

## **Women: No More ornamental Pieces (In Indian Women Novelists' Works)**

**Sangita Mehta**

Assistant Professor, Department of English,  
SNRL Jairam Girls College, Lohar Majra, Kurukshetra

Oas Ki Bund si hoti hai Betiyaan  
Sparsh khurdura ho to roti hai Betiyaan  
Roshan karega beta to bus ek hi kul ko  
2-2 kulo ki laj hoti hai Betiyaan  
Koi nai ek dusre se kum  
Heera agar hai beta to  
Sacha moti hoti hai Betiyaan  
Katon ki rah pe khud hi chalti rahegi  
Auron ke liye phool hi boti hai Betiyaan  
Vidhi ka vidhan hai,yahi dunia ki rasam hai  
Muthi bhar neer si hoti hai betiyaan  
Jinpar ho Ishwar ki aseem kripa  
Unke nasib main hoti hai Betiyaan.

These lines truly explain the importance of woman in the society and portray a picture before our eyes that Gone are those days when women were mere decorative pieces. Now they are bold enough to express and fulfill their desires and dreams. They have made repaid strides in every aspect of modern life. They have opportunities to take bold decisions or lead unorthodox lives. They are not afraid of voicing their opinions or joining forces with other women in the local community of fight against social maladies and injustice. Now the women have made the people realized that status of women in any civilization shows the status of evolution at which,

the civilization has arrived. No doubt they have been the object of constant humiliation and persecution by entirely indifferent cold patriarchal society. But now they are no longer puppets in the hands of male dominated society. They have the courage to face it. In the present scenario, women have shown their mettle in every field and also in literature. Today we have a number of pearls in our literary society like Kamala Markandaya, Shobha De, Shashi Deshpande. Anita Desai, Anudhati Roy, Bharti Mukherji, Maha Sweta Devi, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Manju Kapur, Jhumpa Laheri and so many others, who have shown through their works that in spite of being ill treated, abused and exploited by man, women have the courage to break the shackles of male hegemony and are striving hard to realize their own self after all the word Woman has Man in it, Mrs. has Mr. in it, Female has male in it, She has He in it and Madam has Adam in it. So she has the capability to watch and fulfill dreams of more than mere shadows. As Abigail Adams said that if particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to ferment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no choice or representation.

Shobha De has also tried to show through *Socialite Evening* that now women have such a strong desire that can lead to take decisions. Her women characters are not like of Sati Savitri type, but they are having their values and dignity. They are not ready to accept everything as it is imposed by the male that now will not suppress their desires. In fact they have dare to express their inner desires. As Katherine Anne Porter says:

“Love me, Love me inspite of all!  
Whether or not I love you, whether  
I am fit to love, whether you  
Are able to love, even if  
There is no such  
Things as love love me!”

*Socialite Evening* tells us about Karuna, who has a strong desire to find out her identity and her self from the very childhood days. The story shows how does she struggle with the exploitative men to establish herself in the exploitative male society? And ultimately after struggling, she gets transformed into an exploiter herself and a self sufficient personality gets emerged. She is different from the very beginning like in her way of thinking, in fulfilling her desires (which were very strange to others). Her sister says:

“You were always the strange one, right from childhood,I wouldn't ever figure you out. I used to think youWere slow or vain or both. But there was always some thingSecretive going on inside your mind that none of us knew About.you weren't like the others” (Socialite Evening: 180)

Shobha De has always portrayed her woman characters not only as the protagonist but also as motivating factors in the society. And karuna is one of them. She does not feel satisfied with her middle class life. She wants to get success and wants to be a part of high class society. In order to quench her thirst for becoming a part of high sophisticated class she adopts the profession of modeling. During her profession she meets Bunty who is now her boy friend, but belongs to a middle class. Here she comes in contact in with many popular people through her friend Anjali. But here she feels that she is not made to waste her life for this stupid world of modeling or for her middle class boy friend Bunty. So she decides to go USA in order to find out her own identity and individuality. Ultimately she does what she wants:

“This was going to be my Brave New world trip,  
I was going to find out about myself. America  
was supposed to be my experiment with adulthood.  
I wanted to take Charge, assume responsibility, and  
find directio (Socialite Evening: 51)

