible for the feminist aptitude of the novel.
PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The research will be carried out on the basis of method, profiles in short, given as below for focusing on the points which explore various psychological aspects of sexism in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy often resulting from emotional, social, political, cultural and economical condition of woman; accompanied by her transition into a new age modern woman. The study takes a personal, political and engaging stance to the world. Research studies the social conditions of women in sexist, malestream and patriarchal society.

- Detailed study of novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy
- Minute observations of standard books relevant for understanding the psychological causes of feminism in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy
- Study of journals and magazines to collect and classify the existing material related to the topic.
- The researcher shall go through the different websites on the internet and assort the material related to topic.
- The researcher shall also attempt to visit various libraries in the context.
- The researcher shall definitely look for an opportunity to interact with the novelists in person. If it is possible, this will provide an important supplement to the study.
EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE PROPOSED WORK

The proposed study being the first and original work of its kind will discover certain new and unknown facts as well as re-approach the non facts also. This will be surely helpful in understanding feminine psyche. The research will enlighten people about taken-for-granted sexist practices and the gender-blindness of community practices that displaced, ignored and silenced women, led to an unequal and discriminating social order, and held them captive for millennia. Our study is a research on women, by women and for women to exemplify her quest for emancipation and change. The research will help to reconstruct the domain of conventional research by giving it a psychological dimension.

Bapsi Sidhwa and Arundhati Roy, through their novels have brought to surface the neglected aspects of social reality by adding a new view to the perception of the world. Their protagonists are draw attention to the problems in the social structures and challenge gender ethic, female subjugation and discrimination. They have offered a legitimate basis for social change in the area of gender inequality. The concerned study from psychological view point will help raise issues that will help to redefine the modern role of woman and motivate woman to speak about social life from their perspective which will ultimately contribute towards social change and reconstruction.
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