

CONCLUSION

Every writer I know has trouble writing. - Joseph Heller

If I waited for perfection, I would never write a word. - Margaret Atwood

Aristotle called Sappho the tenth Muse and not the first “poetess.”

Dryden's *Preface to the Fables* represented literary influence as percolated down the generations as in a family tree. Literary history, in his view, is punctuated with battles of controversy waged between the literary father and the literary son as mighty opposites. Sexual division of labour is the root cause of women's marginalization in literary history. This has resulted in a situation wherein the instrumental functions are monopolized by men and the expressive functions are enforced on women. This has made the division between the public sphere / private sphere rigid. Men have come to rule the public sphere and women have been relegated to the private sphere. This is also the disastrous consequence of socialization which merges man's gender identity with his sexual identity and keeps woman's gender identity apart from her sexual identity. As art and literature belong to the public sphere, woman's engagement with art and literature creates a state of ambivalence: whether she can conform to her new role as a writer as per the male norms. Though feminist theories critique the gendered division of the public and private spheres, the conflict itself is artistically productive. This shows the subversive force of feminist writings as a resistance and oppositional practice.

The textual politics of the majority of the female-constructed literary texts is interconnected with creativity and sexuality and probes into the issues of textuality in relation to gender, language and sexuality. Many feminist writers try to reconstruct a past in their writings, "her story" instead of "his story," by resurrecting or rehabilitating the women writers excluded from literary histories. They focus on analyzing the absence/silence of women in the cultural critique of phallocentric discourses and transform the acts of reading and writing as subversive processes. Their writings try to create a new sense of community based on woman-to-woman relatedness. By exploring the relation between the female sexuality and female creativity, they attack the male systems and male values and the universality of misogyny and androcentrism based on them. They try to deconstruct "the paternity theory" where woman is an absence or silence and emphasize how the female identity is discursively constructed through female sexuality and female creativity.

Sexuality is regarded as a source of power. The gender stereotyping is a form of interpellation of ideology practiced in institutions like family, religion and workplace which makes them part of the ideological state apparatus. There is an intricate connection between sexuality and textuality. The literary text created by the female writer is an aestheticized female body which is a site of male oppression and commodification. Just as the female body is the object of the male gaze, the female-centred text is the site of intrusion by phallocentric aesthetic.

The present study tries to highlight the socio-cultural subjugation of women writers as well as their resistance to the entrenched subordination in

the select fictional works of women on writing women. It aims at to substantiate how the women novelists have appropriated their writings in to a subversive force that challenges the phallocentric organization of society, to identify the long-established hegemonic biases that render women writers' identity, mute or silenced and marginalized. The study also explores the interplay among gender, power and resistance. Both domination and resistance are conditioned by the socio-cultural milieu. This transforms man-woman relationship in to an essentially power relation and family in to an institutional apparatus of repression. The study reflects on the different types of representations of resistance in women's fiction and women's attempt to construct a unique female identity through articulating resistance.

The feminists offer a “re-evaluation” of femininity and female sexuality. The French feminists like Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva develop the concept of *écriture féminine*, which is feminine writing from the position of the female body. It is the kind of writing evolved from woman's body and her bodily fluids. They argue that woman is constructed as the Other through language. Since language remains in the unconscious, the Othering of woman through language takes place at the psychic level. Cixous insists women to “write,” breaking the silence: “Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away so violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text as into the world and into history – by her own movement...” (Abel and Abel 279). Cixous means that woman must put her body as the text to find a place

in the canons and annals of literary history. In other words, the textual politics of *écriture féminine* also incorporates the politics of the female body as a text as well as a site of resistance. Adrienne Rich calls the male-centered language the “oppressor’s language,” which ultimately perpetuates male hegemony. Feminists, therefore, think on the prospects to create a “gyno-centric” language or “female-centred” language as the only medium to express unique female experiences. Agreeing with Claudine Herrmann’s statement that women writers are thieves of language, Alicia Ostriker has stated that women writers have to revise myths, which are forms of metalanguage, in order to truly express their gendered experiences and the female sexuality from the perspective of women. Being androcentric, conventional language silences and marginalizes women. The idea of (re)inventing an authentic women’s writing or a unique female language equal but opposite to the male centred language is a theoretical solution. It will be successful only if the restrictions placed on women’s creativity, inevitably linked to female sexuality, are removed.

