Chapter - 2
THE STUDY OF IMAGES OF WOMEN IN INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE
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Indian English literature poses many powerful images of women. In its short history many writers have poured their writing with the life like images of women. India being a conservative country many early Indian English writers have given the typical images of women in Indian society. Although there are some writers who have given images of women from a different perspective.

At first, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya’s Rajmohan's Wife, a first published English novel by an Indian gives us the first image of women in Indian English fiction. "Matangini is Rajmohan's Wife. Matangini overhears the plan of her husband to attack her sister's house. When Rajmohan comes to know about it, he sets out to kill Matangini. She goes against her husband." (Wordpress, Sowmya) She is a brave woman. The powerful image of women is reflected in the fictional works of Krupabai Satthianadhan. "Her two novels Kamala, A Story of Hindu Wife and Shaguna, A Story of Native Christian Life, exhibit images of women." (Mehrotra, 114-115) Kamala is a daughter of a learned sanyasi. She lives in least populated hilly area unaware of way of the world. She is married into a cast ridden family. The story is of her battle into new world. She does not match up to the expectations and remains a misfit in the family. The story of Shaguna is partly autobiographical. Shaguna was a daughter of a Christian convert. As a
Christian convert she not had an easy life. But Shaguna manages formal education beating all odds. She gets admission in medical college. At the end Shaguna is satisfied with life as she finds a man who treats her equally. In this way Krupabai presented images of resilient and brave women.

Rabindranath Tagore is a versatile genius. He was not a feminist writer but his thoughts and writing shows his acute understanding of woman's psyche. He wanted women to have decision making power in family and the society too. In his novels we find many images of different types of women. In *The Wreck*, there is an important incident of boat wreck. There were two families on the boat. Two brides and two grooms with their family members were on it. But only two survives. Kamala and Ramesh considers themselves as husband and wife. They settle somehow in their life. But after sometime Kamala's real husband appears. In it Kamala's dilemma is depicted very aptly by Tagore. "In *Gora*, the Character of Suchitra is portrayed as a liberated young woman. She has a strong mind of her own and she is relaxed at home or outside, While Anandamoyi, mother of the protagonist, limits her to home only and still ready to shake the conservative dogma of the society." (Sarah Edwards- Jonatha Charley, Google Book) *The Home and The World*, the character of Bimal is caught between the pull of the home and the pull of the world. She is a wife of Nikhil. Sandip is nikhil's friend. "She has to change herself under the stress of trial and error and failure. She has to work her salvation out in diligence, through tribulations and experimentation and suffering and disasters."
She has to choose between Nikhil and Sandip to show difference between gold and tinsel" (Iyengar, 107)

There are three phases of Tagore's literary output. In his early period (1881-1897), in rural background his heroines face the injustice and they are confronted with the harsh realities of life. The second phase (1893-1913) is perhaps the most inventive phase of his literary career. It paved way for the portrayal of the urban and educated women as a new force in Bengali Society. His heroine in *Bachelors Club* begs for human rights. Tagore presents the images of widows very carefully. Binodini, the widow, fights with her own passion and unfulfilled love. Damini sidelines tradition and norms of the society, prepares herself for a new life with her new husband. In the mature period (1914-1941), his women now started to show agitation against the evils of society like the caste system, untouchability and religious hypocrisy. She now also takes side of those who want higher education and make a professional career with the help of it. In this way in the works of Rabindranath Tagore we find variety of images of women with different shades.

Mulk Raj Anand with the help of his rare veracity, bold experimentation and aesthetic sensibility has given a lot to Indian as well as world literature in English. His portrayal of women is very real. "*Anand feels that woman, whether she is rich or poor, is a marginalized being.*" (Uppal, Bajaj 114) Anand's women are silent sufferer and constantly being victimized in the patriarchal world. In his magnum opus *Untouchable*, Anand presents his long preserved feeling
for protest against Indian caste system. Sohini's portrayal in Untouchable is full religious hypocrisy. She was molested by Pandit Kali shows that how the people of upper caste, use religion for their own sectarian benefit and surpassing the people of lower caste. Gauri is the only novel of him with a woman protagonist. The old title of the novel was The Old Woman and the Cow. G.S. Balarama Gupta remarks, Anand's principal objective in writing The Old Woman and the Cow is to hint at the emergence of Modern Indian Women, and He achieves it admirably. (Gupta, 95)

