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## CONTRIBUTION OF FEMALE WRITERS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the woman writers in the English literature and their strong writing as well. The most important women authors will be portrayed. The paper will also explore the economic, social, political and other circumstances that determined their writing and try to represent their lives, their agony, their struggles, their writing and the styles they used especially in essays that reach beyond a reading of a single text in order to challenge existing thinking or extend debates about an author, genre, topic, or theoretical viewpoint and relate literary analysis to wider cultural and intellectual contexts. Gender plays an important role in the lives of human beings. From the very first breath of their life, humans were taught to follow a strict code of behaviour that differs depending on their sex. In a patriarchal society, this often means that a male will lead a dominated privileged life in which he has thought to be the standard for human experience and the female will lead a subordinate, submissive life in which she is defined only in relation to males. Both patriarchy and imperialism could be seen to exert different forms of domination over those subordinate to them. Because of this, it was important for the experiences of women under the patriarchal influence to come out to the forefront and reveal the undue cruelty be held on them by men. It was necessary for the women to protest against this male dominance over them. We observe that women continue to define the borders of the community, class and race. They tried to express their agony and dissatisfaction of male dominated attitudes through their works. Moreover, The view on the feminine issues depended on the economical and living conditions that women writers went through, their education, social environment, the attitude toward tradition and the issue of women's independence. Whether the starting point for readers is literary and cultural studies, critical theory, or the canon of literary writings and its traditions, the agendas that have now been argued by feminist theories and explored in women's writings, cannot now be silenced or suppressed. Yet we still inhabit a world in which the reality for many women is that they remain second-class citizens and many women suffer horrific violence and injustice. Therefore, there is still a crucial and immediate need to publish new scholarly critical work, which will help men and women to reconsider their past gender identities, and equally significant, to review their futures.

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**Keywords:** civilization, agony, patriarchal, social environment, Female Writers' Contributions.

## 1. Introduction

Since the 1970s a wide range of feminist writers have made a commendable contribution to education by uncovering the lost histories of real women as well as revealing the revolutionary zone occupied by women's imagined reconstructions of reality. Historically, the dominant role of patriarchy was generally noticeable until the close of the nineteenth century. Writing offered opportunities to explore the injustice and cruelty tolerated by women, but it was also a space to imagine a different kind of society in which women's lives might be improved, and men's dominant role(s) contested.

The aim of this essay is to take a closer look at selected women writers of the English history and at the society that influenced, shaped/restricted their writing. The rise of the female novelist began in the 18th century, but it was not until the middle of the 19th century that their writings emerged on the literary market. Historically, the dominant role of patriarchy was generally evident until the close of the nineteenth century. Situation for women writers was very difficult. With almost no formal educational background and little job opportunities, they had no other choice but to immerse themselves in writing novels as their way to escape from the dominant patriarchal society. Importantly, in doing so, some of them would paradoxically appropriate another masculine genre (Showalter, 1977, pp.3-4). It has to be taken into consideration that writing, and especially the novel genre, was for many of them the only way to comment critically on some of the social ills, including women's oppression. An ironic and defensive counter-voice is noted in the example from Clarion (1913), in which R. West confessed: 'I myself have never been able to find out precisely what Feminism is: I only know that people call me a Feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat or a prostitute.' Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) was an influential and inspiring writer, for many English-speaking writers, the extended essay entitled *A Room of One's Own* (1929) is widely cited still as an example of early feminist cultural ideas.

They regarded the novel as a powerful tool to raise awareness about restrictions that affected women in the 19th century. Naturally, the messages that they wanted to convey were carried out under a veil of different literary devices. Their resistance would be manifested on the level of plot, characterization or style. Men held almost all the positions concerned with the writing, they were novelists, editors, publishers and in some aspects they felt threatened by the entrance of women in the field of literature.

## **2.The Role of The Women Writers in English Literature**

Women in literature are depicted differently based on the culture in which they are immersed in. They find literature the most expressive form of art, which is true to women's experience. Although almost all literature has a male protagonist, the women are always prevalent in the stories or journeys of these male characters. The tradition of women writing has been much ignored due to the inferior position women have held in male-dominated societies. Women themselves were often the only champions of themselves, their contemporaries, and their predecessors. Women's writing falls as a separate category, which articulates the gender specific concerns of women – feminist viewpoint. Women's literature is intimate, confessional, and autobiographical. Victimized as women are by male cruelty and indifference, the identity of women is formed out of pain and suffering. Celebration of femininity is a collective identity of the female world. The collective identity is constructed on their collective oppression, which is a shared experience.