The very pervasive metaphors of speech and silence are used by women writers in their writings to express women’s right to speak or their denial of the voice or articulation. Women’s voices are often stifled or their uses of language are confined to the private sphere. Virginia Woolf observes in *A Room of One’s Own* (1929/1963): “Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer” (286). A woman must have a room of one’s own, both literally and symbolically, if she is to write: “A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” (Woolf 117). Women’s imposed silence is a patriarchal strategy used to perpetuate

their subordination. Existing customs, practices, taboos and stereotyped images are appropriated to keep women away from the public domain. Since language is a source of power, denial of language renders women powerless. The patriarchal structures fear that access to education, speech and writing will make woman independent, rebellious and critical of patriarchy. Even if women dare to speak or write, they are quite often ridiculed, isolated, ignored, criticized, insulted and they will become the easy target of vehement and venomous attack even in social media. If a woman writer ventures to deal with themes like sexuality or body politics, she is charged of indecency and vulgarity. Thus, the domain of writing is not women-friendly. No one can disagree with Deborah Cameron when she comments on the predicament of women writers in her *The Feminist Critique of Language* (1998): “Women writers have faced a double bind: their work could be criticized as ‘unfeminine’ or, conversely, as ‘too feminine’, not the work of a ‘real’ writer but merely of a ‘woman writer’” (07). The domains of publication and criticism have been hostile to women. Notwithstanding Barthes’s persuasive argument in the essay “Death of the Author” (1967), reception of women’s writings has been gendered. The phallocentric language and patriarchal discourse create the stereotyped images and representations of women. They have become a discursive practice in cultural texts. Women writers critique the representation of “male” as positive and “female” as negative in phallocentric discourses. Women writers try to reconstruct/deconstruct the male-constructed images of women.

The writers often use the image of madness or psychic disorders as a metaphor to reflect the age in which they live. Madness as a theme and a point of view is an innovation in confessional poetry and postmodernist fiction. It is a perspective that recognizes the reality of experience of a person irrespective of his/her mental condition. At times, psychic disorders become artistically productive as in the case of the confessional poets. Sometimes the writer's anxiety for diverse reasons results in writer's block. Though writer's block looks as if it were to arise from a single cause, it may be a potpourri of several factors like self-doubt, perfectionism, procrastination, unrealistic expectations, unfortunate incidents in one's life and fear of failure. The blocked writers may not be able to work for many years and some of them will give up their writing as a profession. Some may become hypergraphic with an overwhelming urge to write anything, but not their favourite genre. At times, they suffer both writer's block and hypergraphia simultaneously. Many writers have overcome these disorders by making them artistically fruitful thereby saving themselves.

The present study of women's overlapping concerns related to sexuality and creativity take in to account several cultural constructs. The women writers raise the questions of the discriminative socio-cultural factors in a convincing manner through their female-writer-protagonists and resist them through their literary discourses. The study tries to examine the relationship between the situations faced by women writers in different novels in different cultures and their representations of resistance. Irrespective of the cultural differences, there are remarkable similarities in the hegemony women, especially writers, encounter and the resistance they offer. The prevailing

issues in these works make it possible to juxtapose different concerns in order to untie the latent connection between the types of representations and the systems of power structures. These women writers attempt to define themselves against the dominant discourses and struggle to erase the female stereotypes created by them. Instead of the self-sacrificing and all-forgiving female characters populating the conventional writings, the female writers have made powerful women as their protagonists who affirm their individuality through their subversive or even silent forms of resistance. These female-writer protagonists challenge the patriarchal power structures, deconstruct the conventional role-models and create their own spaces both within the family and outside.