In Gauri, Anand shows Gauri, as gentle as cow in the beginning. She silently suffers the tyranny of her husband and mother-in-law. Gauri was driven out of her house by in-laws. At the end Gauri returns home only to leave her husband's home. Anand through Gauri presents many images of women- the young girl, the married woman, the mother to be, the obedient wife and the tortured one. Anand portrays a woman in rural India who "has been considered untouchable during her period, isolated, and given food away from kitchen, and not allowed to contaminate." (Gauri, 41) Through this Anand wants to point out that woman during her period often isolated in a lonely place or room and treated as untouchable. While at her in-laws' house Gauri was advided by her mother as "be like Sita". (Gauri, 30) In this way Mulk Raj Anand portrayed the images of Indian women who are trapped in society with the ills of the societies like religious hypocrisy.

"R. K. Narayan is the Grand Old Man of Indian English fiction."
(Kumar, 107) Narayan is by no means a feminist writer but he has...
portrayed some of the memorable images of women in his fiction. The theme of emancipation of a new woman finds its expression in his *The Guide*, his magnum opus. Although, it is a story of Raju, a guide, but it was the character of Rosie which clinched all the attention. In Rosie, Narayan has shown a woman experiencing a conflict between a strong yearning of self fulfillment and traditional norms of the society. In it Narayan presents the Indian society where women have been the victim of circumstances and conventions. Rosie also becomes the victim of circumstance as her husband ditches her for his research in archeological study and other woman, but through her rebellious attitude, she make her own way with pride and dignity. It shows a newly liberated woman in the post independence Indian society. *The Guide* presents the traditional Indian where women have no opportunity for expressing their talent. Rosie comes from a "family traditionally dedicated to the temples as dancers" (*The Guide*, 75) Rosie commits adultery with Raju, although being a married woman. It is a crucial stage in her life. Her marital relation with Marco, her husband, forces her to adultery with Raju. Narayan portrays the character of Rosie with bold attitude towards fulfilling her life goals with the help of Raju. Their marriage collapse as the instances of their clash of expectation, interest, desire and hope grows.

R. K. Narayan in *Dark Room* portrays with sympathy the sufferings of women and shows the readers how important are their roles both in family and society. It is a story of disturbed married life. Savitri, the heroine, is eternal feminine and the womanly women. Her
married life was going smoothly with her husband Ramani and their three children. But with the entry of Shanta, the other woman, everything changes. She somehow manages to rouse the feeling of love in Ramani. This shatters their married life. Savitri tried to commit suicide but she is saved. She returns home thinking about her children. Ramani is wandering with Shanta, leaving children at the theatre. Narayan portrays the two completely different images women in *Dark Room*. *The English Teacher* is about love in a married life. Susila is a wife of Krishna. Both love each other immensely. After few years of their marriage Susila is gripped by typhoid, after sometime she dies. Narayan portrays in Susila, the image of woman who can write poetry and who has womanly quality. She is totally different from Rosie or Savitri. Narayan's women are not good or bad but they behave in accordance with their whims and wishes and also milieu around them.

K. R, Srinivas Ayenger states,

*Susila of The English Teacher, Brinda of The Financial Expert and Bharati of Waiting for Mahatma are all variations on the theme of Indian girlhood, and Shanta of The Dark Room, Shanti of Mr.Shampath and Rosie of The Guide are also kindred soul. There are no 'good' or 'bad' characters in Narayan's novels.* (Iyengar, 363)

Raja Rao is a prolific writer, who has written novels and short stories. His works display a profound commitment to Indian philosophy, acquired through a lasting attachment to gurus and ashrams during his life. Leena Gandhi observes,
However, Unlike Anand's work, where women are incidental to the random libidinal and political energies of his heroes, Rao's narrative foregrounds its female characters. In addition to its use of a female narrator, it shows how the conclusive leadership of the satyagraha in Kanthapura is undertaken by a young widow called Ratna." (Gandhi, 205)