Women's literature provides role-models. Individual women find their identity. It was the pen of male writer that the image was created as we see in literature today. Women were dominated by men in every field. It is only after the 19th Century that their lot has improved to some extent. Till then, the image of women in Indian literature has been the creation of dominantly male writers. Occasionally there were men who spoke out alongside women. Some of the first recorded attempts to note women's contributions to literature were catalogs published in the 18th century and were written by men. *Feminead* (1754) by John Duncombe and *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain Who Have Been Celebrated for their Writing or Skill in the Learned Languages, Arts, and Sciences* (1752) by George Ballard are two such manuscripts. So we may say that it is the male writers who have opened the door for women to fight for their rights and equal position in society. Gradually the women writers have come to the force and claimed their rightful place in Indian literature.

Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication on the Rights of Women* (1792) is a landmark treatise that paved the way for many women after her to not only publish their works but also to engage in the overall critical discourse surrounding the issue of women in literature.

Writing was considered unworthy of women, and only if she had a good reason for it (if she was the sole breadwinner in the family) it wasn't frowned upon. They wrote about various topics, mostly in the form of a three decked novel and in different genres like the governess, detective, sentimental, religious, divorce, children's literature, *New Woman* etc. The courage that took women novelists to write, to publish, to publicly admit the authorship of their works was something that today most women cannot imagine. Though many of them today are judged according to the stance they took on the issue of womanhood, it would be unjust to put them only into categories of radicals or conservatives (take into consideration that what

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we consider conservative for today's point of view was radical in theirs) Their writing, their struggle, their courage, their opposition opened doors for new generations of women writers. The analysis of world women writers' literary works would depict the changes referred to women's right to take part in public life between the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. In the 19th century women were hardly engaged in the activities outside the family duties. The 19th century was the beginning of women's engagement into public matters concerning charity activities and education. In the 20th century they started to be interested into political matters as well as to set up their feminist organizations without the participation of men.

Women writers dominated the vast novel market in Victorian England, yet twentieth-century criticism has, until now, been chiefly concerned with a small number of canonical novelists. In recent years a greater emphasis on inter sectionality has encouraged exploration into the relationship between race, gender, religion, and class to even further prove the importance of the acknowledgment of the place of marginalized groups in literature.

### **3. Contemporary Women in Advanced Modern Era**

With the advent of literary modernism, women authors came into their own as innovators. As they traditionally had, women writers tend to focus on the experiences and insights of female characters, domestic difficulties, and the social tragedy caused by wasting the will and talent of women. With modernist aesthetic experiments women authors could begin to develop their own lyrical modes of expression. Using imagery and subjective perspectives, modernist authors inscribed a different experience of the world through a lyrical language of the senses. Modernism twined the issues of social order, gender, the endeavour for education and the needless and detachment of the time. The motion was a repercussion to an international sense of melancholy, thus creating a hopeless idea among people that nothing was any longer tangible or trustworthy. It dispensed with the way human identity seemed to change, and it welcomed disturbance and refusal to walk beyond the oversample. Gender matters have always been a topic of discussion in society as well as in literature, so it became a major attraction of the modernist movement.

Female fraternities had always been treated as a subordinate class by the male patriarchal society. The intellect, the opinion, and their discernment had always been looked upon with detestation by the male oriented society. Women were treated more as accessories to the men in their lives than as independent or metaphysical institutions. Females were portrayed in literature as feminine, dependant, feeble, submissive, and ignorant. Major writers sustained their writings with the fallacious perception that women were always second class to men.

For centuries, women were described by men; the society was male-centric and male-controlled. Male scholars and social intellects were the ones who distinguished woman

with disorder, brutality, confusion, unreason, and the prohibited —other.

#### **4.Female Indian Writers**

History with societal norms was continuously challenged by women, who became the most distinguished and prolific names in the prospect of Indian Literature. There were Indian women writers who tried to engrave their authority in a male dominated conditions as best as it was possible to them. It was a tough task for them, as the women had to break through years of male dominance, taboos and beliefs that had heavily inseminated the society. There are many Indian women writers both authors and poets, based both in India and abroad. The depiction of immigrant women has often been discussed in literature. Indian women writers in foreign land are equipped with better themes than the undying subjects like women rights, unjustness, gender biasness and so on. Some novelists like Jhabvala and Anita Desai are late migrants while others, like Jhumpa Lahiri, belong to the second generation of Indians abroad. Most expat writers have a frail grip of actual conditions in modern India, and tend to recreate it through the sense of nostalgia. Their best works deal with the Indian immigrants, the section of society they know better. Sunithi Nam Joshi, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Divakarvas and Bharathi Mukherjee are the oldest, and most creative. Authors like Jumpha Lahari, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy and Manju Kapoor too have written novels of Magic Realism, Social Realism and Regional fiction, and rewarded from the increasing attention that this fiction has received National and International awards. The work of Indian women writers is significant in making society aware of women's demands and desires, and in providing a medium for self expression and in this way, rewriting the history of India. Undoubtedly, it is well realized that they have recognized a good job in revealing the fallacies of the male- controlled society and bringing it to the lights of the people making them aware of the various rigid limitations and constraints that were dumped on them by society.

