Indian English writers have made a very significant contribution to fiction. Among the Indian English novelists, Shashi Deshpande occupies a prominent position. Her early novels were published just at the time of the 'Post Midnight Children's Generation of Writers'. She has the sensitively-treated typical Indian themes and has portrayed contemporary middle-class women with rare competence. In a wider sense, her subject matter is nothing less than human predicament. She is a champion of oppressed women. One can see her novels have something more fundamental than a social motif. Though Shashi Deshpande projects in her novels the traditional image of woman, the portrayal becomes realistic with a thrust on her sense of frustration and alienation. The characters created by her, like their creator, were torn apart by the conflicting forces of tradition and modernity. The crisis of value adaptation and attachment with family and home pulled them asunder. The plight of the working woman is still worse, aggravated by her problems of marital adjustment and quest for assertion of her identity.
The predicament of the new Indian woman is taken up for fuller treatment by Shashi Deshpande. The novelist, however, has generally concentrated on the plights and problems of educated women mostly with an urban base.

The protagonists of Shashi Deshpande’s novels are depicted as more intelligent and capable women than men. All her novels are in the first person narration, which naturally expresses the feminine point of view. They react to outmoded traditions and superstitions, which tend to impinge upon their personality. They are against arranged marriages and are inclined towards sex freedom. The protagonists are depicted as having the right of education and exercising their rights to have the education of their choice. Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists assert themselves in doing what is nearest to their heart. They play a wider role in the social framework than the average woman as, teacher, writer, wife, novelist, doctor, Journalist and social worker. They are depicted as having the capacity to lead independent lives and making a success of it. In the early stages of their lives, they feel a sense of nostalgia for home, which also proves to be a source of support for them in their difficulties. The home symbolizes the ethos from which they cannot entirely cut themselves off, even if they desire to do so.
Shashi Deshpande was born in Dharwad, in Karnataka, India. She is the daughter of the renowned Kannada writer and Sanskrit Pandit Adya Ranga Charya, a cerebral man who wrote Plays of Ideas. She was a student of Bombay’s Elphinstone College from where she got her B.A in Economics. Nevertheless Shashi Deshpande must have acquired an intellectual bent of mind and love for reading and scholarship.

Shashi Deshpande’s writing career began in 1970. Her major concern in her writing is development of theme and characterization. The Indianness of her writing is extremely natural and authentic. The strong point about Deshpande’s novels is her delineation of woman’s inner world. She herself admitted to Geetha Gangadharan in an interview: “We know a lot about the physical and the organic world and the universe in general, but we still know very little about human relationships. It is the most mystifying thing as I am concerned. I will continue to wonder about it, puzzle over it and write about it. And still it is tremendously intriguing, fascinating”.¹ (Indian communicator, 20 November 1994 p-11). That Shashi Deshpande has been genuinely interested in issues pertaining to the lot of women in India is irrefutable. Some of her views vented through her characters, detail analysis we find in her novels.

The first collection of Shashi Deshpande’s short stories, published in 1978, was called The Legacy and Other Stories. Her other collections of
Short stories are: *It was Dark*, *The Miracle*, *It was the Nightingale* and *The Intrusion* and other stories.


