

**THE NEW WOMAN :
GENDER AND MODERNITY IN SELECTED WORKS OF
FICTION FROM NORTH INDIA, 1930-1960.**

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
JULY 2024**

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FICTION FROM NORTH INDIA, 1930-1960.**

by

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Submitted

*in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy***

to the



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
July 2024

THESIS CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**The New Woman: Gender and Modernity in Selected works of Fiction from North India,1930-1960**” being submitted by **Sevali Hukku** to Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is a bona fide record of the research work done by her under my guidance and supervision. In my opinion, the thesis has fulfilled the requirements and has reached the requisite standard for the submission relating to the degree. The contents of this thesis, in full or in parts, have not been submitted to any other Institute or University for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has been the culmination of a long journey—both intellectually and literally. It is a pleasure to thank the many people who have helped me see this project to its completion. I have benefited from many illuminating conversations with my peers and teachers. I owe my first debt of gratitude to my advisor, Professor Simona Sawhney. Her constant guidance, counsel, and care made this thesis possible.

I am incredibly grateful to the members of my committee: Professor Ira Raja for her insightful suggestions; Professor Stuti Khanna for engaging with the work closely; Professor Angelie Multani for her advice on conceptual frameworks. I am also grateful to Dr Mrityunjay Tripathy for his incisive feedback. I am thankful to the HSS staff including Ms Neelam Sindhwani, Ms Monika Chauhan and Mr Pankaj for patiently answering all my queries, and to our erstwhile department librarian Ms Shweta Verma for her help in procuring books.

I thank Nazia for listening to my endless complaints and Shikha for giving valuable feedback on my chapter drafts. I would like to thank my childhood friends, Samiya Javed Akhtar and Zaynub Tariq, for their constant inquiries that helped me evolve and articulate the central argument each time. I would also like to thank Anuradha Vellat for a friendship that survived hiatus, silence and space.

I would like to thank my immediate and extended family. Beginning with my mother, Durgesh Hukku, my first cheerleader and critic, I owe it all to you; my aunts, Swati Munshi and Swati Sheopori; who taught me the value of persistence. I thank my sisters, Manisha Kaul, Aparnaa Hukku and Aditti Munshi for their unwavering support in ways only a family can provide. Finally, I thank Vyom, my partner in everything, who has been my wellspring of love, strength, and support in ways he cannot even begin to realize.

Lastly, I dedicate this thesis to my grandfather, the late Kunwar Krishna Sopori, who introduced me to my first book and inspired me with his wealth of knowledge and wisdom.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the rise of the figure of the New Woman in selected novels from North-India. I read this figure through a close analysis of the heroines in the novels. I also offer a study of other women characters in these novels who often act as a counter foil to the main characters.

A close reading of the novels reveals that these are complicated women characters. They are primarily shaped by a duality that runs through all the texts. They appear at a time of historical transition. They embody characteristics of both tradition and modernity, and are figures in transit. In some ways, it is even difficult to classify them as feminist or rebellious. I propose that the appearance of these varied women characters in early twentieth-century fiction was a product of its time. I study three significant influences that shaped the emergence of these characters: the rise of a new middle-class morality, nationalist revivalism and the violence of the last decades of colonial rule. These events had a crucial impact on the lives of real Indian women, which in turn determined how women characters were shaped and imagined in North-Indian fiction.

KEYWORDS: New woman, domesticity, duality, nationalism, middle-class, modernity

यह शोध उत्तर भारत के चुने हुए उपन्यासों में नई महिला के चित्रण के उदय की जांच करता है। मैंने इन उपन्यासों की नायिकाओं का गहन विश्लेषण करके इस चित्रण को पढ़ने का प्रयत्न किया है। इन उपन्यासों में अन्य महिला पात्रों का भी अध्ययन प्रस्तुत किया गया है, जिनका चित्रण अक्सर मुख्य पात्रों के प्रतिपक्ष के रूप में किया गया है ।

इन उपन्यासों का गहन अध्ययन यह प्रकट करता है कि ये बहुस्तरीय महिला पात्र हैं। वे मुख्य रूप से एक द्वंद्व से आकार लेती हैं जो उस समय के सभी ग्रंथों का महत्वपूर्ण भाग रहा है। ये एक ऐतिहासिक संक्रमण के समय चूने हुए उपन्यासों में प्रकट हुई हैं। ये परंपरा और आधुनिकता दोनों की विशेषताओं को आत्मसात करती हैं, और परिवर्तन की पात्र हैं। कुछ मायनों में, इन्हें नारीवादी या विद्रोही के रूप में वर्गीकृत करना भी कठिन है। मैं यह प्रस्तावित करती हूँ कि प्रारंभिक बीसवीं सदी के कथा साहित्य में इन विविध महिला पात्रों का प्रकट होना अपने समय का उत्पाद था। इन्हें बेहतर समझने के लिए मैं तीन महत्वपूर्ण प्रभावों का अध्ययन करती हूँ जिन्होंने इन पात्रों के उदय को आकार दिया: एक नए मध्यवर्गीय नैतिकता का उदय, राष्ट्रीय पुनरुत्थान, और औपनिवेशिक शासन के अंतिम दशकों की हिंसा। इन घटनाओं का वास्तविक भारतीय महिलाओं के जीवन पर महत्वपूर्ण प्रभाव पड़ा। इस प्रभाव ने उत्तर भारतीय कथा साहित्य में महिला पात्रों को आकार दिया और उनकी कल्पना को निर्धारित किया।

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