But this trip doesn't help her to find out identity as individuality when she comes back from her trip, she gets married with a wealthy businessman. But karuna's marriage is a failure, because it is loveless, joyless infact it is irritating to her. She hates the behavior of her husbands, who always remains busy in reading the business pages of the Times of India. She realizes that this person is not made for her. She says: we were reduced to being people. Everything that mattered to us was trivialized. The message was, “you don't really count, except in the context my priorities”. It was taken for granted but our needs were secondary to their. And that in some way we ought to be grateful for having a roof over our head and four square meals a day. (Socialite Evening: 69)

Ultimately she begins to get detach from her husband. But in getting detached from her husband, she also feels guilt somewhere because basically her husband is not bad. But his fault is that he is just like an average man and she wants something more than average. Finally she begins to take interest in reading books and also gets an extra material affair and the result is divorce from her husband After getting separated from her husband, she adopts some old jobs for fulfilling her basic needs, begins to live with her parents and feels very contended. She feels that this is the best time of her life when she is really enjoying a lot with herself and with her parents. During this stage, she also steals an idea of a journalist who wanted to make a documentary on her experiences, and writes a book. In order to overcome her poverty and middle class life, She says to the agent. "I know when I am on to a good thing and the good thing is me. If anyone is going to cash in on this, baby, it is not going to be you..." (Socialite Evening: 306)

During this period she gets a marriage proposal from Grish, his good friend, the art film maker and also gets a offer from her ex-husband to come back but she feels so peaceful with her parents and with herself, that, she rejects their proposal. Finally she gets, whatever she wants. She rises herself from the middle class life also. She does not compromise with the situations, but faces with courage and enthusiasm and achieves her goal. She does what ever her conscience allows her.

Shashi Despande has also shown through her works that now the woman will not just keep their mouth shut. They are bold enough to express what ever they desire, they want to achieve in their life. A stage comes in woman's life, when she says that no more compromises now. In that long silence the author has also portrayed a character jaya, who is in a state of confusion in the beginning, but as the novel unfolds, she goes through a process of introspection, self analysis and self realization. She is struggling to find her own voice, to create a space for oneself throughout the novel but at the end she does whatever her soul allows her to do. The author has revealed an intriguing picture of an ordinary middle class educated woman, jaya. She lives with her husband Mohan and two children Rahul and Rati. The story revolves around her married life and her role as a mother, as a wife, as a daughter in law. She is fully devoted to her husband and accepts him as he is to her. In spite of showing her so much devotion and dedication, she doesn't get that attention from her husband, as expects. The story begins with Jaya and Mohan's shifting to their old house in Dadar, because of some malpractice was found in Mohan's business. The flat belongs to Jaya's uncle. Here she comes to know about herself, about her married life, about Mohan

and finally realizes that her marriage is as a pair of bullocks yoked together. A man and Woman married for seventeen years. (That Long Silence: 8)

Most of the time, she begins to remain lost in her past memories because she realizes that “Nothing, nothing between us, nothing between me and Mohan we live together but there had been only emptiness between us. (That long silence 1989: 185) She begins to question herself “who am I” because she has also got a name after marriage Suhasini which means a soft smiling, placid motherly woman, a woman who lovingly nurtured her family, a woman who coped . (That Long Silence: 15)

After getting frustrated she also begins to write stories related to her own experiences and emotions and also got the first prize for that. But soon Mohan discouraged her to write about the personal life and she adheres submissively and stops writing about her feelings. Because someone has told her that “A husband is like a sheltering tree. Take your pain between your teeth, bite on it, and don't let it escape”

(That long silence: 32) But finally when she thinks about her past memories and meets Kamat, then she succeeds to come out of that long silence. And she begins to write for the Magazines and Newspapers.

In the end she allows herself to break out of “the long silence”, “I am not afraid any more. The panic has gone” (That Long Silence: 191) She begins to re evaluate her life. She resolves to change her life by renegotiating the power relations and improving the interpersonal relationship within it rather the instrumentality of her writing. (Sunder Rajan: 81)

It means Shashi Despande does not show only the struggle. Her characters are not only suffering but also have the courage to protest. She believes that still there is ray of hope. Life is not all a compromise. It can be made better. She says we don't change even over long periods of time. But we can always hope. Without that life would be impossible. At the end Jaya realizes what her worth is, what her value is. She refuses to be oppressed. She refuses to give up her individuality. She refuses to do things which go against her conscience.

Thus the Indian novelists show that now women have their own voice, a voice that had been suppressed for centuries. Now they have courage to make their own choice and are not dependant on male's choice. Now they are bold enough that they can raise a voice of protest against whatever is going on wrong with them. They will not remain silent any more.

### **Works Cited**

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