A Brief examination of all her novels is attempted here. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980) ambivalently projects deconstruction, as well as reconstruction of gender roles. As the female protagonist of the novel is consciously, and often unconsciously in search of an 'inner space' which is instrumental in the reconstruction of gender identity in the wake of its being deconstructed. In this way the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is totally different in the sense that it explodes the myth of man's unquestionable superiority and the myth of woman being a martyr and a paragon of all virtues. It is based on the problems faced by a career woman. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* tells the story of a marriage on the rocks. Sarita (Saru) is a “two-in-one woman”. In the day time she is a
successful doctor, and at night "a terrified animal" in the hands of her husband Manohar (Manu) who is an English teacher in a college. Manu has become a psychic case for several reasons; Saru is a successful doctor, while he is an ordinary lecturer in an ordinary college: she is respected by the community while he is ignored. This leads Saru to leave her house and return to her father's house after fifteen years – a place she had once sworn never to return to. The stay in her father's house gives her a chance to review her past and present, that is, her relation with her husband, her dead mother, dead brother Dhruva, and her children Renu and Abhi. Though she remains unchanged till the end, she has a better understanding of herself and others. This gives her the courage to confront reality. The dark no longer holds any terror to her. Saru is highly self-willed and her problems ensue because of her out-sized ego and innate love for power over others. She defies traditional codes at the slightest threat to her importance, as that is what she missed and craved for in her mother's house. Even in her childhood Saru had realized that economic independence alone could be an insurance against subordination or suppression. From then on every move in life is towards the realization of that goal of economic independence. And what Premila Paul said, "The Dark Holds No Terrors is a totally different novel in the sense that it explodes the myth of man's unique trouble superiority and
myth of woman being a martyr and a paragon, of all virtues. It is based on the problems faced by career woman. It is discussed as; there are three problems incidents that are frequently evoked in Saru’s introspection in a fragmentary fashion in the first three sections of the novel. The first incident is Saru’s interview for a special issue on career women brought out by a women’s magazine. The interviewer’s casual query put forth to Manu - “How does it feel when your wife earns not only the bread but most of the butter as well?” totally undermines Manu’s confidence. His sense of insecurity starts with the explosion in the nearby factory. The lover in him dies when the neighbours wake up to the fact that Saru is no ordinary housewife but an important doctor. Manu lets his wounded male pride manifest itself in the form of sexual sadism.

The second moot point that is evoked in the novel with bitterness is Prof. Kulkarani’s (Manu’s one time imagebuilder at college who had encouraged their marriage) message from her mother to Saru. He bears the tidings of her mother’s death and her total rejection of Saru in a casual unconcerned manner. “Daughter? I don’t have any daughter. I had a son and he died. Now I am childless... I will pray to God for her unhappiness. Let her know more sorrow than she has given me” (p-178). The mother had successfully erased Saru from her household with the
exception of a photograph, only because her brother was also in it. Saru’s obsessive remembrance of her mother is indicative of both her sense of guilt and her sense of defeat. Death seals off all possibilities of straightening things. Dead or alive, Saru sees the mother sapping her of all happiness and asks herself, “why should she matter dead when she had never mattered alive?” (p-23). She sees her as “a vengeful ghost” and gives the dead so much power over herself.

The third important incident that Saru recalls repeatedly is her brother Dhruva’s drowning in a pond. Her love for power is reflected in her relationship with the brother too. It is said that being older to him by three years gave her advantages of dictatorship. Because of the mother’s favouritism Saru hates Dhruva and the struggle for importance goes on. Saru wants to blot him out of the family picture and, when it happens there is a definite gloomy atmosphere at home. The mother established that Saru has killed Dhruva and Saru put herself in the dock. The traumatic story of The Dark Holds No Terrors is of a double psychological conflict: the first one is between a mother tradition-bound and custom-fettered and a daughter-intelligent and strong-willed; the second one is between a husband who starts from a position of success and acclaim, but more down will, and a wife who starts from a point where she has been rejected by her mother, but rises through great effort
and intelligence. They move in directions opposite to each other and are hence on a collision course of intelligence and integrity to attain self-identification. Premila Paul pointed out, "The Dark Holds No Terrors would be considered a protest novel too.... Saru’s Feminist reactions date back to her childhood when she had to contend with sexist discrimination at home".  

Shashi Deshpande changed the theme of her next novel. She gave a touch of sensitiveness to this novel If I Die Today (1982). There is one catchy statement on its cover page; that is, “This is a gripping story of men and women charged with fear and with a sense of violence around them”.  