The Anglo-American writer Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* (1963) gives an account of Esther's misandrinism, neurosis and creativity. *The Bell Jar* describes Plath's own predicament: the inability to combat self-destruction and neurosis through creativity. The novel also reflects the conflicts between domesticity and self-reliance she experienced as an extra-ordinarily talented woman. *The Bell Jar* is the story of a successful suicide maniac woman writer who wrote the story of an unsuccessful suicide maniac woman writer writing on a woman writer. That is, Plath's novel, a frauenroman, is about an adolescent writer, Esther Greenwood, who finds it very difficult to write about Elaine, her character-writer. Thus, *The Bell Jar* has the structure of a story-within-a-story-within-a-story.

The embedded Esther-doubles and doubled characters, and their double experiences using the *doppelgänger* concept in the novel, provide

information about sexuality, creativity and insanity in the American society of the 1950's. Plath has successfully portrayed the different categories of sexuality through multiple voices of the protagonist not only enhancing the quality of objectivity of the novel but also bringing in polyphony to the text. Self-expression empowers Esther. She chooses to write about her self, her desires and suppressed feelings and emotions to find a voice and space against the feminine mystique that pervaded in her society. This "feminine mystique" of the 1950s America, as observed by Betty Friedan (1963), is no less different from what is discerned by Judith Butler as "gender performativity" in *Gender Trouble* (1990) and as "the beauty myth" by Naomi Wolf in *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used against Women* (1991) which also find its reverberations in Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* (1922) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949). *The Bell Jar* has thus a very contemporary style. In spite of being set in the year 1953, the novel's themes of female sexuality, marriage, motherhood, madness, creativity and confinement presented through the images of fragmentation, alienation, purgation, colours, and so on transcend many generations. Esther's depression, her numbing anxiety, the "sour air of the bell jar" can happen to anyone, at any place, at any time. *The Bell Jar*, a trauma narrative, is a sort of scriptotherapy for both the writer and her created character-writer(s). The autopathographic writing thus functions as both a therapeutic form of writing and a struggle / resistance against the dominant culture. *The Bell Jar* is the writer(s)'s autothanatography as well as auto-obituary, their life writing as well as their death writing. As Elaine is Esther's voice, Esther herself is Plath's voice who tries to bring to

light the double standard of ethics, values and aesthetics followed by the patriarchal society.

The Canadian writer Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners* (1974), a metafiction written in the 1970's, portrays the obstacles a woman writer faces in achieving her goals. It is narrated through the memories of Morag Gunn, an independent single-mother, who struggles to understand the loneliness of her eighteen-year-old daughter, Pique. Morag, with all her strengths and weaknesses, searches for her identity. Through the portrayal of the woman-writer, Laurence concludes her very last novel by digging up her past through a sequence of "Memory Bank Movies." In the novel, readers are informed about Morag's bringing up in Manawaka by the Logans and her pursuit of the self, knowledge and true home through the subsequent years. Thus, *The Diviners* becomes a *Künstlerroman* as well as frauenroman for Morag and her creator, Laurence.

The writer Laurence has created a woman-writer, Morag Gunn, whose experience is that of all dispossessed people in search of their roots and who stands as an inspiring representation of fearlessness and survival. The creator-writer, Margaret Laurence, as well as the created writer, Morag Gunn, offers a resistance that is, an exercise of power against the oppression and injustice of power structures which degrade them to the point of objectification and commodification. The text is a manifestation of Lauernce/Morag's attempt to locate a room of her own against all odds. The text enumerates the various problems faced by the woman writers like writer's block, writer's cramp,

hypergraphia, publication difficulties besides the prejudices of the patriarchal and racial society.

