

# Depiction of Woman's Identity: A Feministic Study of Two Tales from Shobha Rao's "An Unrestored Woman and Other Stories"

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**Abstract** – Rao's collection of short stories explores the tenuous place of women. Some of the stories stand independently, others are intertwined, with characters from one story popping up years later in another. *An Unrestored Woman* is Shobha Rao's debut collection about the shared grief that occurred starting with the 1949 partition of India and Pakistan. Rao's historical fiction has likewise gives a voice to top to bottom, multi-layered characters has picked up inclusion in my women's history month lineup. The paper in hand is a feministic study of two tales from Shobha Rao's "An Unrestored Woman and Other Stories". These stories move around female characters confronting embarrassment, and misuse in society. The stories under discussion are *An Unrestored Woman* and *The merchant's wife*. The stories are described in the third person perspective. The language is fluid and real. The principle association between these stories is two protagonists and the intensity of their misery. The primary characters of these are Neela and Renu. They interacted with one another at the refugee camp where they were sent to live in their widowhood. These two stories are their experience to conquer the circumstances which were granted to them as a woman by the society. Renu and Neela persistently remind one another. It appears that writer as a narrator wants to analyze their sufferings. She wants to paint two diverse picture and simultaneously correlate them. Writer's primary concern is to delineate women identity in society. The account of stories satisfies her purpose effectively.

**Keywords:** Women, Feminism, Society, Stories, Un-Restored, etc.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Shobha Rao is one of these feminist writers. Rao gave us an essence of her arresting writing in her brilliant debut collection of short stories, *An Unrestored Woman*, about the impact of India's wrenching partition on its most helpless populations. She conveys her sharp eye to this dark yet at last cheerful story. Both of her works escalate issues identified with women's journey for self. The book named *The Unrestored Women and Other Stories* is the depiction of enacting violence amid the demonstration of partition and after that. It portrays all scenes, from tormenting of village people by a religious group to the suffering of a mother isolated her child. It is a story of each village of India and Pakistan.

The first tale, *An Unrestored Woman* is the tale of the vulnerability of main character Neela, who even in the wake of being getting married couldn't be able to enjoy her life as a married woman. She confronted affliction when her husband got lost in partition revolts following a couple of months of her marriage. On getting the news of the death of her husband, she

was sent to refugee camps where she lived under unfavorable conditions. The hunger she had felt on her wedding day toward the start of the story is utilized as a metaphor of unfulfilled desires. This hunger stayed same till the end of the story. The second metaphor is her longing to enjoy the swing on a Banyan tree. In last paragraphs, she was sleeping close to her husband and was considering swing she wants to enjoy and maybe could never appreciate in future. After marriage, she was ill-treated by her husband. She was not regarded even as a human as he had constantly constrained himself on her. Her decisions and desires were totally ignored. After the news of the death of her husband, her mother-in-law sent her to refugee camps made for rehabilitation of women after partition. At camp, her friendship with Renu solaced her a bit. They chose to leave the camp and work in the city. When they decided to spend their life by working at their own, Neela's husband returned. To exacerbate the situation once more, her husband took her back home. Her expectations were dashed to the ground when she came to realize that her husband taken her back to get back her expensive gold mangal sutra. At last, she was

lying conscious close to her husband and taking a gander at the banyan tree and its branches. Her thoughts clearly depict her state of mind. One day she rose and went to the kitchen and drank that whiskey from the bottle she put away in rice back. In the state of intoxication, she dreamt herself swinging in the support of branches of a banyan tree in their house yard. With the end goal to conquer the hard reality she took drug that she had denied when it was offered by her mother-in-law. Finally she chose to live with unfulfilled wishes. The last lines of the story delineate her hardship and helplessness of being a woman.