The description applies only to a small part of the novel but entirely misleading as far as its theme is concerned. The real theme of the novel is not murder or violence, but there is something more. One of the concerns of the novelist is to depict what happens to women after marriage: what they have been, what they have become, and what is in store for them. On the surface, all is well with the middle-class women. They have a relatively happy married life with their spouses, but the question arises regarding their education, economic independence, and motherhood to disturb the existing equation. - The novel reveals the philosophy viz. a) a search for self-identity b) man is free to choose, but he is entirely responsible for his choice. And it is an irony of life that the
man who advocates and practices such philosophy in this novel is looked at with ambient feelings by the people who know him. The entire action is seen through the eyes of Manju is eminently suited to be the narrator, for several reasons. She is essentially honest, straight-forward, broad-minded, kind-hearted and intelligent. She is a lecturer in a college. And she is well-educated and well-read. She is sensitive enough to notice nuances of feelings not only in herself but in others. The theme of the novel is like an allegory of the story of Adam and Eve continued beyond the Fall. It was in a sense, a fortunate Fall, for Adam and Eve have a chance to rise again through their own conscious efforts and not through any fortuitous circumstances. Manju finds her married life fraught with silences and barriers. Even the second pregnancy which is supported to bring husband and wife closer fails to deliver the desired result, as she feels being slowly silenced distanced from her motherhood, she is fed up with the marriage and avers: “A marriage, you start off expecting so many things. And bit by bit like dead leaves, the expectations fall off. But these two people who have shut themselves off in two separate glass jar Who can see each other but can’t communicate? Is this marriage?” (p - 24) like Sita, Savitri, Draupadi and others too prefers the image of a pair of bullocks to describe a married life. That’s why, critic Toril Moi remarks, “The principal objective of feminist criticism has always been
political: it seeks to expose not to perpetuate patriarchal practice”, and this is what Shashi Deshpande also does through her text.

**Come Up and Be Dead.** There are three aspects in the novel *Come Up and Be Dead*, all are equally important. The protagonist of the novel, Kshama does not influence the action, and the philosophy that evil is omni-present. The theme of *Come Up and Be Dead*, expressed with another form, which imitates the play *Hamlet*. Miss Kshama Rao, is the new headmistress of the high school. She has been appointed through the good impression she made on the chairman of the body of Governors whom she encountered by chance in a train. The novel again makes its appearance in three form: revengefulness’, lasciviousness and proneness to commit murders. Revengefulness is represented in Varma. Lasciviousness makes its appearance in Sanjay, Sharmila, Mridula, proneness to commit murders is there in Sanjay, Girish and Mridula. Varma who stands for revenge treats the whole female sex as his enemy. Girish by shock tells to Devayani.

“Strange, isn’t it, that a man who has so much money should make himself vulnerable by going in for a thing like this? When I went to him I knew at once that he enjoyed this trade in girls................”8 (P.252). Varma’s revengefulness is akin to the revengefulness of Charles Dickens’
miss Havisham in the novel *Great Expectation*. Verma inflict harm on the wrong doer.

B.D. Sharma writes, “Shashi Deshpande also ponders over the question as to what can be done to keep people away from wrongdoing”.¹ One can keep oneself away from sin if one struggles against evil all through one’s life and keep one’s evil desires under control by making conscious efforts to achieve the goal. Shashi Deshpande subscribes to the view that the wicked have to be punished, whatever the odds.

**Roots and Shadows**: The first to be written and the second to be published, deals with the problem of sexual morality. Since it was the first one to be written, we may justifiably assume that the problems dealt with there were nearest to Shashi Deshpande’s heart or worried her most. The problem in the novel is dead weight of tradition in a joint-family under the patriarchal system, retarding the natural development of a spirited but sensitive young woman. The system was some decades ago and in some places is even today a distinguishing characteristic of Indian life is continued. This was an advantage in an agrarian society, but rapidly developing commercial and industrial societies broke up the old order and unitary families become more common. In the novel four generations live together under the hierarchical dictatorship of Akka,
Indu's grandfather's widowed sister, since the grandfather is dead. "A household like this cannot be without certain drawbacks. Living too close too entangled with one another. So that if you move, you're bound to hurt some one else. And if they move, they hurt you. So many divers pulls, so many conflicting feeling." Shashi Deshpande tried to show these feelings are common in the joint family. Indu's uncle enlightens her about the women, "These women are so small-minded, they all spoil the cooking to starve those they dislike. They don't care if they starve themselves in the bargain" (P.144) but it has some compensation. All receive equal treatment, and even a motherless child is taken care of. Indu, the protagonist, described how happily she, a motherless baby, grew up in that joint family. Widowed sister and daughters would find shelter there. M. Mani Meitei pointed out, "Thus, in Roots and Shadows we hear a woman speak through her body; through her consciousness, and through her pen. This kind of exercise might be called 'wish fulfillment'.

