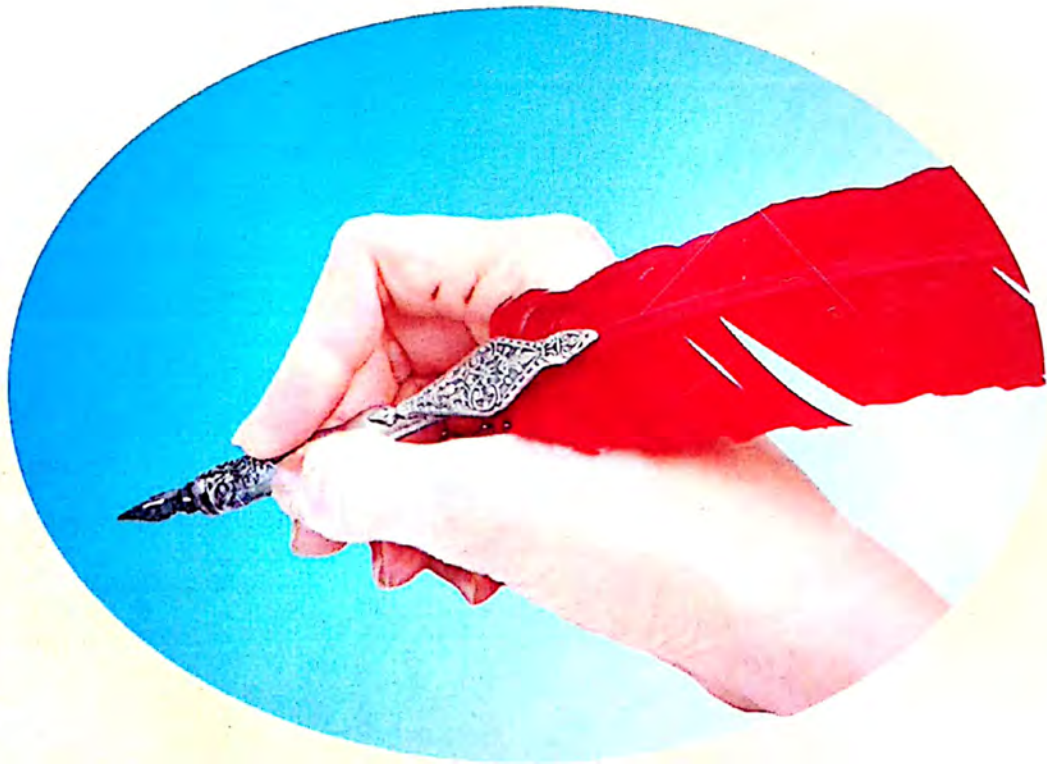


BLAZING TORCHES

*T.M. Umarani
Gomez Sophia
U. Anamica*



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
Jayaraj Annapackiam College For Women (Autonomous)
Periyakulam, Tamil Nadu, India.**

Title of the Book : Blazing Torches
Editors : T.M.Uma Rani
Gomez Sophia
U. Anamica
First impression : February, 2016
Page : 224
Price : Rs.600/-
ISBN : 978-93-84193-59-1
Printed at : Laser Point, Madurai-625 003.

Publisher

Department of English
Jayaraj Annapackiam College for Women (Autonomous)
(Accredited With "A" Grade in Cycle – 3 By Naac)
Periyakulam-625601theni Dt, Tamil Nadu.
Web:jaceng@annejac.com
(Affiliated to Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal-
624102, Tamilnadu.)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced. Stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner. Application for such permission should be addressed to the publisher.

Disclaimer

The authors are solely responsible for the contents of the papers edited in this book. The publisher or editors do not take any responsibility for the same in any manner. Errors, if any, are purely unintentional.