Some Prominent Female Authors, their Literary works & quotes.

In order to make this transition smooth and significant, women writers have taken upon themselves this great task.

Jane Austen (1775 – 1817) : She was a renowned English author who wrote romantic fiction combined with social realism. Her famous novels include Sense and Sensibility (1811), Pride and Prejudice (1813), Mansfield Park (1814) and Emma (1816). Jane Austen's novels are a reflection of her outlook on life. Her novels also focus on the issue of gaining a suitable marriage. Jane's novels emphasized into the character and nature of human relationships, from even a fairly limited range of environments and personalities. Some of her famous quotes are:

“The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.”

— Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey

“A lady's imagination is very rapid; it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony in a moment.”

— Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice

“The more I know of the world, the more I am convinced that I shall never see a man whom I can really love. I require so much!”

— Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility

Charlotte Brontë (1816 – 1855) – Eldest of the three Brontë sisters. English novelist from Haworth, Yorkshire, her works are considered classics of English Literature. She was noted for *Jane Eyre* (1847), a strong narrative of a woman in dispute with her natural fancies and social condition. The novel gave new truthfulness to Victorian fiction. *Shirley* (1849) and *Villette* (1853) were also later written by her. Some of her famous quotes are:

“I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will.”

— Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

“I do not think, sir, you have any right to command me, merely because you are older than

I, or because you have seen more of the world than I have; your claim to superiority depends on the use you have made of your time and experience.”

— Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) - English poet who was famous for writing poems of romance. She excelled in works of fantasy, in poems for children, and in religious poetry. Christina was one of the Victorian age's finest poets. She was the author of numerous books of poetry, including *Goblin Market* and other Poems (1862), *The Prince's Progress* (1866), *A Pageant* (1881), and *The Face of the Deep* (1882). Rossetti also wrote religious prose works, such as *Seek and Find* (1879), *Called to Be Saints* (1881). She has been compared to Emily Dickinson, in the choice of spiritual topics, Rossetti's poetry being one of intense feelings, and her technique refined within the forms established in her time. Christina Rossetti achieved widespread recognition for her writing; by the time of her death in 1894 she was established as one of the most original voices of her century. Some of her famous quotes are:

“We must not look at goblin men,  
We must not buy their fruits:  
Who knows upon what soil they fed  
Their hungry thirsty roots?”

— Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market and Other Poems*

“Better by far you should forget and smile than that you should remember and be sad”

— Christina Rossetti, *Pre-Raphaelite Poetry: An Anthology*

“Remember me when I am gone  
away, Gone far away into the  
silent land.”

— Christina Rossetti, *Remember*, l. 1-2 (1862).

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Toru Dutt (1856-1877) - Poet, novelist, essayist, translator and polyglot – was an outstanding pioneer in the history of Indian literature. First Indian poetess to write verses in French and in English. In 1876, the first edition of her book *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* was published by the Saptahik Sambad Press, Bhowanipore. Her poem, *Our Casuarina Tree*, has become one of the more popular poems in modern Indian literature. In this poem, she reminisces about her happy childhood days through her memories of the tree, which she associates with her prime and with her siblings. Most of her works were published posthumously. Her poems were released successfully in a compilation named *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*. Some of her famous quotes are:

-“On fresh straw lies the little One, Not in a palace, but a farm.” - Christmas, Toru Dutt

- “And far and near kokilas hail the day”- Toru Dutt, *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*

Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949) - *The Nightingale of India*, was a child prodigy, Indian independence activist, feminist and a poet. Sarojini Naidu's verses were published in four volumes: *Songs* (1895), *The Golden Threshold* (1905), *The Bird of Time* (1912), and *The Broken Wing* (1917), all highly acclaimed for their evocative and romantic descriptions of India. Naidu's poetry includes both children's poems and others written on more serious themes including patriotism, romance, and tragedy. Published in 1912, "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad" remains one of her most popular poems. Sarojini Naidu played an important role in women's rights struggle in India. She helped in shaping Women's Indian Association in 1917 with Annie Besant and others. At the Framji Cowasji Institute, where practical Ramabai Ranade urged affluent women to help their poorer sisters, Naidu recited "Ode to India," calling upon Mother India to "awaken from slumber." Some of her famous quotes are:

Shelter my soul, O my love!  
My soul is bent low with the pain  
And the burden of love, like the  
grace Of a flower that is smitten

with rain:

O shelters my soul from thy face!"

— Sarojini Naidu, The Golden Threshold

"She is twin-born with primal mysteries, and drinks of life at Time's forgotten source."

— Sarojini Naidu

A country's greatness lies in its undying ideals of love and sacrifice that inspire the mothers of the race.