The Latina writer Julia Alvarez's *Saving the World* (2006) presents two female writer- protagonists — Alma Huebner, a contemporary Dominican Republic writer suffering from writer's block and her created character-writer Dona Isabel Gomez, the unknown rectorress of La Casa orphanage at La Coruna who helped Dr. Francisco Balmis, the leader of the Spanish Royal Philanthropic Expedition of 1803, to vaccinate twenty three orphans with cowpox and bring them as sequential carriers from Spain to Central America to save the world from smallpox epidemics. Isabel narrative parallels with the second narrative where Alma identifies herself with Isabel to save her American husband Richard who is involved in the project of AIDS vaccination tests in the Dominican Republic to save the world from AIDS in the twenty first century. The historical narrative of Isabel saves Alma from the world of depression and writer's block.

The multiple embedded narratives in *Saving the World* with their multiple voices and alternate narrations give insights into the cultures of different communities in two different centuries and draw attention towards the major difficulties faced by the marginalized groups in this age of commodification. It also enumerates the problems encountered by writers, especially women writers, in publishing their works. Publishers make use of Alma's ethnic identity as part of their doing good business and she poses resistance to her cultural "Othering." Alvarez uses diverse illnesses as a metaphor of the world's crisis as depicted in the multiple embedded narratives.

Through the revision of the historical narrative of the Spanish Royal Philanthropic Expedition of 1803, Alvarez, reconstructs the place of Isabel in history through her character-writer, Alma and gives her voice. The writer-character(s) thus become(s) the voice of the writer-creator, Alvarez.

The Japanese-American writer Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013) depicts the life of two women-writer-reader protagonists — Ruth, the blocked writer, and Nao, the diarist — while using the writing process as a narrative discourse. Through her twin narrators, she presents a web of narratives weaving Zen Buddhist philosophy and quantum mechanics, man-made disasters — wars and environmental pollution — and natural disasters — tsunami and earthquake, suicide and genocide, Zazen and cyber surveillance, bullying and resistance. Ozeki skillfully creates a *Künstlerroman* or somewhat a *frauenroman* of her women-writer-protagonists through self-realization and social and cultural maturation. *A Tale for the Time Being*'s intertextuality with its hypertexts, paratexts, metatexts and hypotexts and transgeneric features add to the literariness of the novel erasing the boundaries between literary genres, between the real and the virtual, between the mass culture and elite culture.

As a writerly text, *A Tale for the Time Being* is open to endless signifiers making the reader(s) — Ozeki/Ruth/Nao/Oliver and the general readers of the text — active in the literary process. Ruth's hypnagogic visions help her to get access to Nao's world, a decade ago from her present, to change the "now" of reality relating the entanglement concepts of quantum creativity by Erwin Schrödinger with his well-known Schrödinger's cat

experiment and Hugh Everett's Many Worlds Interpretation to the metaphysical concept of time-being and non-dualism in Zen Buddhism, thus saving her from writer's block. Ozeki even shares her concept of reader's block through Ruth's anthropologist friend Muriel to her reader(s). In *A Tale for the Time Being*, women-writer/reader character(s) preoccupy themselves in the production, reception and interpretation of meanings in their position as writer, reader and critic as envisaged by Elaine Showalter in "Towards a Feminist Poetics" (1979). *A Tale for the Time Being*, modeled on the Japanese I-novel known as *watakushi shōsetsu* or *shishōsetsu* flourished in Taisho era, is an autobiographical or semi-autobiographical novel with Ruth as the autobiographical self of Ruth Ozeki using her writing on women writers as a strategy to resist the dominant ideologies prevailing in the real and virtual worlds of multiracial and cyber cultures.

The Indian Dalit writer Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You* (2017) is a feminist manifesto of how the different dominant ideologies of gender, class and caste curb a woman's creative output by taking control of her female reproductive sexuality and female literary creativity. The unnamed narrator-writer in the novel is portrayed as the victim of the emotional, physical, sexual and psychological violence of her husband who considers her writing and career as unwomanly activities, confining his writer-wife to the private sphere of domesticity. The brutal day-to-day marital rape of the narrator-writer becomes a metaphor of the patriarchal authority as per Lenore Walker's Cycle Theory of Violence in *The Battered Woman* (1979), comprising a three-phased recurring battering cycles — the tension-building, the acute battering incident

and the respite/honeymoon phases — in an abusive relationship. The writer as well as her created writer-character challenges the myths of rape and domestic violence by becoming a free writing woman.

