CONCLUSION

Writing to me is a process of discovering the truth - the truth that is nine-tenth of the iceberg that lies submerged beneath the one-tenth visible portion we call Reality. Writing is my way of plunging to the depths and exploring this underlying truth.

-Anita Desai.

Very modern and the recent women writers in India are Arunthathi Roy, Geetha Metha and ShobhaaDe. Shobhaa De dominates the scene and seems to be the voluminous writer next only to Anita Desai and Sashi Deshpande. All women writers deal with the problems of women and the psychological predicament of women. But Shobhaa De deals with the problems of women from men’s point of view. She does not deal with women alone but human beings as a whole. She has a wider horizon. Unlike Anita Desai and Sashi Deshpande, Shobhaa De deals with the particular sect of the society, the upper-class society. She deals with well-educated, financially independent women. There is a social mobility in all her novels. Almost all the characters move from middle class to upper class.

Jane Austen in her novels talks about a particular society, which she is familiar with. Likewise Shobhaa De also pictures the upper-middle class women. And it is her strength. She ponders on the psychology of men and women, the need for mask in any human relationship and makes a conclusion that mask has become inevitable in the process of survival. Human beings cannot always be what they really are. There are several situations where one is forced to hide the real intention, the real self for the sake of courtesy or to maintain relationships. So everybody wears a mask. There is a sociological and psychological necessity for mask.
Shobhaa De in her novels portrays the ordinary realistic human beings. The uniqueness of Shobhaa De is that she pictures in her novel no idealistic characters but very realistic personalities. Ibsen is hailed as the Father of Modern Drama because of his realistic, and not of his idealistic characters. Shobhaa De also photographs the realistic characters very well. Ordinary people are shocked by the behaviour of the women characters. They are very modern and westernized. Shobhaa De jolts the readers out of their complacency. She gives no escape from reality.

In Socialite Evenings Karuna, the protagonist tries to extricate herself from the meaningless, deadened marriage by her extra marital affair with Krish. She desires to end her life when she walks out of her marriage after knowing the divorce plan of her husband. Finally she decides to remain single taking care of her parents; she does not want to get into marriage bond again. Another character in the same novel, Anjali is forced to stay in marriage with Kumar who is a homo. They are educated and economically independent personalities, yet they have no escape from reality. There is no easy escape in life. “But there are no short-cuts in life. No easy ways out.” [S.E 226]

A character like Abe, Anjali’s husband, is good for nothing but lives to enjoy with out caring about a family, wife or children. Similar characters can be seen in every part of the country. The husband of Karuna who desires divorce, comes back seeking her help. He wants to get rid of Winne, that is the sole reason; he is not sorry about what he has done to Karuna. This type of human beings who are not concerned about their partners but interested only in their own self exist in real world too. Another character, Rita who is
In Starry Nights, Aasha Rani is a star, sweet heart of millions, but she is not happy with that status. She is not content; does not have any peace of mind being a super star. She craves for love and a family of her own. She does not run away from her stardom but at the same time she is not happy in her position too. She gets into marriage with Jai, has a baby but again she returns to the glitter world from which she desires to get away. This is reality. She misses that kind of recognition and the fame she received as a cine star. There is no escape for her, for she comes back to the same world from which she runs away in search of love and peace of mind. Her sister Sudha Rani becomes money mad and power mad. And that leads to her destruction.

In Sisters both Mikki and Alisha have money and power but that does not make their life easy. They have their own problems - lack of love and no sense of belonging, fear of death, struggle to survive in the male dominated business world, etc. They are very young but they are forced to struggle for their survival. Mikki though well educated and rich is steadfast in her love for Binny even after knowing well that he has cheated her and after knowing that he has a family with two children. Alisha falls in love Dr. Kurien who is a married man, and becomes a drug addict when he leaves her.

The sister’s father, Hiralal is not a gentle manly character. He leads a double life. Same with Binny too. Both are business tycoons who always crave for money, power and status in the society. Relatives do not help in
anyway. They calculate the amount or the benefit they could get out of Mikki and Alisha. Alisha being the illegitimate daughter is hurt by the indifferent treatment of the society. But that is the reality; money not only given luxury but also leads to problem; for example the way Mikki is treated by Binny, and all the sufferings she undergoes in her married life.