— Sarojini Naidu

"To quench my longing I bent me low

By the streams of the

spirits of Peace that flow

In that magical wood in

the land of sleep."

— Sarojini Naidu

Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941) - A British writer who is considered to be one of the foremost modernist literary figures of the twentieth century. Best known as the author of *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Woolf's work explores the key motifs of modernism, including the subconscious, time, perception, the city and the impact of war. Her 'stream of consciousness' technique enabled her to portray the interior lives of her characters and to depict the montage-like imprint of memory. She is also known for her essays, including *A Room of One's Own* (1929), in which she wrote the much-quoted dictum, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." Woolf became one of the central subjects of the 1970s movement of feminist criticism and her works have since garnered much attention and widespread commentary for "inspiring feminism." She refused patriarchal honours like the Companion of Honour (1935) and honorary degrees from Manchester and Liverpool (1933 and 1939), and wrote polemical works about the position of women in society, such as *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938). In *Flush* (1933) she wrote of the life of the spaniel owned by the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in *Orlando* (1928), she fictionalized the life of her friend Vita Sackville-West into that of a man-woman, born in the Renaissance but surviving till the present day. Some of her famous quotes are:

"Lock up your libraries if you like; but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."

— Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

"As long as she thinks of a man, nobody objects to a woman thinking."

— Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*



“No need to hurry. No need to sparkle. No need to be anybody but oneself.”

— Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own / Three Guineas*

“For our penitence deserves a glimpse only; our toil respite only.”

\* To the Lighthouse, Part II, Ch. 3

Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957) - The daughter of a dilettante poet, Gabriel was a Chilean poet-diplomat, educator and humanist. She was the first Spanish American author to receive the Nobel Prize in literature. The Nobel citation read: "for her lyric poetry which, inspired by powerful emotions, has made her name a symbol of the idealistic aspirations of the entire Latin American world." Mistral's works, both in verse and prose, deal with the basic passion of love as seen in the various relationships of mother and offspring, man and woman, individual and humankind, soul and God. During her lifetime Mistral published four books: *Desolation*, *Tenderness*, *Clear-cut*, and *Winepress*. These are included in the 'Complete' Nobel edition published in Madrid; the *Poem of Chile*, her last book, was printed years after her death. *Le Guin* includes poems from all five books in this volume, with particular emphasis on the later work. The publication of her first book of poems "Desolation" in 1922, which would subsequently earn her the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1952, enabled her to end her teaching career of 15 years and start a life of international responsibilities as consul of Chile (1925-1957) serving in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, and the United States. Her next two works: "Lecturas para mujeres" (1923) and "Ternura" (1924) consolidated her fame.

Some of the famous quotes of Gabriel Mistral are:

- “You shall create beauty not to excite the senses but to give sustenance to the soul.”

— Gabriela Mistral

- “Because she—you hear her—she's calling, and is always going to call, and it's better both of us die by the dagger without anyone seeing us, Orestes, and die a fit death.”

— Gabriela Mistral, *Madwomen: Poems of Gabriela Mistral*

“Dusk

“Many things we need can wait. The child cannot. Now is the time his bones are formed, his mind developed. To him we cannot say tomorrow, his name is today.”

— Gabriela Mistral

Agatha Christie (1890 – 1976) - English writer of crime and romantic novels. She is best remembered for her detective stories including the two diverse characters of Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot. She began her debut novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, in 1916 and published it after the end of the war, in 1920. The novel introduced Hercule Poirot, one of Christie's most enduring characters. Miss Jane Marple was introduced in a series of short stories that began publication in December 1927 and were subsequently collected under the title *The Thirteen Problems*. Christie wrote more than 70 detective novels as well as short fiction. She also wrote romance novels like *Unfinished Portrait* (1934) and *A Daughter's a Daughter* (1952) under the name Mary Westmacott. Christie was a renowned playwright as well, with works like *The Hollow* (1951) and *Verdict* (1958). Christie was made a dame in 1971. In 1974, she made her last public appearance for the opening night of the play version of *Murder on the Orient Express*. Some of her famous quotes are :

“Very few of us are what we seem.”

— Agatha Christie, *The Man in the Mist*

“Instinct is a marvelous thing. It can neither be explained nor ignored.”

— Agatha Christie, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*

“You gave too much rein to your imagination. Imagination is a good servant, and a bad master. The simplest explanation is always the most likely.”

— Agatha Christie, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*

“Never do anything yourself that others can do for you.

