

Female Positioning and Gender Polarization

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Abstract—*Ismat Chughtai was Urdu's most dauntless and contentious woman writer of the twentieth century and surely the leading figure of the Progressive Writers group. This group of Urdu writers produced various influential works between 1935 and 1955. With the help of her works, Ismat made prominent presence by writing on areas which had not been earlier discussed or explored. She spoke for the exploited lot of the Indian society- the women. She gave to their feelings words and wrote many such works which discuss various issues which were hidden behind a veil. She wrote in a time when women in orthodox Muslim families were supposed to obey quietly the instructions given to them by their elders. Her stories had female characters which gave a blow to the dominant patriarchal ideology that a woman is the sanctum sanctorum of the home and therefore she is restricted from exploring various dimension of active sexualities. This paper deals with prevailing definition of sexuality in the backdrop of patriarchal society and the protagonist's deviation from this dominant definition in the short stories by Ismat Chughtai. The paper has a close focus on two short stories, Gharwali (The Homemaker) [1940] and Til (The Mole) [1950]. The paper makes an attempt to explore the different incidences in these two stories which shed light on how Ismat discusses the sexuality of the Indian women in the age of sobriety.*

Keywords: *Doughty, explore, gender, outrageous, rebel, sanctum, sexuality, shy, sobriety, women.*