Raja Rao always portrays women keeping in mind the scriptures of Manu Smriti, which shows the duties and behaviour of women. A submissive attitude is one of the striking features on Raja Rao's characterisation. His ideal women - Savithri, Shantaha and Jayalakshmi are submissive ones. In Kanthapura, not at all assertive but fully obedient wife to her husband is highlighted. During the training of the women at the Kanthapura village, Rangamma advises "Be strong sister. When your husband beats you, you do not hit back. do you? You only grumble and weep." (Kanthapura, 175) According to Ram in The Serpent and the Rope, bondage is woman's destiny. The Serpent and the Rope describes that woman has to marry whether she is blind, deaf, mute or she has tuberculosis. For any woman her womb is her life. While for Shantha in The Cat and Shakespeare marriage does not mean anything to her. Savithri says, "No woman who is a woman can choose her destiny. Men make her destiny. For woman to choose is to betray biology." (The Serpent and the Rope, 291) For women to do anything opposite would nullify one's womanhood. In Kanthapura we find painful portrayal of Ramabai Ranade who is torn between her
husband's wish to be educated and her mother-in-law's taunts. For some extent it is true that Gandhian movement had a vital role to play in bringing the woman out of purdah. There is a reference of Rani Lakshmibai in Kanthapura, but the ideal woman in it is projected in the figure of the submissive ones. Rao's mastery is seen in employing an old grandmother as the narrator in Kanthapura. In Rao's work marriage for women is very vital as it brings motherhood for her. The images which Rao portrays lay much emphasis on the ability of a woman to produce a child. She is regarded holy during her motherhood state. All in all Raja Rao portrayed images of women quite different his contemporaries. His women characterisations are influenced by the Gandhian movement.

Bhabani Bhattacharya is a social realist novelist who was much impressed by Tagore and Anand. His novels are built on social issues. But still there are some images of women which needed to be mentioned. In So Many Hungers, Kajoli is a rustic girl. She is raped by a soldier. Most of the rustic and downtrodden women are destitute to brothels after rape but Kajoli, for her dignity and self respect rejects it. Later she decides to earn for herself instead of selling newspaper here and there. Her story is a given a happy ending by Bhattacharya. Here through Kajoli, he portrays the image of the rustic girl who suffers a lot but at the end gets a happy life. In Music for Mohini also portrays wonderful image of Mohini, a Calcutta born Brahmin girl. She is a renowned radio artist. She marries to Jaydev. Jaydev's sister Rooplekha. Ruplekha tells Mohini after marriage that she city bred and
village wed and I village bred and city wed. Both of us are common in many ways. We have to change our lifestyle to settle in our in-laws house. In this way images of women who changes their lifestyle to settle in their married life. It also shows how much Indian women have to adjust in their in-laws homes.

Kamala Markandya has portrayed different images of women in her novels. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, Rukmani is a child bride of twelve years. Nathan, a poor farmer, is her husband. Rukmani gives birth to a baby Ira but her husband wants male child. After some time Rukmani bears many male children. Then one day townsmen came to her village to build a tannery. Rukmani is against this sudden intrusion of modernity and industrialism enters rural life. Rukmani arranged for Ira's marriage. But Ira returns as she could not bear a child. Due to less rain crop fails. Her family falls into starvation. In the mean time Ira sells her body for family and also gives birth to an illegal baby. At the end Raukmani and Nathan have to settle for charity. They do petty job for their family. In this way Markandaya portrays the image of Rukmani who sacrifice her happiness for the sake of her family. Ira's portrayal is also vital. As she is rejected by her in-laws as she is barren. She then sells her body to her starvation gripped family. She is also the embodiment of the family woman who can do anything for her family. A. V. Krishna Rao asserts:

*Rukmani's calm acceptance of the reality of the situation is more in agreement with the tradition of an Indian woman.* (Rao, 57)
Her second novel *Some Inner Fury* is a first person autobiographical novel. Mira, the heroine is also the narrator of the story. Mira was different from Rukmani from many aspects as she belongs to highly educated, upper class an ultra modern society but both of them are victimized by violent socio-historical changes. Mira echoes the young blood of before independence. In Mira, she portrays the image of modern liberated woman. It records girl's growth to womanhood. Her third novel *A Silence of Desire* portrays the image of traditional housewife in Sarojini who is wife of Dandekar. Dandekar's suspicion of Sarojini grows as she went outside every evening to a doctor. But at the end both of them live happily. Markandaya portrays the domestic world of a couple. Her portrayal of Sarojini is quite unique in Indian English literature.

