

**WOMEN IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF
ANITA NAIR AND RUPA BAJWA- A STUDY**

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CONCLUSION



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The women writers say that stories never end, at every ending there is a new and spirited beginning-the beginning of an every woman who herself unchained from the disrespectful world leads her life on her prophecy. Anita Nair and Rupa Bajwa through their novels *Ladies Coupe*, *Mistress*, *The Sari Shop* and *Tell me a Story*, profoundly intends to hope that change will occur definitely, by presenting various phases of women switching from slavery to person opposing patriarchy.

Anita Nair and Rupa Bajwa's novels have dealt with the lives and experiences of women, who face discrimination and traumatic experiences in their family life. They have discussed issues such as subjugation of women, domestic violence, gender discrimination, identity crisis and rape. Their fiction mainly presents the ethos of the middle-class women in the Indian urban life. Women in their fiction belong to the post-independent India, educated and conscious of their individuality, and who try to find their place in the family and in the society. They appear to challenge patriarchal oppression, and show the possibility of these women seeking independent life of their own.

Anita Nair and Rupa Bajwa's novels, particularly focus on the themes that exist between mother and daughter, husband and wife,

between father and daughter. In all relationships, women occupy the central stage and significantly, the narration shifts through their feminine consciousness. Generational differences are seen in all the selected narratives, especially those regarding women's issues. The older women in the novels tend to agree with traditional ideas of gender, while younger women express more contemporary ideas.

Akhila in *Ladies Coupe* being a spinster, it was Akhila who was responsible for the family's social, financial escalation. But at the end, she was denied of the status, for the ability of mind that she has paid and her agility to keep going without letting the family fall apart. Akhila suffered emotional numbness, a natural reaction to trauma and to control herself in this initial stage of grief and loss. The protagonist emotional numbness was the last door for her bonding with the family.

Akhila accepts the reality and loss that sprouted in her life.. She learns to reorganize herself from the life's experiences. Physical isolation from her family is like fighting for own freedom and equality which has lost long ago. Her way of rejecting to tolerate the age old tradition and social set up, that has allowed a woman to work for the benefit of patriarchal order which only knew to condition her. The writer strongly advocates feminist consciousness but not feminist ideology. Akhila ponders with subtleness. The stress, that, many well educated twenty-first century women experience. Akhila struggles to define herself within

a patriarchal frame of reference. She exposes social injustice and the necessity for justice in the lives of women. She portrays women who grapple with sexual and social conflicts.

If Akhila is a spinster, Radha in Anita Nair's *Mistress*, is a married woman with an artistic temperament. She is a representative of the larger predicament of women in general in the contemporary Indian society. On par with women's career marriage is known to be playing a dominant role in a traditional society like that of India. Radha's marriage with Shyam is like a boat in turbulent water. The couple had their own priorities to choose life in marriage. For Radha, it is to reunite her guilt consciousness, family honor and personal identity as a married woman. For Shyam, Radha is only a financial supporter and to own a beautiful girl as wife for the sake of hike of his social reputation. Though lovelessness in marriage drives Radha to seek solace and comfort through extra marital relation with Christopher, within no time Radha's realization from the world of artificiality makes her to know her responsibility as Shyam's wife. Radha's pure love churned to be Chris's Mistress and to become a mother which was not made possible to Shyam because of his physical impotency. However, Shyam loved her for what she is and for what she has. Radha assumes the role of traditional India wife who seeks comfort in her rightful place as wife and mother in the patriarchal system.

For Akhila and Radha life has opened new windows to usher in change to an extent that their dreams are remade and their goals for survival are self set. But for Kamla in the novel *The Sari Shop* by Rupa Bajwa, life has offered her no solutions to reach out. Akhila and Radha are educated and able to triumph in life and subsequently they move on. But Kamla's life is like a stagnant pool, where in there are many unseen invisible whirlpools. The writer Rupa Bajwa unlike Anita Nair has picked her protagonist from Indian slums. Where illiteracy, poverty, superstitions, aimless goals, emotional pulls, psychological constraints, affections, financial struggles, addiction to drugs, rape stages the show in the life of protagonist.

Kamla being woman of self respect she craves for the bonding within her family, especially struggles to grab her husband's attention and support. But fate plays a different role she becomes lonely when she is not given due respect. she is a lone warrior seen fighting for her voice to be heard in an otherwise dumb struck patriarchal society, who feels that accepting and listening to woman is a social taboo. Kamla presence is ostracized, she is subjected to domestic violence, humiliation and physical assault only because she was a woman from the lower class.