— Agatha Christie, *The Labours of Hercules*

“It is the brain, the little gray cells on which one must rely. One must seek the truth within-- not without.” ~ Poirot”

— Agatha Christie

Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014) - Was an American poet, singer, autobiographer, storyteller, and civil rights activist. She was an award-winning author known for her 1969 memoir, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which gained critical acclaim and a National Book Award nomination and her numerous poetry and essay collections. Subsequent volumes of autobiography include *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), *Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* (1986), *A Song Flung Up to Heaven* (2002), and *Mom & Me & Mom* (2013). Angelou was also a creative and famous poet, and her poetry has often been applauded more for its depictions of Black beauty, the strength of women, and the human spirit; demanding social justice for all—than for its poetic virtue. Yet *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie*, which was published in 1971, was nominated for a Pulitzer

Prize in 1972. Angelou continued her career in films and television apart from her poetic life. She was the first Black woman to have a screenplay (Georgia, Georgia) produced in 1972. She was nominated for an Emmy award for her performance in Roots in 1977. Some of her famous quotes are:

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

— Maya Angelou

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”

— Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

“A woman's heart should be so hidden in God that a man has to seek Him just to find her.”

— Maya Angelou

“Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud.”

— Maya Angelou, Letter to My Daughter

“If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.”

— Maya Angelou

Toni Morrison (1931 – 2019) - An American novelist and a college professor. Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, was published in 1970. In 1988, Morrison won the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved* (1987); and she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. In addition to "Beloved," which centers on an enslaved African-American woman and was inspired by the true story of Margaret Garner, Morrison penned other novels: "Sula" (1973); "Song of Solomon" (1977); "Tar Baby" (1981); "Jazz" (1992); "Paradise" (1997); "Love" (2003); "A Mercy" (2008); "Home" (2012), and "God Help the Child" (2015). She was known for her editing and essay writing. Her novels are known for their epic themes, exquisite language and richly detailed African American characters who are central to their narratives. She was noted for her examination of black experience (particularly black female experience) within the black community. She worked hard and developed her own reputation as an author, and her perhaps most celebrated work, *Beloved*, was made into a film.

Some of her famous quotes are:

“If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.”

— Toni Morrison

“You wanna fly, you got to give up the shit that weighs you down.”

— Toni Morrison, Song of Solomon

“Freeing yourself was one thing, claiming ownership of that freed self was another.”

— Toni Morrison, Beloved

“Make up a story... For our sake and yours forget your name in the street; tell us what the world has been to you in the dark places and in the light. Don't tell us what to believe, what to fear. Show us belief's wide skirt and the stitch that unravels fear's caul.”

— Toni Morrison, The Nobel Lecture In Literature, 1993

Shashi Deshpande (1938) - An Indian novelist, she is a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award for the novel *That Long Silence* in 1990. She was also awarded with the Padma Shri award in 2009. Deshpande has written four children's books, a number of short stories, and nine novels, besides several essays, available in a volume entitled *Writing from the Margin and Other Essays*. She published her first collection of short stories in 1978, and her first novel, 'The Dark Holds No Terror', in 1980. Her novel *Shadow Play* was shortlisted for The Hindu Literary Prize in 2014. Shashi Deshpande an eminent novelist has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. Emphasising on the marital relation she seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her submissive role in the family. Her novels reveal the man-made patriarchal traditions and uncomform of the modern Indian woman in being a part of them. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life and patriarchal values.

Some of her quotes are:

“A wife should always be few feet behind her husband. If he is an MA you should be a BA. If he is 5'4'tall you shouldn't be more than 5'3'tall. If he is earning five hundred rupees you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety nine rupees. That's the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage... No partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care it is unequal in favor of the husband. If the scales tilt in your favor, God help you, both of you.”

— Shashi Deshpande

“Things can never be as they were. It's astonishing how we comment on change, as if change is something remarkable. On the contrary, not to change is unnatural, against nature.”

— Shashi Deshpande, *That Long Silence*

“To overcome your fear of death, you have to move from ‘the world ends with me’ to

‘the world goes on without me’. It is a great leap, the biggest step a human can take.”

— Shashi Deshpande, In the Country of Deceit

“Surely there comes a moment in every human's life when he or she says, like the Sibyl - I wish to die.”

— Shashi Deshpande, That Long Silence

Alice Walker (1944 – ) - An African American author, poet, short story writer, and a social activist. Her novels, most notably *The Color Purple* (1982), focus particularly on women. *The Color Purple*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award in 1983. Walker's work consistently reflects her concern with racial, sexual, and political issues—particularly with the black woman's struggle for spiritual survival. Her first novel, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970), introduces many of her prevalent themes, particularly the domination of powerless women by equally powerless men. Walker's first book of poetry, *Once*, appeared in 1968, and her first novel, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970), a narrative that spans 60 years and three generations, followed two years later. A second volume of poetry, *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems*, and her first collection of short stories, *In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Woman*, both appeared in 1973. The latter bears witness to sexist violence and abuse in the African American community.