Nayantara Sahgal portrays political class very realistically but meanwhile she has portrayed many wonderful images of women in her novels. Her first novel *A Time to be Happy* presents Kusum, a real representative of the Indian values of life. She is married with Sanad. As a woman novelist and also as a human being, Sehgal is deeply concerned with the need for freedom for women to become aware of themselves as individuals. Kusum in *A Time to be Happy* starts this process. In this novel all women are viewed in the perspective of marriage except Kusum, whose view point after her marriage is not voiced or expressed at all. Her image is off submissive one. While character of Maya is of typical type. She is a childless married woman and her childlessness is a symbol of her unhappiness. She suffers from
emotional isolation in her marriage due to lack of communication with her partner. Rashmi, her woman protagonist in *This Time of Morning*, is a liberated girl who wants freedom outside her married life. She is married to Rakesh. By the end of the novels Rashmi announces her intention to get a divorce after her short affair with British architect. In this novel Sahgal focuses in the kind of freedom young women desire outside marriage. Nita is another important woman in the novel. She refuses all her offers of marriage and finally becomes engaged to a young man she neither loves nor admires, finally enters into an affair with Kalyan. As Jasbir Jain rightly points out,

*Nita and Rashmi are both very different from Maya and Kusum and are the products of changed social conditions. They are not intended to be passively docile, instead want to live their own lives.* (Jain, 35)

The character of Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh* is portrayed in accordance to Rashmi of *This Time Morning*. Both have mismatch life partners and both wants to have freedom from married life. Saroj is vaguely aware of her dissatisfaction with her husband Inder. She seems to blame herself for their problems. Saroj grows to face her divorce and to trust her emotions again. She develops extra-marital affair with Vishal for developing honest and trustworthy relations. There is warmth and reality in the portrayal of Saroj, which was lacking somehow in her earlier novels. *The Days In Shadow* is her partly autobiographical novel. It deals with the plight of divorced woman Smriti, the heroine of the novel. She marries Som but Smriti leaves her
husband. Meanwhile Smriti falls in love with Raj. Her ex-husband takes away their children. It lightly questions the divorce in marriage. As a sensitive woman Smriti craves for communication and understanding, which she was unable to find in Som's world of ambition and money. She finds denial of freedom, a very humiliating experience. The character of Rose, an English woman, reflects that whenever the women are, whether in the East if the West women suffer oppression in a male dominated social set-up. She is poor girl who works as a sales girl is enchanted by Ram, an Indian. Rose finds herself in tight situation when Ram tells about her wife and new born son. Indian Rose feels isolated as she is an outsider. She didn’t fit in Indian social structure as she realizes hostility in the eyes of Mona, Ram's first wife. Rose and Mona both are portrayed with womanly attitude. Rose is in in dilemma in her husband's home and Mona could not bear the sight of Rose in her home. Totally different image of woman is found in Rich Like Us by Sahgal. In this way in most of her novels Nayantara Sahgal portrays the images of women who want to have their share of joy outside married life.