CONTENTS

Preface

- 1 Violence and Sex in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* 1
Dr. A. Muthumeenalosini
- 2 Discovery and Recovery of Landscape in Native Canadian Poetry: A Critique Of Rita Joe's *I Lost My Talk* 9
Dr. A. Roselin Mary
- 3 The Status Given to Women - Unfold The Suppressing Masks of Women 15
Sr. Dr. B. J. Queensly Jeyanthi
- 4 A Silent Triumph Over Psychological Violence: Margaret Shanthi in Anita Nair's *Ladies' Coupe* as an Iconic Woman 23
Dr. D. Silvia Flavia
- 5 The Emerging New Woman In Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* 27
T.M Umarani
- 6 Sexual Issues In Ruth Praver Jhabvala's *In Search Of Love And Beauty* 32
Dr. C Priya
- 7 Persecuted Women – A Global Perspective 35
Dr. Gomez Sophia
- 8 Behaviour of the Anguishes of Women In The Select Novels Of Anita Nair 41
G.Muthu Meenachi
- 9 Discriminated Women In Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat* 48
B.Annapoorani

THE EMERGING NEW WOMAN IN BHARATI
MUKHERJEE'S *MISS NEW INDIA*

T.M UMARANI

Gender discrimination in the society leads towards complicated problems in families which culminate in utter ruin and devastating violence ending up in failure. Women always considered as the weaker sex often become victims of this dominating violence. They are suppressed by the male sex, who always try to crush the feminine psyche. The feminine psyche which often longs for solace, consolation and care from the better half often encounters perennial problems connected with alienation and depression. In spite of the patriarchal domination and psychological sufferings only a few rise up because of their mental makeup.

Post-independent fiction by women writers achieves a separate identity as their novels focus on the conflicts encountered by the women-protagonists who are desolated and isolated by the society. Writers like Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Deshpande and Bharati Mukherjee are all women writers who cross all barriers and boundaries as they present a spectrum of perspectives of women. As an acclaimed novelist and a professor at the university of California Bharati Mukherjee described herself as being raised in Calcutta within a hierarchical classification obsessed society where one's identity was fixed, derived from religion, caste, patrimony and mother tongue.

Bharati Mukherjee's novels and short-stories often reveal contemporary themes and concerns. One of these is the emotional and psychic consequences of search for self identity. Mukherjee does not impose readymade solutions to the problems facing immigrant Asian women. She prefers showing them acquiring the power in order to control their fates. At times, they offer role models for several immigrant women. Fakrul Alam writes:

“Once literature begins to serve as a forum illuminating female experience, it can assist in humanizing and equilibrating the culture, value system, which has served predominately male interests. A literary work is capable of providing role models, instil a positive sense of feminine identity by portraying women who are self actualizing, whose identities are not dependent on men”.

The novels of Bharati Mukherjee give credible illustrations of the predicament of the women in the contemporary society while the characters of her novels feel the unrefined brutalities and violence that surround them, and they become victimized by various forms of social oppression. The novels of Bharati Mukherjee, *The Tiger's Daughters*, *Wife, Jasmine*, *The Holder of the world*, *Desirable daughters* and *Miss New India* present the feminine psyche at various levels of oppression and suppression. For all her struggles and experiences as a writer, she describes her writing as a celebration of freedom and says, “The experience of cutting myself off from a biological homeland and setting in an adopted homeland that is not always welcoming to its dark complexioned citizens has tested me as a person but it has made me the writer, I am today”.

Bharati Mukherjee's eighth novel, 'Miss New India' describes the experience of a young woman, Anjali Bose, who escapes the constriction of a small-town in Bihar, one of India's most backward states, for the promise of Bangalore, one of the country's fastest growing cities. The novel 'Miss New India' brings out the protagonist Anjali's Journey as a quest for the inner self and immigrant psyche which proves to be empowered through illusion and depression. Mukherjee portrays the conventional form of Indian femininity and also the patriarchal dominance clearly. The father of Anjali is very particular of settling up Anjali in her married life. He is so much bothered about “the family honour and fatherly duty” and he bluntly says, “it's not a question of happiness, yours or ours it's about our name, our family and reputation”.

Even at the age of nineteen she has to obey the command of her father regarding marriage. Anjali's sister Sonali's life is a sad story as she is a divorced single mother living with her four year old daughter in a single room flat in Patna, working as a steno-typist. Her dreams are shattered as her husband is discovered to be a drunkard. She accepts her life silently without trying to find her identity. To her Life becomes only 'a tale told by an idiot full of sounds and furies signifying nothing'. Just because she is born as a woman, she is compelled to become a victim of the society which always forces a woman to fall into the trap of matrimony. In the small village Gouripur, family weddings and funerals are the incontestable duties and rituals of Indian life. Most of the other Anjalis accept their fate, hobbled by saris, carrying their infants".