Shashi Deshpande exposes the reality of natural individualism cannot find much scope in such a place. Young people with independent attitudes cannot find the atmosphere here congenial. They want to strike out on their own. Indu, a grand-daughter of the family, leaves the house when she is eighteen for higher education and is determined never to
come back. She gets married on her own. For ten years the family does not extend even a formal invitation to Indu and her husband to visit them. After ten years they ask her to come because Akka is on her deathbed and she has made a will leaving all the property to Indu. The lawyer tells them about the will after Akka's death. Indu goes and finds the family in doldrums. A few of the men have jobs and of the younger generation a few are doing well at school except Naren who has got 1st class at the M.A. in economics. He is the grandson of a distant cousin of Akka. The members of the older generation still suffer from superstitions - the wife must not utter her husband's name: if she does, his life-span will be shortened: if she goes around the tulsi plant, it will be lengthened. Some of them eat food from the unwashed plates which their husbands have used. If you utter the name of Rama, the soul of the dead will go to heaven quickly. The wife's dying before her husband is to be considered good fortune. If a widow does not shave her head, she is a second class citizen. When Saroja (Naren's mother) wanted to learn music, "Akka put her foot down". (P-55). Replies, "what - learn music from a strange man! Sit and sing in front of strangers! Like those women? Are we that kind of a family? Isn't it enough for you to sing one or two devotional songs, one or two aarti songs?" (p-55). The ideal woman is the one who will dissolve personality in her husband's.
The one custom against which Indu has a firmly rooted prejudice is arranged marriages. Speaking about the prospective bridegroom of Mini Kaka declares, “He has two legs, two arms, two eyes, two ears. So what if he’s a little dark? So what if he’s not too bright?"p.52. “May be the boy is a little ugly, may be a little stupid...... but everything else is fine. The family is good, it is known to us, they have money, she will be quite comfortable. (p-56). Mini herself realistically asks, “What choice have I, Indu?"16-(137). Indu feels sorry for the helplessness of Mini and of thousands of other girls not only as a feminist but as a simple human being. But when she thinks of the disillusionment of her own love-marriage, there is much for her to ruminate over. She realizes that Mini because of her realistic attitude will be contended all her life, while she herself had been ecstatically happy, only for a short time. Her love-life has been a story of disillusion. “Jayant and I............... I wish I would say we have achieved complete happiness. But I cannot fantasise”.17(p.14) She tells Naren. How ecstatically happy she had been in the beginning.

“You know the word ‘deflowered’ they use for girls, Naren?............ but I told myself my body had burgeoned into a flower of exquisite felicity"18.(pp.90-91). There was a time she had derided the traditional concept of an ideal woman- one who loses her identity in her husband’s. but that’s exactly what had happened to her. She dresses to please him.

96
"When I look in the mirror, I think of Jayant. When I undress I think of him. Always what he wants, what he would like isn't there anything I want at all? Have I become fluid, with no shape, no form of my own? At that moment a savage truth had stared me in the time. Without wants there is no I" 19. (p.54). But Jayant is just the opposite. "He too expected me to submit. No. Not expected. He took it for granted that I would" 20(p.174). She submitted because she was afraid of failure. She had to show to others that her marriage was a success. There was a certain amount of incompatibility of temperament between them "It's more like .... We're on different levels. He chooses his level. And I .... I try to choose the one he would like one to be on. It humiliates me" 21(p.68) This is an expression of the inner fury of a woman.