In Ruth Prawer Jhabvala first novel To Whom She Will, Amrita is a modern Bengali girl. She falls in love with Hari in her youthful days. But their parents didn’t allow their marriage. Hari marries to a girl of her community and then shattered Amrita marries Krishna, a lecturer. In the figure of Amrita, Jhabvala portrays a young Indian woman who is not conventional and tradition bound. Amrita is presented as a powerful agent of revolt in this novel. Through Amrita, Jhabvala
captures the social image of woman, whatever her personal aspirations, Indian women paid to revolt against tradition. Her *The Nature of Passion* presents Nimmi as a modern young girl. She strongly believes in women's emancipation, going to clubs, playing tennis, keeping bob-hair, dating, dressing stylishly, and attending lectures on English Romantic poets. But all this is not permissible in her community. In this way Jhabvala portrays the image of liberated young Indian girl in Amrita. In *Esmond in India*, an English man Esmond marries Gulab, an Indian beauty. Gulab is portrayed as sluggish, gluttonous and unhealthy and Esmond as mean, extracting and flirtatious. Their married life ends disastrously. Gulab is a beautiful but passive Indian girl. Jhabvala portrays the image of Gulab with warmth. It is Gulab's encounter with Western way of life that makes her uncomfortable. In *Backward Palace* Jhabvala describes the struggle and sufferings of an English girl, Judy. She is marries Bal, an Indian actor. Judy is blessed with a gift for giving and receiving affection. She adapts herself admirably into Bal's joint family. But Bal's behaviour is immature and with lack of planning of her life. Here in Judy Jhabvala has portrayed the image of English woman who can do all possible thing to settle in her in-laws house. *Get ready for Battle* portrays Mala, who is constantly snubbed by her husband Vishnu, who ironically lives double standard life. Jhabvala thus portrays the images of women in her novels quite different from her contemporaries.

Anita Desai is a reputed novelist with many different images of women to her credit. In her first novels *Cry, the Peacock*, she portrays
the first image of an abnormal urban Indian woman in Maya. Maya is a young sensitive woman who marries Gautam four years back. She is childless. When Toto, Maya's white little dog, dies her life takes an unfortunate turnaround. As she is highly emotional, she cannot adjust with the news of Toto's death. She now cries for Toto every day and goes hysterical about it. Maya is gifted with neurotic sensibility and poetic imagination. In insanity she murders her husband at the end and her own tortured life ends with suicide. Maya's image of an urban Indian married abnormal woman is very new in Indian English literature. In *Voices in the City* Desai portrays the images of young women in Monish and Amla. Monisha, Amla and Nirode are brothers and sisters. They all move to Calcutta, to find meaning and identity of their lives. Anita Desai delineates the corrosive effects of a callous metropolis upon sensitive minds. Monisha, married sister of Nirode, is a central character in the novel. In her we can see gripping image of a woman whose married life completely shatters. She comes to Calcutta with her husband. But her relationship with him marks by loneliness and lack of communication. She loves privacy and loneliness very much. Her search for a real meaning of life ends in nothingness and futility. At the end she ends her life by committing suicide. Amla is unmarried, gay and social girl but soon she is in the grip of this city. In this way Desai portrays the images of young women who search real meaning of life and identity in the city of Kali, Calcutta. *Bye-Bye Black Bird* portrays the image of Sarah, the English wife of Adit Sen. Sarah is an existentialist character of Desai like Maya and Monisha.
Sarah is oversensitive. Her married life has given her nothing but alienation and loneliness. Married with an Indian, "she had become nameless; she had shed her name as she had shed her ancestry and identity." (Bye-Bye Blackbird, 35) Sarah has to annihilate her individual identity and self because marriage leaves her no choice. In Where Shall We Go This Summer? Desai portrays Sita, a middle-aged and rebellious housewife. She is mother of four children. Her husband is Raman, is always busy, practical and indifferent to his wife and they have an unhappy married live. She is alienated from her husband. At the end she compromises with her destiny. Fire On The Mountain presents Nanda Kaul, leaving a life of solitude and seclusion. At a very matured stage of her life she decides to lead a lonely life at her bungalow, Carignano, in Kasauli with the charms of mountains. Her life is suddenly disturbed when she receives a letter from her daughter, announcing that her great grand-daughter will be coming to Carignano for a stay. Raka is Nanada's daughter-in-law. She is lonelier and more cut off from society than her great grandmother. In this way Anita Desai portrays the images of women who want their empty space with lots of solitude and loneliness. In this way in Anita Desai we find many images of women like - psychic, frustrated, lonely, abnormal, etc.