After moving to New York, Walker completed *Meridian* (1976), a novel describing the coming of age of several civil rights workers in the 1960s. Walker carries on to write in a variety of genres, from fiction to nonfiction and poetry. In 1997's *Anything We Love Can Be Saved*, she explained her own political and social struggle, while in the short story collection *The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart* (2000), she employed fiction to reflect on her own past, including her marital life, the birth of her daughter, and her new meaningful life after her divorce. Her major non-fiction works include *Living by the Word, I Love Myself When I am Laughing . . . And Then Again When I am Looking Mean And Impressive: A Zora Neale Hurston Reader* (1979), *In Search of Our Mother's Garden: Womanist Prose* (1983) and *Warrior Marks: Female Genital Mutilation and the Sexual Blinding of Women* (1993). Walker's most recent work is *We Are The Ones We Have Been Waiting For* (2007).

Some of her famous quotes are:

“No person is your friend who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow.”

— Alice Walker

“I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice

it.”

— Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

“Hard times require furious dancing. Each of us is proof.”

— Alice Walker, *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing: New Poems*

“Deliver me from writers who say the way they live doesn't matter. I'm not sure a bad person can write a good book. If art doesn't make us better, then what on earth is it for.”

— Alice Walker

“...have you ever found God in church? I never did. I just found a bunch of folks hoping for him to show. Any God I ever felt in church I brought in with me. And I think all the other folks did too. They come to church to share God, not find God.”

— Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

Sudha Murthy (1950 - ) - An eminent author in English and Kannada, Sudha Murthy has written novels, technical books, travelogues, collections of short stories and non-fictional pieces, and books for children. Murthy is known for her philanthropic work and was awarded with the R.K. Narayan Award for Literature and the Padma Shri in 2006, and the Attinabbe Award from the government of Karnataka for excellence in Kannada literature in 2011. Murthy's social work covers healthcare, education, empowerment of women, public hygiene, art and culture, and poverty alleviation at the grassroots level. Murthy has written many stories, mostly published by Penguin, which deal with common lives and her views on donations, hospitality and realisation. Mrs. Murthy has authored a number of books namely *Mahashweta*, *Wise and otherwise*, *The day i stopped drinking milk* and other stories, *The old man and his God*, *dollar bahu*, *The Serpent's Revenge*, *The House of Cards*, etc. She is the chairperson of the Infosys Foundation and a member of the public health care initiatives of the Gates Foundation. It was her savings of Rs. 10,000 that was instrumental in the founding of Infosys. She became an inspiration to the younger generations. Some of her famous quotes are “Life is an exam where the syllabus is unknown and question papers are not set. Nor are there model answer papers.”

— Sudha Murthy, *Wise & Otherwise*

“If you try to please everyone, you will please no one. It is impossible to lead your life for others' happiness.”

— Sudha Murthy, *Wise & Otherwise*

“With my experience in life, I want to tell you that having good relationships, compassion and peace of mind is much more important than achievements, awards, degrees or money.”

— Sudha Murty, *The Day I Stopped Drinking Milk: Life Lessons from Here and There*

“Usually, people who are sensitive need more time to understand the real world.”

— Sudha Murty, *House of Cards: A Novel*

“Money is one thing which rarely unites and mostly divides people.”

— Sudha Murty, *The Old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India*

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (1956-) - Poet, short story writer, and an Indo American novelist, Chitra Banerjee is a fantastic writer who has published four books of poems (*Dark Like the River*, *The Reason for Nasturtiums*, *Black Candle*, and *Leaving Yuba City*), two novels (*The Mistress of Spices*, *Sister of My Heart*), and a collection of short stories (*Arranged Marriage*). The subject line of her writings highlights the roles of women in India and America; their struggle to transform to new ways of life when one's cultural traditions are in dispute with the expectations of the new cultural values; and the complications and dilemma of love between family members, lovers, and spouses. She won several awards for her poems, such as a Gerbode Award, a Barbara Deming Memorial Award and an Allen Ginsberg Award. Divakaruni's first collection of stories, *Arranged Marriage*, which won an American Book Award, a PEN Josephine Miles Award, and a Bay Area Book Reviewers Award, greatly increased her visibility. Divakaruni's volumes of poetry, *Dark Like the River*, *The Reason for Nasturtiums*, *Black Candle*, and *Leaving Yuba City*, gives a vivid image of India, the Indian-American experience, and the situation of children and women in a patriarchal society. Two of her books, *The Mistress of Spices* and *Sister of My Heart*, have been made into movies by filmmakers Gurinder Chadha and Paul Berges (an English film) and Suhasini Mani Ratnam (a Tamil TV serial) respectively. A short story, "The Word Love," from her collection *Arranged Marriage*, was made into a bilingual short film in Bengali and English, titled *Ammar Ma*. All the films have won awards.

Some of her famous quotes are :

“Love comes like lightning, and disappears the same way. If you are lucky, it strikes you right. If not, you'll spend your life yearning for a man you can't have.”

— Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *The Palace of Illusions*

“Each day has a color, a smell.”

— Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *The Mistress of Spices*

“That's how it is sometimes when we plunge into the depths of our lives. No one can accompany us, not even those who would give up their hearts for our happiness.”

— Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *Sister of My Heart*

“Everyone breathes in air, but it's a wise person who knows when to use that air to

“speak and when to exhale in silence.”

-- Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

Arundhati Roy (1961 – )- An Indian author and a political activist. Arundhati is best known for her first novel “The God of Small Things” which won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction in 1997. Roy has written several critical essays. Some of her other notable works include “The Cost of Living” , “The Algebra of Infinite Justice” , and “War Talk” . After her first novel, Roy began working as a screenplay writer again and wrote for television serials such as “The Banyan Tree” and the documentary “DAM/AGE: A Film with Arundhati Roy” (2002). Roy was awarded the Sydney Peace Prize in 2004 for her social campaigns and for promoting peace and nonviolence. She was awarded the Norman Mailer Prize for Distinguished Writing in November 2011. In January 2006, she was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award, a national award from India's Academy of Letters, for her collection of essays on contemporary issues, The Algebra of Infinite Justice, but she declined to accept it "in protest against the Indian Government toeing the US line by 'violently and ruthlessly pursuing policies of brutalization of industrial workers, increasing militarization and economic neo-liberalization' In 2017 Roy published “The Ministry of Utmost Happiness”. The work is a blend of personal stories with contemporary issues as it uses a large casting of characters, including a transgender woman and a resistance fighter in Kashmir, to explore contemporary India.

Some of her famous quotes are:

“That's what careless words do. They make people love you a little less.”

— Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things

“To love. To be loved. To never forget your own insignificance. To never get used to the unspeakable violence and the vulgar disparity of life around you. To seek joy in the saddest places. To pursue beauty to its lair. To never simplify what is complicated or complicate what is simple. To respect strength, never power. Above all, to watch. To try and understand. To never look away. And never, never to forget.”

— Arundhati Roy, The Cost of Living

“Colorful demonstrations and weekend marches are vital but alone are not powerful enough to stop wars. Wars will be stopped only when soldiers refuse to fight, when workers refuse to load weapons onto ships and aircraft, when people boycott the economic outposts of Empire that are strung across the globe. ”

— Arundhati Roy, Public Power in the Age of Empire

“The way her body existed only where he touched her. The rest of her was smoke.”

— Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things



J.K.Rowling (1965 –) - A British author, film producer, television producer, screenwriter, and philanthropist. She is best known for writing the Harry Potter fantasy series, which has won multiple awards becoming the best-selling book series in history. The first book in the Harry Potter series, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (1997; also published as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone), was released under the name J.K.

Rowling. Succeeding volumes—Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (1998), Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (1999), Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2000), Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2003), and Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (2005)—also were best sellers, available in

more than 200 countries and some 60 languages. The seventh and final novel in the series, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, was released in 2007. Her first novel for adults, The Casual Vacancy, was published in 2012; she also published the crime novels The Cuckoo's Calling (2013), The Silkworm (2014), Career of Evil (2015) and Lethal White (2018) under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith. In October 2010, Rowling was named the "Most Influential Woman in Britain" by leading magazine editors. She has supported multiple charities, including Comic Relief, One Parent Families, and Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain, as well as launching her own charity, Lumos.

Some of her famous quotes are:

“If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

“It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

“It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

“I solemnly swear that I am up to no good.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

“Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

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Anita Nair (1966 - ) - Indian bestselling author of fiction and poetry, with her famous novels translated into 21 languages. She wrote her first book, a collection of short stories called Satyr of the Subway, and won a fellowship from the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Nair is a famous and critically acclaimed author of the novels *The Better Man*, *Ladies Coupé*, *Mistress*, *Lessons in Forgetting*, *Idris: Keeper of the Light* and *Alphabet Soup for Lovers*. Anita Nair is one of the frontiers of Indian English literature. Her writings have caught the attention of the whole world; she has successfully advocated women's rights through her novels. Her novels *The Better Man*, *Ladies Coupe*, *Mistress*, *Lessons in Forgetting* and *Cut Like Wound* reflect

a typical regional ambience. The radical change in attitude towards gender, social roles and marital relationships was due to the emergence of a new generation of women in the nineteen-eighties and nineteen-nineties who tend to question the image and role of women in terms of femininity and female identities and patriarchal value. Nair's other books include a collection of poems titled *Malabar Mind*, a collection of essays titled *Goodnight & God Bless* and six books for children. She has also written two plays and the screenplay for the movie adaptation of her novel *Lessons in Forgetting* which was part of the Indian Panorama at IFFI 2012 and won the National Film Award in 2013. She was also awarded the Central Sahitya Akademi award and the Crossword Prize.