That Long Silence: The novel has several facets, and critics have divergent views on what the novel is about. The most obvious one is that it is a "story deals with the Indian woman in disharmony with her sexual, cultural and natural roles". 22 Writes R. Mala. Keki Daruwala calls the novel "One long rumination on relationship" 23. But few critics have mentioned except in passing that an important aspect of the novel is the protagonist's attempt to find herself". Adele King states that, "Like Deshpande's other works, these novels (The Dark Holds No Terror and That Long Silence) are primarily concerned with the plight of the modern
Indian woman who is seeking to understand herself." All the protagonists of Ms. Shashi Deshpande are not merely educated but go out to work, except Jaya. Indu is a journalist, Saru a doctor, Urmila a lecturer in a college, Kshama the head-mistress of a high school. But the author appears to have greater sympathy for Jaya than for the others. Talking to Dr. Vanamala Viswanatha, Ms. Deshpande concedes, "may be not being a working woman, I have been able to feel more for a house wife who is most devalued..... women who do not go to work, who are literally trapped. And yet I agree with you, now that I am working, having a life outside the family is very important for a woman." Shashi. K. Jha writes, "Ms. Deshpande unhesitatingly admits that the novel is based on her own marriage." And author agrees to this comment.

The story begins with Jaya as a child of whom her father had high expectations. The atmosphere at home was strictly traditional and she married without a murmur. Mohan, the bride-groom, changes her name to Suhasini, as is the custom, and Suhasini's models are mythological figures like Sita, Savitri and Gandhi. She accepts that a husband and wife are like pair of bullocks yoked together and it is more comfortable for them to move in that a husband is like a sheltering tree. Her dream of a happy home is the kind of advertisements they show in theaters before a picture begins. 'The kid ,with the endearing moustache of milk. The
tender smiling mother rubbing vicks on her son’s chest. Even the younger mother feeding her baby with farex: the brother and sister running in hand in hand to adoring smiling parents, happy families in their gleaming homes spelt sheer poetry to me. For me, they were the fairy tales in which people live happily ever after.

The analogy of husband and wife being like a pair of bullocks or the husband being a sheltering tree or the wife being an extremely narrow-minded, egoistic sparrow, suggests that they do not live as truly human. “When people are treated as things and come to regard themselves as things that can be managed, controlled, shaped and exploited, they are prevented from living in a truly human manner”.

Along with this came several disillusionments. “First there’s love, then there’s sex – that was how I had always imagined it to be. But after living with Mohan I had realized that it could so easily be the other way round” (p.95). “Often I had told myself; love is a myth, without which sex with the same person for a life time would be unendurable”27 (p.97). The marriage of Mohan and Jaya is almost on the rocks, “We had never come together; only our bodies had done that” (P.98). Jaya, however, cannot resist her body’s irresistible need of Mohan. For her, Mohan was only surrogate for the dead Kamat in this act. Hence it was an act of treachery to herself, fraud against Mohan and betrayal of Kamat. Shashi Deshpande
does not argue for sexual freedom but only for equality with Man. It is significant that of all her heroines, only Indu has an extra-marital affair. But there is little doubt that Ms Deshpande is disgusted with the queasy prudishness of women about sex morality. It would look as though sex-prudishness is a part of the collective unconscious of Indians. A woman may be genuinely good in everything else. She may be honest, kind, helpful and sympathetic, but if she is known to have sex relations with somebody apart from her husband, she will be looked down upon. To begin with Mohan himself. He conforms to every formula associated with middle class husband; he is unsensitive; priggish and over-ambitious. Mohan decides to marry Jaya because she speaks English fluently like a convent-educated girl that she is. He had earlier happened to be simple, fascinated for a few minutes by three well educated, fashionably-dressed women speaking English and was so much impressed that he had decided to marry a girl who could speak English like them. Later, he happens to overhear Jaya speaking English and he tells Dinakar that he wants "an educated wife" (p.90) and what he means by "educated, cultured" is one who can speak English, as if they are necessarily synonyms terms. Mohan has an egoistic philosophy, the motive of which had made him suffer psychologically and physically. This leads to his unauthentic life, the result of which is guilt. Mohan has feelings of guilt
and when he sends Jaya a telegram from Delhi, she hopes that "All Well" in the telegram may mean a move towards authentic living, but actually Jaya and Mohan are opposite of each other in the sense that she has the makings of an existentialist and he has not. Her honesty with others and more importantly with herself reveals her integrity of character. She has the intelligence too, to understand the implications of a saying or the possible repercussions of an action. This will be borne out by an analysis of the novel.

