

Preface

Situated in the cause and consequence of society, theatre as a dynamic space heterogeneously synthesizes a multitude of voices, viz. of the playwrights, directors, choreographers, stage and costume designers, light/sound operators, and also that of the audience. It not only intervenes into the cultural, political, religious structures of society, but also, almost always, challenges its equilibrium. But, historically theatre has failed to provide adequate representation to women as conscious subjects and often engaged in producing stereotypes. Feminist theatres of the 1960s sought to foreground the representation of women in theatre but were criticized for being essentialist and failing to address the differences that separate women in one context from women in another. But Tutun Mukherjee's 'Prolegomenon to Women's Theatre' in her anthology of plays by women playwrights *Staging Resistance: Plays by Women in Translations* (OUP 2005), introduced me to the gradual growth of a theatre by women in India that thematically and dramaturgically deviates from the feminist as well as male-dominated traditional Indian theatre conventions. Forays into the Indian Women's Theatre led me to explore not only its uniqueness in engaging socio-cultural crevices with respect to women in India but also the variety of forms they espoused to articulate their voices. In this thesis, however, I primarily focus on exploring themes and issues Indian women playwrights have broached in their plays, making a select study of women-authored plays. Appearing at different points in time, the plays have been brought together here on the basis of their theme/s that foreground women as the subject resisting stereotypes and thus voicing their desire and articulating a life of their own.

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- "Negotiating the Abused Woman Body: A Study of Select Woman Authored Plays from the 1980s". *The Indian Journal of English Studies*. Vol. LVI. 2019. ed. by Khatri, C.L. Association for English Studies in India. 2019.
- "Let There be Light ... There is No Light: Rereading the Gender – Caste Welfare Politics through Listen Shefali". *Globalization: Emerging Trends in English Language and Literature*. 62nd All India English Teacher's Conference 18-20 January, 2018. Osmania University Centre for international Programmes. Hyderabad. ed. by Raju, B.V., A. Karunekar and K. Nageshwar Rao. Siri Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd. 2018.
- "Images: Women in Post-Independence Male Oriented Indian Theatre". *Postcolonial Indian Drama in English and English Translation: Reading Themes and Techniques*. ed. by De, Uttiya and Sarkar, Jaydip. Authors Press. 2015.
- "Theatre's Intervention and Women Empowerment: Dina Mehta's Getting Away with Murder". *Women Empowerment in India Opportunities and Challenges*. Sitalkuchi College, 27-28 November, 2015. Comp. by. Sharma, Gopal. Rupali. 2015.
- "A Theatre of their Own: Indian Women Playwrights and Directors in Perspective". *International Organisation of Scientific Research – Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 19, Issue 11. ed. by Islam, M.S. et al. 2014.
- "Lesbian as the Absolute Other: Usha Ganguli's Rudali in Perspective" in *The International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies* Vol. 2 Issue 10 (Online). 2014.

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PINAKI RANJAN DAS