Some of her famous quotes are:

"This is the world. Half of it is lit by the sun and the other half remains in darkness. It is the same with life. There is good and bad and it's our duty to remain in the light, be good."

— Anita Nair

"Perhaps, what I seek now is a friend like I have never had before. Someone to share a smoke and my thoughts with. Someone who will see life with the same eyes as I do; experience the same lift of spirit when mine soars. Someone whose destiny is woven with mine even though we are bound by neither blood nor any other tie."

— Anita Nair, *The Better Man*

"once you stop worrying what the world will think of you, your life will become that much easier to live."

— Anita Nair, *Ladies Coupe*

"I wanted to read someone who rose above the romanticism of most women writers. I wanted robust prose; I wanted muscle and sinew, even if it was a love story."

— Anita Nair, *Eating Wasps*

"Every night there is something to ruminate on. The vagrant mind knows no boundaries. It leaps"

— Anita Nair, *Goodnight and God Bless*

I don't think there is a need for the categorization of 'woman writing'. I think in some sense

writers lose their gender when they walk into the world of words; I believe that writers ought to be able to slip under the skins of both men and women. Only then will the writing and the characters have credibility and strength.

— Anita Nair

J K Rowling (1965 - ) - A British fiction writer. Rowling is most famous for being the author of the Harry Potter fantasy series. Her books have gained international attention and have won multiple awards. She also writes crime fiction under the pen name Robert Galbraith. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, was published in 1997. There were six sequels, of which the last, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, was released in 2007. Since then, Rowling has written five books for adult readers: The Casual Vacancy (2012) and—under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith—the crime fiction Cormoran Strike series, which consists of The Cuckoo's Calling (2013), The Silkworm (2014), Career of Evil (2015), and Lethal White (2018). Rowling has lived a "rags to riches" life in which she progressed from living on benefits to being named the world's first billionaire author by Forbes. However, Forbes reported that she lost her billionaire status after giving away much of her earnings to charity but remains one of the wealthiest people in the world. She is the UK's best-selling living author, with sales in excess of £238 million. Time named her a runner-up for its 2007 Person of the Year, noting the social, moral, and political inspiration she has given her fans. Rowling was appointed a Member of the Order of the Companions of Honour (CH) at the 2017 Birthday Honours for services to

literature and philanthropy. In October 2010, she was named the "Most Influential Woman in Britain" by leading magazine editors. Rowling has supported multiple charities, including Comic Relief, One Parent Families, and Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain, as well as launching her own charity, Lumos. Some of her famous quotes are:

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— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

“It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

“It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

“Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

“It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all - in which case, you fail by default.”

— J.K. Rowling

Jhumpa Lahiri (1967 -) - A dazzling storyteller with a distinctive voice. English-born American novelist and short-story writer known for works of fiction like Interpreter of Maladies, The Namesake, Unaccustomed Earth and The Lowland. Jhumpa Lahiri published her debut in 1999, Interpreter of Maladies, winning the Pulitzer Prize. She followed up in 2003 with her first novel, The Namesake, and returned to short stories with the No. 1 New York Times best-seller Unaccustomed Earth. Lahiri's 2013 novel, The Lowland, based on real-world political incidents. Lahiri's writings reflect the immigrant experience without any kind of prejudice or bias. In 2018, Lahiri published the short story "The Boundary" in The New Yorker. The story explores the life of two families and the contrasting features between them. Lahiri published her first novel in Italian called

Dove mi trovo. In 2019, she compiled, edited and translated the Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories which consists of 40 Italian short stories written by 40 different Italian writers. Lahiri has a beautifully complex and innovative writing style. She uses common words to create an impactful scene that remains permanent in the mind of the reader. Her use of language is simple and can be understood with ease.

Some of her famous quotes are :

“That's the thing about books. They let you travel without moving your feet.”

— Jhumpa Lahiri, The Namesake

“Still, there are times I am bewildered by each mile I have traveled, each meal I have eaten, each person I have known, each room in which I have slept. As ordinary as it all appears, there are times when it is beyond my imagination.”

— Jhumpa Lahiri, Interpreter of Maladies

“You are still young, free.. Do yourself a favor. Before it's too late, without thinking too much about it first, pack a pillow and a blanket and see as much of the world as you can. You will not regret it. One day it will be too late.”

— Jhumpa Lahiri, The Namesake

“Isolation offered its own form of companionship: the reliable silence of her rooms, the steadfast tranquility of the evenings. The promise that she would find things where she put them, that there would be no interruption, no surprise. It greeted her at the end of each day and lay still with her at night.”

— Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Lowland*

“He owned an expensive camera that required thought before you pressed the shutter, and I quickly became his favorite subject, round-faced, missing teeth, my thick bangs in need of a trim. They are still the pictures of myself I like best, for they convey that confidence of youth I no longer possess, especially in front of a camera.”

— Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*.

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