Ramabhai, a fatherly figure, stands by Mikki at all times, even helps Alisha to get her rightful money her father has left her, is mad for power and money. He goes to the extent of killing a whole family in order to own the Hiralal Industries. No one can dispute the fact that in day-to-day life the society comes across such type of men, so cruel and merciless. There are persons also like Minx a pervert and Rover who in the name of socialization exploit women, as portrayed in Strange Obsession. There are persons like Deb who is interested in letters and finally sell them for the thrill of power. There are so many Mayas who live with shattered dreams in their married life. There are persons like Swati in Snapshots who is ready to destroy even her innocent friends for personal benefit. They can step upon many carcasses to reach their desired heights.

Shobhaa De enables the reader to get away from the mask of Indianhood. May be Shobhaa De intends to shock the readers, for the four letter words she uses are definitely shocking to the readers. But it is a fact that these four letter words are very common in the particular sect of the society. Critics accuse her on pornographic writings, but pornography is not a mask of Shobhaa De since it is purposive. It is purposive because she wants the reader to sit upright. She desires to shock the readers to thinking and look at the reality they have shunned for a long time.
It is easier to analyse the novels of Shobhaa De rather than the nonfiction, where she writes frankly about herself and allows the reader to see what lies beneath the exterior well known personality of Shobhaa De. She does not condemn people outright. She makes the reader see into the human nature.

Her theme is same as that of many women writers but her uniqueness lie in the treatment of her characters. She does not exalt women or condemn men; there is no sympathy for men or women in her novels. She gives equal treatment to all her characters. The language she uses reveals much of the truth about the particular sect of the society. That which seems obscene to the reading public is in common use among the upper-middle class society. For example, in the novel Second Thoughts, Maya finds the word ‘nonsense’ used casually by most of the people in Bombay is considered as a serious insulting word in Calcutta. Similarly the language used in her novels brings out the nature of the character and the reality of the class. This study has made an attempt to capture Shobhaa De’s reflection on the society, her attempt to show to the world the different facets of life.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter gives the general introduction on literature, novel as a genre, Indian writing in English, Indian women writers and the life and works of Shobhaa De. It also states the conceptual framework on which this research is built upon. The second chapter gives the review of literature, gives in nutshell the opinion of the researchers who have so far dealt with the works of Shobhaa De. The third chapter is a critical analysis of the early novels of Shobhaa De - Socialite Evenings, Starry Nights, Sisters, and Sultry Days. The fourth chapter analyses the later novels Strange Obsessions, Snapshots and Second Thoughts. The fifth chapter deals with the narrative technique used by
Shobhaa De in her novels. And the concluding chapter sums up the study.

This thesis focuses on Shobhaa De’s contribution as a novelist. It brings out the realities of life portrayed in her novels. The usage of language could have been refined but at the same time it cannot be denied that she has a valuable theme, the reality of the present society and the change in the human values, and the condition of the human relationship in the modern time. After a deep analysis the fact that Shobhaa De is honest in her portrayal of characters and situations as it is in real life is acknowledged.

As the saying goes, ‘Truth is bitter’, when Shobhaa De reveals the truth so far hidden in the name of Indian culture and social norms, the readers are unable to confront it. Nonfiction by Shobhaa De helped the researcher in understanding the author better. In fact, it is only after reading her Selective Memory, the researcher determined to do research on Shobhaa De desiring to bring out the positive side of the novels as well as the hidden realities that lie beneath the shocking language.

Some of the critics accuse Shobhaa De’s Selective Memory as being too selective. But when asked the author replied that she has done justice to the book as an autobiography and has covered all three stages of her life. It is true that she has not given any details about her first marriage or the reason for the break of marriage. But that does not mean she is not an honest person. As a writer she has deep compassion for suffering human beings and condemnation for dishonest wicked behavior in any human.

She does not wish to pass any message to the society; she says her novels are not written with any social concern or for any social reformation. But the novels are truthful reflection of the upper class society; Reflection of truth with no bias.