Shashi Deshpande is a prominent Indian English woman novelist. Her The Dark Holds No Terrors portrays the character of Sarita. She is driven into schizophrenic state of mind by her in-laws for male child instead of girl. Sarita feels the guilt of leaving her parents, her
mother's death, her career as a physician and also about her marriage. Her brother died when he was just seven year old, she feels guilty herself about his death also. Her mother taunts her at various moments about her being into the world. She is more successful than her husband as a physician. At the end Sarita breaks the sackles of tradition in quest of herself her identity which she ultimately realized in course of her life. In Sarita Deshpande has created an image of a woman who can break the laws of the patriarchal society to fine herself. If I Die Today Deshpande portrays the character of Manju, a lecturer in college. She is broad minded and kind by nature with honesty. Her life is straight forward. She adjusts well with her personal, social and professional life. She is devastated by the institution of marriage with silence and loneliness. In Come Up and be Dead Deshpande portrays Miss Kashama Rao, newly appointed Head Mistress of the school. After some time she thinks that she is not capable of handling the situation, especially when her brother is held as prime suspect. Her dilemma is depicted by Deshpande beautifully. Roots and Shadows presents Indu who finds herself in acute dilemma of choice between her family and profession and between tradition and patriarchy. She is victim of social and sexual oppression in her day to day life. She is a journalist, who wants ot find her own self identity and also wants to attain individuality. But after her marriage she realizes that she again loses her freedom and individuality. Here also Deshpande portrays a typical Indian woman who is caught in the net of marriage and not able to fly with her individuality. In The Binding Vine
she portrays the character of Urmi who raises her voice against the rape of her elder daughter Kalpana by her sister's husband. The image of a woman, who can do anything to punish her daughter's rapist, is portrayed very well. In *A Matter of Time*, Deshpande portrays the character of Sumi. Her husband leaves her without any kind of fault by her side. But most of the people believe her responsible for his leaving home. She is an obedient wife. Deshpande portrays in it the image of woman who is targeted by patriarchal society without any kind of fault by her side.

Bharati Mukherjee in *The Tiger's Daughter* portrays Tara Banerjee Cartwright. She experiences two different cultures of America and India while she is young. She respects elders, addresses others very well. She is very liberal compared to other Indians. In her visit to India she goes to the slums and also calls Calcutta her home. She loves her husband very much. Mukherjee portrays in Tara an image of woman who mingles with the two different cultures very well. In *Jasmine* Mukherjee portrays the character of Jasmine, who goes to different continents to fulfill her dead husband’s wishes. From Hasnapur to Jullundhur to Florida, Manhattan, Iowa may be seen as she is moving towards the brave new world. In her journey she faces Hunger, violence, ill-treatment, rape and murder but she is never frightened through her mission. Her real name was Jyoti. Then she changes to Jasmine and then to Jase at last to Jane. We can see the complete change in her attitude and personality with each new name. Jasmine kills her rapist and she posses no bad memory regarding it. in this way
in through Jasmine Mukherjee portrays an image of woman who never
deters from her real mission whatever may come in between.

Shobha De in *Socialite Evenings* portrays Karuna, the
protagonist. She writes memoirs to free herself from routine boring life
style. As her memoirs become successful she receives name and fame.
She gets celebrity status and plans a television series. The image of
woman who is caught in the day to day routine life style is presented
very efficiently. In *Starry Nights* De portrays Aasha Rani, who
struggles for seven years to become heroine in Indian Film Industry.
Her mother advises her to do blue films to get noticed in the film
industry. She is later blackmailed by her lover over her porn star
career. She also has an affair with a columnist. At the end she commits
suicide. She is a girl with little moral who can follow any path to reach
at the top. *Strange Obsession* presents Amrita Aggarwal, an gorgeous
young super-model. Her beauty is the talk of the town. She meets
Meenakshi Iyengar, a mysterious woman. They develop lesbian relation
between them. The images of women involved in lesbian relation is
portrayed with utmost reality by De. *Second Thoughts* portrays Maya, a
beautiful Calcutta based girl who is eager to escape her dull routine
life to attain glory in Mumbai. She moves to Mumbai after her
marriage. But her husband is strictly of conservative kind of nature
which disturbs Maya. She begins to feel loneliness in Mumbai now.
She finds little solace in her neighbor but he betrays her. The image of
a girl enchanted by the live of the people of Mumbai is depicted very
well by De.
Githa Hariharan in her first novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* portrays the character of Devi, daughter of Sita. Devi returns from America to Madras to live with her. Devi finds it difficult to adjust as she is forced to change her radical ideas. When she comes to India her dream like visit to America ends. But her mother Sita always supports her. Devi finds a friend in Mayamma, the old family servant in the house. In all and all Devi is representative of the present day intellectual woman but she has to face failure, fights loneliness and alienation. Devi also wants to be a good wife. At the end returns home but only after seeing the world to the fullest that signified nothing to her. According to K. G. Maheshwari:

*The Thousand Faces of Night is a novel of three women - Sita, Devi and Mayamma who "walked on tight rope and struggled for some balance, for some means of survival they could fashion on themselves.* (Maheshwari, 169)

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* presents three generations of women who suffer at the hand of male dominated society. The first generation is represented by Mammachi, a typical housewife. She suffers as if she is a caged bird in the hand of her husband. She surpasses her talent for music as he was jealous and full of male ego. Her married life is in want of love. The second generation is represented by Amu, the daughter of Mammachi. She too suffers a lot in a patriarchal world. Her father doesn't allow her to study much as he refuses to pay for her unnecessary expenses. She finds escape route for her caged life. Then she marries.
...Ammu didn't pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted. She thought that anything, anyone at all would be better than returning to Ayemenem.

(The God of Small Things, 39)

She too suffers a lot from her husband like her mother. But since her childhood days she had seen her mother suffering, she fights her battle like a fighter. She comes out of her married life bravely to save her morality and self respect as her husband wants her to sleep with his boss to save his job. Now she doesn't want to return to Ayemenem so fought her battle with her twins. The third generation is represented by Rahel, lived a fully rebel life. Rahel is the daughter of Ammu and sister of Estha. Her horrible childhood memories destroy her life completely but somehow she manages save something. Her expulsion from college due to un-girl quality in her nature didn't let her down. She marries but the marital fulfillment stays away from her. She returns to Ayemenem. Thus in this way all three important women characters of The God of Small Things portrays images of women whose voices are crushed in the patriarchal world.

Jhumpa Lahiri is a prominent Indian English diasporic writer. In The Namesake she portrays the character of Ashima, a nineteen year old girl from Calcutta. She is married with Ashok Ganguli. After marriage Ashima shifted to USA. Ashima make social circles of Bengali people leaving in USA. Somehow she passes her time but most of time she fells alienated in another country. Ashima tries hard to reserve their home culture in USA. She is a typical immigrant woman
who wants to preserve her own country's values. Moushmi, the second
generation migrants, breaks her marriage with Gogol. She goes to live
with Dimitri, a German. She earlier had relation with men from Paris
and America. She doesn't believe in following one particular culture. It
shows new generation migrants are becoming global and also living
like a multi cultural person. Her *Unaccustomed Earth* presents the
character of Ruma, a thirty-eight year Asian Indian woman, married
with Adam, an American. Ruma realizes the importance of mother after
the death of her own mother and her own family. Ruma's mother
migrates to US for her marriage with her father. She strictly follows
the laws of the US as a migrant. In this way in most of her novels
Jhumpa Lahiri portrayed the images of women with keeping in mind
their immigrant status and adjustment with loneliness and alienation.

In the fiction of Amitav Ghosh there are only few women
characters and their role is limited but they are in control of everything
Kumar is an orphan boy of eleven years. He works for Ma Cho, but he
is infatuated by the body of Ma Cho. Ma Cho like many women in
Ghosh saved the situation by the strength and sanity. Her woman stands
as a preserve of cultural and spiritual essence. *The Hungry Tide*
presents Nilima, Kusum, Piyali and Moyna. Kusum is a tribal woman.
Nilima Mashima of Lusibari belonged to an aristocratic family with a
good educational background. Piyali Roy represents the parents
generation. She is a Catologist researching marine animals, a rare
profession for women. And Moyna Mondal, she is also a tribal woman
who stands in the novel as a woman with self respect. In addition she is a woman with soaring aspiration, unlikely for a tribal woman. *Sea of Poppies* presents Deeti, a punching character who undergoes suffering in her married life. She is a kind woman but it shattered by sheer fate. She is a ordinary village woman. Her husband is opium addict. Her mother in law also behaves rudely with her. Deeti remains silent throughout her life as her inner turmoil is very bitter for her.