The Merchant's Mistress is the story of the setback of another woman character named Renu. The two stories have been associated on the bases of its character. Renu accompanied Neela (heroine woman of An Unrestored Women) in Refugee camps. This story is a depiction of a woman character that experiences unfavorable conditions to reach to her destiny. The exploitation in camps and in the house of merchant she worked made her feel that being a woman she is less than a human being. The story is full of symbols representing womanhood. The story starts with her making a trip in the train to Ahmedabad in the wake of escaping the refugee camp. She declined to grow her hair, while other widows in the camp had adjusted themselves according to circumstances. Notwithstanding being a young lady she could neither settle herself as a married woman nor turn into a tailor, while others widows arranged their marriages to camps guards and officials. Subsequent to leaving camp at Ahmadabad, she got a job at a diamond merchant's house. The merchant's wife is another character experiencing the burden of being a woman. Soon they built up a intimate physical relationship. She also develop a physical relationship with the merchant. At the house of a merchant, she spent an peculiar sort of life. She shared a love triangle there. As the narrator makes reference to, "Her days were separated between them. Finally, she came to think about merchant's plan of going to South Africa. She murdered the merchant and steal all his diamonds. She distinguish herself as the merchant and left Ahmadabad on his ship. The story ended at her anticipating new life in another continent. In this manner two stories ends in illustrating two women's sufferings at different places with same amount.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Carmen Escobedo de Tapia (2018)** The Indian English narrative must be considered from a threefold point of view: history, nation and narration. Indian women writers have additionally handled this theme. The manner in which they represent the shock of Partition is especially related with the circumstance of women in India. This article plans to diacronically analyze a few examples of female Indian narrative: Sunlight on a Broken Column by Attia

Hosain, Clear Light of Day by Anita Desai and An Unrestored Women (2016) by Shobha Rao, to explicitly center around how women characters develop their memories of the historical occasion as a narrative of loss through which, eventually, we can identify the hint of gender violence as linked to the concept of nationalism trying to restore the past and the present

**Dr. Itishri Sarangi, Ms.Yajnaseni Mukherjee (2012)** The feminist dependably endeavors to restore the tarnished image of the woman and extol it. One evident characteristic among all the contemporary women writers in Indian writings in English is the revolutionary spirit with which they endeavor to write. Their writings are a explosive of suppressed desires and repressed feelings that have for quite some time been accumulated. Women writers have demonstrated that their writings are serious and require consideration. They handle things proficiently balancing tradition and womanhood. To be a feminist is to have the capacity to make a particular feminine mode of writing, fighting for the freedom of womenfolk in subjugation and every one of those forces inside and outside the society that troubled the neat classifications of the family and mutilated the feminine side of a woman. The infiltration of the western culture gave a serious blow to the Indian traditional life and women epitomes' identity maintaining the family regime slowly became transformed into women in search for their sole identities and on search of a a liberated independence

**Chaman Nahal (1991)** in his article, "Feminism in English Fiction", defines feminism as "a mode of presence in which the woman is free of the dependence syndrome. There is a dependence syndrome: regardless of whether it is the husband or the father or the community or whether it is a religious group, ethnic group. At the point when women free themselves of the dependence syndrome and have an ordinary existence, my idea of feminism materializes. According to her, women are considered secondary in connection to men from the ancient time. It isn't need of feminine feature however it is the result of education and social tradition under the control of men. Women's dignity flopped yet they stand on a similar ground of intellectual and professional equality. This has offered ascend to social evils moreover.

**James (1998)** appears to be here to utilize the notions of "oppression" and "disadvantage" as placeholders for more substantive accounts of injustice (both normative and descriptive) over which feminists disagree. Today, the idea of gender has turned into a debatable issue in our society and an important dimension in the analysis and the design of social and economic policies. Nowadays, development is considered regarding increased welfare, as well as far as the sustainability dimension. This means in the

development process, we cannot undermine the resources of coming generations. Included in these resources are the lives of men and women. In this regard, sustainability and equality are intrinsically related.

