

A Legacy of Defiance: Exploring the Power of Resistance and Resilience in ‘The Last Queen’

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Resistance can be described as the act of opposing or standing against something, often involving active defiance or refusal to accept certain conditions, rules, or power structures. It can be social, political, or personal and is characterized by efforts to challenge, push back, or fight against oppressive forces, whether they be external (colonial rule or societal expectations) or internal (emotional or psychological pressures) and resilience refers to the ability to recover from adversity, challenges, or difficult situations. It is the capacity to bounce back, adapt, and maintain strength despite hardships. Resilience can be emotional, psychological, or physical, and it is often associated with endurance, perseverance, and flexibility in the face of change or trauma.

Maharani Jindan Kaur, the last queen of Punjab, the protagonist of Chitra Divakauni's novel 'The Last Queen', not only resists both personal and political struggles against British colonial rule and patriarchal structures but is also resilient despite being imprisoned, exiled, and separated from her son, Prince Dalip Singh. Her narrative gives voice to her struggles and perseverance in the face of overwhelming adversity. This research paper examines her resilience from a young, inexperienced queen to a fierce leader who challenges the British Empire's annexation of Punjab and fights for her son, Dalip Singh's, rightful throne.

The paper also addresses how the novel offers a feminist perspective on Maharani Jindan's resistance to the systemic silencing of women's voices in history and how her emotional and political resilience is key to her legacy.

Keywords: resistance, resilience, colonial rule, struggle, Maharani Jindan