V. S. Naipaul's novels always presented male protagonist in his novels but there are some important women characters in his novels which are needed to be mentioned. *A House for Mr. Biswas* presents Mrs. Tulsi. She is a pillar of power in Hanuman House. As Gordon Rohlehr states:

*Hanuman House revels itself, not as a coherent reconstruction of the clan, but as a slave-society, erected by Mrs. Tulsi and Seth who need workers to rebuild their empire.* (Rohlehr, 87-88)

After Pundit Tulsi's death Mrs. Tulsi looks after his property and community. She is respected by all and no one utters bad against her. She always asks Mr. Biswas to follow Hindu family tradition as he opposed to it. Although she is an orthodox woman she allows her sons to wear the cross and also to study at Roman Catholic Church in Port of Spain. Another important women character in the novel is of Shama. She is a wife of Mr. Biswas. Her husband remains always dependent of her mother for crucial decisions due to which she is not satisfied with him. She is not in favour of leaving the house when Mr Biswas is
ready. She plans and arranges a house warming ceremony against the wishes of Mr. Biswas, invites everyone from the Hanuman House. In this way Naipaul has portrayed the two different images of women in *A House for Mr. Biswas*.

Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* presents Dian Dalal. She fights for her independence and individuality but she faces the continuous failures and threats by society. She chooses to change her home, because she wants to assert her individuality and sense of self. She has grown up in Bombay, but her sense of liberty after her husband's accidental death keeps her away from her family. Diana's new family creates an ideal world where many cultures mingle with each other. She marries Rustom, the man of her choice and not her father's. She supports herself by obtaining some orders for tailoring clothes. She becomes helpless when the eviction of her flat takes place and has no other place to go. Rohinton Mistry points out through the image of Dian that it is difficult for a woman to live independently without any kind of male protection. In *Such a Long Journey*, Mistry presents Dilnavaz, Roshan and Miss Kutpitia. Miss Kutpitia is superstitious and she has a sound understanding of supernatural things. Dilnawaz is Gustad Noble's wife while Roshan is their daughter. Dilnawaz is a perfect foil to Gustad-soft and pretty. She has female passivity. Roshan is as soft as a doll and fragile. Dr. Jaydeepsinh Dodiya observes,

*Undoubtedly, Mistry's women characters in Such a Long Journey are not dynamic at all. They are traditional*
Indian women. The type of freedom a modern Indian woman is supposed to have is not observed in life of any female character in this novel. (Dodiya, 55)

Anita Nair's *Ladies Coup* presents Akhila. She is a submissive married woman. She is forty five years old. She takes various roles in her life – daughter, sister, aunt and provider for the family. She takes the burden of the home on her young shoulders after the death of her father. Indra Devi says:

*Anita Nair probably hints at the family’s easy acceptance of her as the head of the family on a place traditionally reserved for the patriarch in both the colonial and post-colonial periods.* (Indra, 220).

But after meeting five other women in a train compartment her life completely transfers. She now looks at life very positively. Anita Nair’s Akhila is an embodiment of a submissive woman who comes out of the shackles and feels mantle independency.

In the novels of Manju Kapur we find a rich galaxy of urban middle class women who want to defy society and patriarchal approach. In her very first novel *Difficult Daughters*, she portrays the character of Virmati. She is a vigilant girl who wants to her own room. She wants to study further. Her ideal is her cousin Shakuntala. She wants to be like her. But in achieving freedom and control over her life she marries the man of her choice who is already a married. Her situation worsens after marriage. She enters her in-laws home as a second wife. Reena Mitra rightly asserts:
Unfortunately, however, the assertive and resolute Virmati never blossoms to the full. (Mitra, 78)

Her A Married Woman presents Astha. Her third novel Home presents Nisha. The Immigrant presents Nina. Her latest novel Custody presents Shagun and Ishita. All these protagonists of her are married and educated. All belong to Middle class family. Manju Kapur has presented rich images of women in her novels.
Work Cited


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