**Simone De Beauvoir (1952)** Two of the most important works of contemporary feminist theory — Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father* derive their ideological introduce from the twentieth-century philosophical movement, existentialism. This assemblage of ideas was itself established in the theoretical develops of a few German philosophers: Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger, yet had its most well-known formulation in the works of French thinker Jean-Paul Sartre

### 3. FEMINISM AND LITERATURE

The field of Sociology has given further space for gender studies that define distinctive roles in society and shared its space to Feminism. With the rise of the term Feminism, there rose a voice to make a balanced society for every living being. The term has its diverse meaning that determines gender jobs in the social and the political scenario. "Feminism as a movement is a collection of movements gone for defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social right and equal opportunities for women. It mainly focuses on women's issues and conduct. Feminism is for the most part seen as a political agenda that developed in the United States after the 1960's." As far back as antiquity, there have been women fighting to free their half of the aggregate population of the world from male oppression. Feminism is neither a prevailing fashion nor a logical extension of the civil rights movement, however the challenge against the legitimate, economic and social limitations on the essential rights of women which have existed since the beginning and in all civilizations. Normally, the principles of feminism have been verbalized long prior.

God made human beings and divided them into man and woman, with a couple of fundamental contrasts in body and mind, and introduced an element of irresistible attraction between the two sexes to help the process of reproduction and survival of the species. The topic of man-woman relationship did not exist in the barbaric age. It was just with the beginning of civilization, when men began to live in groups, and last framed families, first matriarchal and then male centric, that the inquiry emerged, basically to determine the fatherhood of each newborn baby. It was the invention of the institution of marriage that sowed the seed of subjection for women. Manu, the law-supplier, sanctified this subjugation when he governed in Manusmruti Woman isn't qualified for freedom. While the transition from barbarism to social life had its advantages, it additionally constrained the individual to subdue his instinctual

conduct and subsequently to minimize the chances of his life pleasurable. Such repression is even more serious in the inflexible, tradition-bound society of India. The resultant suffering is likewise shared more by women in India, in light of the fact that the social norms and moral codes of India are especially disadvantageous to women.

What is relevant at this point the extent that feminist ideas are concerned is to believe, to know, and to understand the predicament and dilemma of women within the setting of society and culture to which they have a place? This can be defined as feminism in light of the fact that such an ideology creates a cognizant consciousness of women's concern. Feminism is a movement for social, culture, political and economic, equality of men and women. It is a campaign against gender inequalities and it takes a stab at equal right for women. Feminism can be likewise defined as a worldwide phenomenon which delivers different utilizations identified with women over the world in a particular manner as appropriate to the specific focus. Despite the fact that their issues identified with feminism may contrast for various societies and culture yet they are extensively integrated with the underlying theory of achieving equality of gender in each circle of life. So feminism cannot be fixing to any thin definitions dependent on a specific class, race or religion. The feminist theory rose up out of these feminist movements and includes general hypotheses about the origins of inequality and sometimes, about the social construction of sex and gender, in an assortment of disciplines.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The focus is on women characters individually who regardless of being a piece of independent countries, were far from freedom. Their lives were permanently paralyzed by these tragic incidents. The havoc that separated them from their local land, abandoned them to scan for their identity. They introspect who they really are, from where they have a place with, their relation to country, community, religion, and family. The Writer endeavors to challenge all social and religious institutions from marriage to law, politics, and judiciary that had neglected to provide equally balanced life to a piece of society that ought to be considered equality important to its opposite sex. Women characters in mentioned work, while going through the traumatic experience, enduring mental and physical pain, lived. They don't lose trust till the end. They were assaulted; tortured, distanced that resulted in the loss of their identity. Their inability to conquer these circumstances is clear from that point exchanges and soliloquies. The language is fitting to depict their suffering, their journey persuade in themselves, to carry on with their life all alone, to accepting themselves who they really are. Through this, they get their freedom, from which they were deprived of even subsequent to

being a piece of an independent country. The focus is on women as individuals who are striving to safeguard their identity.

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