The narrator's Communist husband's poem, "When I hit you/ Comrade Lenin weeps" stands in sharp contrast with his Marxist ideology and writer-wife's musings: "I cry, he chronicles. The institution of marriage creates its own division of labour" (Kandasamy 84). This later functions as the author's statement. The text portrays how unfortunate circumstances can create hypergraphia and writer's block in the same woman writer as per Flaherty's cycles of productivity in her *The Midnight Disease: The Drive to Write, Writer's Block and the Creative Brain* (2004). The novel also demonstrates how kitchen can be used as her stratagem for resistance to patriarchy, besides her writing. Kandasamy's profuse use of different colours as symbols of Othering, appeal to the reader's visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and tactile senses. Thus, the unnamed narrator becomes every woman, a case of social/cultural Othering.

All the selected novels reflect the patriarchal strategy to stereotype woman as Madonna/Monster or virgins/whores or mad woman irrespective of culture. Plath presents this angel/monster trope in *The Bell Jar* through the twelve guest editors and various maternal figures and through the multiple voices of (fe)male characters. In *Saving the World*, Alvarez gives insights to the Latina culture that views woman as the maternal model of the Blessed Virgin Mary, either the Mexican version Virgin de Guadalupe or her Spanish version Doña Marina, or La Malinche/ La Llorona emerged from the European

archetypal images and the Latin American mother figures. The Virgin de Guadalupe/ La Malinche dichotomy is presented in Isabel (*Saving the World*) just like the mother figure Madonna and the Whore aspects in Morag (*The Diviners*). Nao in Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* is forced to become a "virgin whore" with the fetish customers of one of the notorious Akhibara French Maid Cafés in Japan. In her two customers, one has been a school uniform fetish masochist and the other a fetish sadist of some BDSM groups. When the unnamed narrator's husband in Kandasamy's *When I Hit You* calls her *Thevidiya*/whore on a daily basis, she gives many hints to testing virginity in the Indian culture by *agni-pariksha* or a trial by fire like Sita in *The Ramayana* and widows maintaining their "purity" through Sati, thus highlighting the "purity"/"pollution" of woman's body. The writer/character-writer discusses short untied loose hair of the registered sex workers of the colonial India and the loose hair seen as the symbol of wanton woman in *Kamasutra* to the "matted hair of women saints and the shorn head of widows, a symbol of their having given up all claims to exercising sexuality" (Kandasamy 72). Morag's (*The Diviners*) long straight black hair becomes short, permed and coloured to become the colonized "smart" wife of the English Brooke only to become "Morag Dhu" (Morag Black) of her Scottish strain of Anglo-Métis identity later. The testing of woman's "purity"/"pollution" notion reflects in Brooke's oft-repeated playful question before he went to bed with her: "Have you been a good girl, love?" (Laurence 200). Women writers thus critique the apparent representations of female sexuality in to the dichotomization of good/evil in different cultures.

The patriarchal view of wife as the property of husband is condemned by Morag as the wife of the authoritarian Brooke (*The Diviners*), unnamed narrator (*When I Hit You*) and Esther for Mrs. Willard (*The Bell Jar*). The unnamed narrator (*When I Hit You*) observes the patriarchal society's attitude to normalize rape by victim blaming and slut-shaming instead of punishing the perpetrator(s) and she cites various examples ranging from the brutal rape of the sixteen-year-old "Suryanelli Girl" from Kerala by forty two men over a period of forty days to thousands of unknown marital rapes in India to let know her marital rape on a day-to-day basis. Kandasamy thus exemplifies the emotional, physical and sexual violence against the writer-protagonist as well as the violence against women from colonial India to the present. The attempted rape of Esther by Marco (*The Bell Jar*) and Nao — both homosexual and heterosexual — by her classmates (*A Tale for the Time Being*) too suggest the dominant rape culture that prevails in the world. Nao becomes a victim of "menstrual" or "red rhapsody" pornography and her bloody panties are put on auction in a *burusera* / panty fetishists' online shop and her rape video porn finds a good rating in the cyber space for the voyeuristic gaze of others. Ozeki thus substantiates that cyber culture too promotes real/ virtual rape, pornography and sexual violence. Kandasamy too criticizes the male voyeuristic gaze in cyberspace irrespective of generations, whether young or old, like the unnamed narrator's father's seventy-five-year old Mathematics tutor who wants to demean or flirt with her in the social media like Facebook (*When I Hit You*). The lusty male gaze of steward towards Isabel proves that even a woman with a scarred face from smallpox is