The other axiom, that of the pair of bullocks is repeated five times—twice on page seven, once on page eight, once on page eleven and once on page one hundred ninety-one, but each time there is a slight difference in emphasis. If two human beings are yoked together, and if they have no choice about how to act, then there is no significance in being human beings. "I have always thought there's only one life, no chance of reprieve, no second chances" (p.191-192). Why does man require a second life for redemption, since "in this life itself there are so many cross roads, so many choices?" (p.192). The direction of the path of Jaya's life, the milestone which stand for the evolving significance of the imagery of the two bullocks yoked together, are a path from unauthentic life, for choice is an important tenet, since it implies responsibility.
The repeated use of the word "silence" sounds ominous but is really ironical, for the story is about silence being broken and not kept. By narrating the experiences of the past, Jaya has broken a silence sustained for the previous seventeen years of marriage. The silence is not Jaya’s alone but of all Indian women of the past, present and possibly the foreseeable future. The word ‘silence’ has been used again and again in a variety of contexts and with different persons, but always with reference to suffering. Mohan refers to his mother’s suffering as ‘toughness’ but Jaya could easily see that it was “a struggle so bitter that silence was the only weapon. Silence and surrender” (p.36). That in India even women with education and time sensibilities suffer in dumb silence as much as the illiterate and ignorant is the most forceful feminist protest that Ms Deshpande makes in this novel. Women have put up with stupid traditions like their names being changed at the time of marriage, their being confined to allotted slots like daughter, wife and mother until they are shifted to another slot by men. Then they have to consider themselves lucky if they die before their husband. They do not protest, since they have no identity of their own, against not being mentioned in the family tree of the father or of the husband - all this in silence. But now Jaya has erased the silence in her heart. Her father named her Jaya or Victory because she was born Jaya has justified her father’s selection.
Elizabath Robins writes - "Shashi Deshpande's novel, That Long Silence, announcing, as it were, the intention of this talented contemporary Indian writer to break the long silence that has surrounded women, their experiences and their world. For a long time, woman has existed as a gap, as an absence in literature, whether western or Indian. This is not only true of the fiction created by men, but also by women, who have mostly confined themselves to writing love stories or dealing with the experience of women in a superficial manner, creating the same kind of stereotypes of women which they find so reprehensible in the writings of men. Women writers have also often fallen a prey to that prescriptive feminist ideology of creating strong women characters. This doctrine becomes as repressive as the one created by male hegemony and represses the truth about the majority of their sisters and their lives"30.

That Long Silence - then, traces Jays's passage through a plethora of self-doubts, fears, guilt, smothered anger and silence towards articulations and affirmation. Suman Ahuja, observes that, "Jaya - caught in an emotional eddy, endeavours to come to terms with her protean roles, while trying, albeit in vain, to rediscover her true self, which is but an ephemera... an unfulfilled wife, a disappointed mother and a failed writer"31
Jaya tells her own story - One may say that her preoccupations are man-woman relationship, marriage and family life. But the novel avoids the facile solution of putting the blame on man only. Both men and women are product of their culture and victims of the institution of marriage. It is as difficult for women to outgrow. The images and roles allotted to them by their society as it is for men. It is typical Indian English novel that speaks to us of our own situation. The image of the woman underwent a metamorphosis when the contemporary woman decided to cast off her traditional role of living under the shade of her husband. Jaya, the heroine of the novel, gives us the new image of the Indian woman who now tries to stand on her own legs and seeks to break the age-old silence by refusing to dance to the tune of her husband. With Jaya's assertion of life that 'Long Silence' is threatened to be broken.