For Anjali, her father thought that B.Com degree would increase her stock in the marriage market. He was keen on searching a partner, for Anjali through various means Matchmaking seems to be a cloud in the distant horizon, but before it was over, the martial monsoon would break and there will not be any blessed showers. Hence Anjali too falls as a victim to the patriarchal society. She gets an associate degree in Commerce, and anticipates with high expectations of her future partner. But the ghastly man chosen by her father, maltreats her roughly by raping her brutally resulting in an emotional breakdown in Anjali.

The women of India in remote villages always bear the tribulations and sufferings patiently. The history of silence experienced by the Indian women is indeed a sad saga, filled with pangs of anguish and sorrow. They were really hushed up without being allowed to raise their meek voices against the brutal society. Since they belonged to the inferior sex, they were treated like beasts, and as a result the feminine psyche gets crushed under iron feet of the male. But the Anjali of Bharati Mukherji asserts her individuality and identity by breaking away the barriers, she leaves her parents a note saying

"I am ready to take my place in the world" and she runs away to the contemporary twenty first century Bangalore, as per her mentor Peter Champion's guidance to settle in life. He persuades her by motivating her to take charge of her own destiny and tells her, "Bangalore is the place for a young woman like you". Bangalore is invigorating and fascinating for Anjali where she will have her 'self' respected. As a symbol of progress, Anjali represents an emerging woman who dares to face life boldly and independently overcoming all the obstacles. Her dominant spirit rising up against social, traditions the undying enthusiasm and daring courage in revolting against the terrorist plot bring out her uniqueness as an emerging new woman.

Thomas Gray says,

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness in the desert air.

The lot of the women forbade them to grow prosperous and victorious as they didn't have the sparks of the revolutionary spirit to face boldly the challenges of life. But Anjali's journey from self- alienation to self identification, from negation to assertion, from failure to success, from pessimism to optimism brings out her feminine self to project as a new Indian woman symbolising a new India.

Anjali is one prototype of the sort of women who want to break away the barriers of the society especially the cultural shortcomings of the patriarchal society. Anjali is supported by her shattered sister Sonali to protest against the norms of the society about the institution of marriage. Anjali becomes 'Anjie' by fabricating an alter-ego, an American version of herself. In the event of accomplishing her dreams she becomes a prey to devouring men in the society. But her revolt against male domination is both educative and creative. She escapes the danger of depersonalisation and self-destruction. Later as a booming business woman Anjali returns to her home village Gouripur to address Peter Champion's students. She reallocates her position from that of an obedient daughter of

Bengali parents destined for arranged marriage and a life of slavery to the other Angie, 'A Miss New India' with the spark of empowerment and liberation.

The traditional middle class Indian girl Anjali, from the northeastern Indian state of Bihar emerges as new woman, as she learns good American English, dreams of a new life in Bangalore, with a successful career. The bright girl from rural India ends up by overcoming caste and class barriers to successfully negotiate her way through India's new call centre woman. The reinventional experience of Anjee, who takes every negative experience positively, makes her really a pioneer of the young aspirants. The aspirers and achievers have to undergo great risks, in order to rise above the average. She inspires the woman as she overcomes the challenges and difficulties of becoming an empowered and independent young woman of India. Janet Wolf in her book "Feminine Sentences" comments, What women write or point is clearly related to their experiences. Those have been very different from those of men. Women writers have focussed on and they are concerned with the situation of women in society. Bharati Mukherjee is one such writer focussing on women and their sufferings in her novels.

WORKS CITED

Vijoy Mishra, *Gynotexts of Indian Diaspora*, Axis Books Private Limited, New Delhi

Monika Gupta, *Women Writers in the Twentieth Century Literature*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.

AlapatiPurnachandra Rao, The Fractured 'Self' in Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India*, In: *International Journal Of English: Literature, Language & Skills* 2015, Eds: MrudulaLakkaraju, 3(4):134-138, ISSN 2278-0742.