not spared (*Saving the World*). Though all women are not actual rape victims, they are victims of the threat of rape.

The select women's novels express the patriarchal view of women as systems of reproduction and men taking control of reproductive experiences of women through technical intrusion. The male gynecologists' interference in Mrs. Tomolillo's delivery belittling her pain and pleasure (*The Bell Jar*) is in sharp contrast with Morag's delivery of Pique feeling each and every moment of her newly experienced motherhood (*The Diviners*). The women writers critique the laws of religion, mostly made by man, which do not permit woman to take reproductive choices and often many deliveries put woman's life at stake. Dodo Conway, the eternal mother, who has six children and is on the verge of a seventh (*The Bell Jar*), Morag's Catholic landlady Mrs. Crawley in her late twenties who has had four kids and expecting a fifth one and Dan's wife Bridie with her seven children at a very younger age (*The Diviners*) and little Francisco's young wife Maria with five kids (*Saving the World*) are some instances. The mothers and would-be mothers in the Isabel narrative of the nineteenth century (*Saving the World*) were considered mere reproductive machines with no access to education and many died during child-birth. Alma's narrative also illustrates that the situation has not changed in the Third World nations even in the twenty first century. The unnamed narrator's husband (*When I Hit You*) provides a good instance to the patriarchy's attempts to subvert female artistic creativity by emphasizing the reproductive functions of women whereas Dr. Brooke Skelton controlled Morag's reproductive creativity and literary creativity denying the pleasure of

motherhood (*The Diviners*). The multiple maternal figures — mother, foster mother, stepmother or other mother substitutes appearing in the novels —*The Bell Jar*, *The Diviners* and *Saving the World* —exemplify both the emancipatory and repressive features of motherhood. Isabel's identity as a foster mother to children at the orphanage enjoying motherhood devoid of reproductive experience functions as a foil to Alma's maternal desires as a stepmother (*Saving the World*). The intruding mother of the unnamed narrator (*When I Hit You*) is different from the hundred-and-four-year old Zen Buddhist Jiko (*A Tale for the Time Being*). Through the presentation of several maternal figures against paternal figures, the women writers of select novels exhort the need for reproductive rights, reproductive health and reproductive justice as envisaged by the ACRJ.

The women writers of select novels also urge the need for solidarity and sisterhood for women's empowerment and collective resistance in their texts. Plath has foreseen this concept and presents it in the twelve interns staying in the Amazon hotel exclusively reserved for women, in the various sisterhood episodes and the exclusive women's mental hospital (*The Bell Jar*). The relation between Morag and Ella (*The Diviners*), Isabel and Alma beyond space, time and geographical barriers, and Alma and Tera (*Saving the World*), Ruth and Nao (*A Tale for the Time Being*) are various instances of sisterhood relationships. The fact that language is not a barrier to form solidarity among women is proved by the sisterly affection between Isabel speaking Spanish and the native Kaluluwa speaking Tagalog in *Saving the World*.