Kamla remained to be called with her own name instead of adding her husband's identity. Like the mariqueen in the malls with no feelings towards life. Kamla did exist in the life's mall. When her husband was ill-

treated by the rich class, she fights on behalf of her man who otherwise did not think her as human being till then. The way she scarifies her life in the most heinous violence remains to be a black mark in the progress of women development especially from rural and slum areas. Kamla is killed not by men but by the order of patriarchal, who has no value for life and woman. Kamla's death is an eye opener to the brutal warfare that seems to stretch across the world.

The rich class and caste struggles in India have been denying woman her identity as an individual, who has equal right to stay and strive with self dignity with others in the society. The haves and have not's struggle have been slightly hinted by the writer who portrays her protagonist as a victim to the consumerist class. Patriarchy has always scoffed at the weaker sex and remains dumb for the meek. In death, Kamla's soul reaches peace but her brutalized body tormented and tortured distills the agony of poverty and grief struck life of marginalized and suppressed women in India. The soul of Kamla hopes for a new beginning atleast for the generations to over the disparity of class struggle that may not vandalize the human right to live in peace and harmony in the society.

If Kamla's life has come to a forced end Rani of *Tell Me a Story* who is also from slums who learns to resist the pressures of life and makes them as pleasures of life. Rani's life from the couch of contentment is

suddenly thrown out into the streets with sudden death of her father. When her family thought her to be a family burden, she learns to move on. Rani remains to be firm and unperturbed which are hallmark signals of her positive mind. She has learned to carve her own niche that could brighten her life and future.

Rani unhesitatingly chooses to have a carrier as a domestic servant. Later she takes up a job in beauty parlor. She is exposed to new class of women whose high class style of survival gives her clarity of her class struggle. Her positivity never hampers her to lose confidence in whatever situation she stays in. She learns to grab each and every opportunity that life has given her. She takes hold of the lost reigns and now remains to be an architect of her own fate.

Mostly, these women characters survived only to fulfill their dharma to please their husbands and in return bear severe pain and have permitted for the use and abuse of themselves in the hands of their men. Though unfairly subjected to gender discrimination, agonized in the name of marital relationships and subjected or cruelly raped, or forced to tolerate humiliations in the name of widowhood, women are made to accept these kinds of harassments as a part of their *stridharma* (duties of woman). They were forced to be convinced to think it as fate. Violating these rules was treated as a sin. Akhila's Amma, Margaret's mother,

Janaki, Sheela's mother, Sudha, Rani's mother and Aunt belonged to this class of traditional role.

Anitha Nair's Prabha Devi, Margaret Shanti, Sheela's grandmother and Sadhiya are the women are in reality wearing the mask of modernity while they are traditionalists who pretends to accept patriarchy. Hence, these women try to muddle through and at times move back and forth between the traditional and modern values and finally come to rest on a plane neighboring the two concepts. All these women lived acquisitive and connoisseur lives. They desired a beautiful house, status family, a caring husband and with good looks.

The women in between neither customary nor deep-seated in their thoughts and practice are the second type of women roles. Rupa Bajwa's Mrs.Sachdeva, Mrs.Kapoor, Mrs.Bhandari and Mrs. Gupta are the women who belong to this stratum. These female characters were wives of someone who are socially reputed and financially strong. They do not have any independent existence and they have been called as Mrs. Sachdeva, Mrs.Kapoor, Mrs Bhandari. It is all rented from husband's chain of command and tradition.

Modern woman is dauntless, resilient and rebellious. She does not surrender herself to the norms of men. As far as reaching feminist ideology articulated for instance, Akhila, Karpagam, Marikolanthu, Radha, Saadiya Kamla, Rina Kapoor Rani and Sadhna fit in to a new

woman gap, otherwise supposed to have fresh uniqueness. Anita Nair and Rupa Bajwa women protagonists are rebellion, aligned with labeled roles imposed on them by the society. At the end of every story one finds the change in the women from suppression to liberation.

What a women needs in this well structured patriarchal world is self identity to make choices of their own with regard to career, sexual relationships without the norms and influence of the patriarchal society. It is true that even working women also faces the challenges in every aspect. Women are the victims of the social impairments, they need to pursue studies and enlarge their boundaries of thoughts, and societal acceptance by removing disparity between different classes, and women will surely be empowered. Through women characters, the writers present before their readers the instances of India and unlock one's vision to the true India of the twenty first century.

The main aspiration of Anita Nair and Rupa Bajwa's writings is to bring conscious to the term female individuality, which is much more important and essential to the present society. The perspective towards female individuality has completely changed in modern times. Female individuality is not just doing whatever they want to do; it is about doing the right thing against all odds. Every person needs to understand the responsibility comes from the freedom. Women need to be self supporting financially, through which they knew their self worth that in turn

clarifies them that no longer needs men to protect them, as they themselves capable enough to fight their own battle. At the end they emerge victorious.