All the female-writer-protagonists of the select five novels—(Esther in *The Bell Jar*, Morag in *The Diviners* and Alma and Isabel in *Saving the World*, Ruth and Nao in *A Tale for the Time Being* and the unnamed narrator in *When I Hit You*) — give insights in to the life of a woman writer. The women writers present the other minor character-women writers like the twelve guest editors, Esther's sponsor writer Philomena Guinea and her created character Elaine (*The Bell Jar*), the historical old pioneer settler writer Catharine Parr Traill and successful Ella Gerson (*The Diviners*), the old feminist Japanese writer of *watakushi shōsetsu* or *shishōsetsu* or I-novel Jiko Yasutani (*A Tale for the Time Being*) and male writers like Brooke (*The Diviners*), the unnamed narrator's Communist husband (*When I Hit You*), the medical writing of medical crew of the Spanish Royal expedition of 1803 of the Isabel narrative and Mario Gonzalez-Echavarriga, the patron of Latino critics of the Alma narrative (*Saving the World*) and Haruki I's world war narratives in his diary and letters in Nao narrative and Oliver in Ruth narrative (*A Tale for the Time Being*) as literary device to compare and contrast their identities. All these female writer-protagonists overcome their writer's block or hypergraphia or both due to fear of failure procrastination, perfectionism, publication difficulties and unfortunate circumstances in their life by writing about the female experiences. Various literary genres like the letters, memoir, diary (*The Diviners*, *Saving the World*, *A Tale for the Time Being* and *When I Hit You*) films, photographs (*The Diviners* and *When I Hit You*), articles, novels, poems, short stories (*The Bell Jar*, *The Diviners* *Saving the World*, *A Tale for the Time Being* and *When I Hit You*), and blogs (*A Tale for the Time*

Being and *When I Hit You*) are used by the women writers as writing strategies against dominant discourses.

The study **Portrait of the Writer as Woman: A Study of Creativity and Sexuality in Women's Fiction** tries to provide a portrait gallery of the writer as woman which includes the portrait of an adolescent writer in Nao (*A Tale for the Time Being*), the portrait of a suicide maniac young writer in Esther (*The Bell Jar*), the portrait of a young writer-wife as well as the portrait of a divorcee writer in the unnamed narrator (*When I Hit You*) and Morag (*The Diviners*), the portrait of a young mother writer in Esther (*The Bell Jar*) and Morag (*The Diviners*), the portrait of a single mother writer in Morag (*The Diviners*) who has written about “The Portrait of a Writer as a Pregnant Skivvy,” the portrait of a foster mother writer in Isabel, the portrait of a step-mother writer in Alma (*Saving the World*), the portrait of a childless mother writer in Ruth (*A Tale for the Time Being*) and Alma (*Saving the World*), and the portrait of a middle-aged writer in Morag (*The Diviners*), Ruth (*A Tale for the Time Being*) and Alma (*Saving the World*). The vivid portraits draw attention towards the major difficulties faced by women writers and their resistance and evaluate the status of women writers with regard to their position in the male-dominated public sphere of literature.

Women's writing on writing women is, therefore, a surrogate female body evolved from the female desire and female sexuality. The aesthetic of their writing parallels an attempt to create a female-centered language. The select fiction reflects writing women's responses to male domination in sexuality and creativity. It is an attempt to find out how women have created

spaces of resistance to the dominant discourses of patriarchy. These women writers strive to recontextualise, recreate and rewrite the past in their writings with a view to retrieving the submerged female identity and moving to the centre from their marginalized positions. They articulate their voices of dissent and resentment towards multiple oppressions in patriarchal, capitalist and racist society. All these novels give a kaleidoscopic view of woman's predicament in different cultures. It is definitely a march towards action from speech, to assertion from silence. The modes of resistance shown by the women characters in these fictional texts create new forms of resistance discourses. They raise the questions of oppression, marginalization and objectification in a convincing manner through their writer-protagonists. Their writings resist the forces of multiple oppressions in contemporary society.

A close reading of the select fictional texts by women writers on writing women reveals the various strategies women novelists adopt to articulate resistance and to assess the impact of specific socio-cultural and historical contexts on the authors' conceptualization of resistance. The ambivalence created by the binary division, the public/ private sphere, develops into an artistically productive conflict and gets manifested in the form of resistance in their works. The lives of the female writer-characters certainly become instrumental in creating a change in the social psyche, the collective unconscious of the readers, especially women readers.