The Binding Vine - is a microcosm of mankind as far as human relationships are concerned. The relationships, the feelings involved, the emotions aroused, the complexes and complexities of human behaviour make the characters come alive. Different people react in such divergent ways to similar circumstances that we can only wonder at the variety of human nature. Urmi and Vanna are, for example of the same age, close friends, school mates, sisters-in-law, and love each other, but they are so unlike each other in their attitudes to their children, mothers, fathers,
husbands and even each other. It is through their reactions and feelings that they become fascinating. It is her father’s attitude to life that makes Urmi self-reliant and self-willed, too, to some extent. Whether it is as simple a matter as the kind of clothes she likes to wear, or going out to dinner with Dr. Bhaskar, or going to Shakutai’s house to console her, she goes her own way irrespective of what others feel or say about it. In this respect Vanna is quite different from Urmi. In her case too, it is her father’s influence or rather neglect which has made her so. She has grown up in a family where her father has completely ignored the presence of Vanna and her mother. So she has a tendency to agree with, not to say flatter people. But no relationship can perfect – that would be against human nature. However, “each relationship, always imperfect, survives on hope”32(p-141). But there can always be an agreement about disagreement. Shashi Deshpande suggests that all relationships, where strong emotion like love is involved make persons vulnerable. “Parenthood makes you vulnerable”.33(P.77) seems to be the moral of the story of Babar and Humayun thinks Urmi. Marrying the person one loves lead to the same kind of vulnerability. “The most important need is to love. From the moment of our births, we struggle to find something with which we can anchor ourselves to this strange world we find ourselves in. Only when we love, do we find this anchor. Love makes you
vulnerable"34 (p137). Urmi saw the same kind of fear, the fear of being trapped, on Kishore's face on their wedding night. That is why she walked out of the bridal room to her grandparent's house and returned next morning. Probably Kishore saw the same kind of fear in Urmi eyes and therefore, did not prevent her from going.

There is one thing more terrible than death and not inevitable either. That is, the treatment of some women by men in a patriarchal society. The protest against the disabilities of women has been called the feminist movement. What is more important in Binding Vine is, it reveals the fact that no less than seven women are the victims of male hegemony - Vanna, Inni, Akka, Shakutai, Sulu, Kalpana and Mira. Why chastity is given undue importance in patriarchal system of society has been explained in an earlier a fortunate fall, for Adam and Eve have a chance to rise again through their own conscious efforts and not through any fortuitous circumstances. As A Matter Of Time (1996) - reveals the story of a family lives under the same roof from three generations. They have their own values and mindsets. The most important character in the novel is Kalyani - presented as "a weak, feeble creature". Who returned to her parents house as "a deserted wife". Though it was purely arranged marriage, and Kalyani marries with Shripathi, who is her maternal uncle, the marriage was failure. About thirty-five years, there was an oppressive
silence. Kalyani resisted. Satish. K. Alkant pointed out, "A frequent theme in Deshpande’s fiction is that of ‘silence’ or ‘absence’ which is often a consequence of the marginalization of women in the mainstream culture".34

Kalyani wanted to ask one question to Gopal but it remains unsaid. "If I meet Gopal I will ask him one question. The question no one has thought of what is it, Gopal, I will ask him, that makes a man in this age of acquisition and possession walk out on his family and all that he owns! Because ..........It was you who said that we are shaped by the age we live in, by the society we are part of. How then can you in this age we live in turn your back on everything in your life? Will you be able to give me an answer to this".35 (p.27)

All the happenings in the novel revolve round this very question. People make various wild guesses and suppositions. Kalyani’s daughter Sumi’s character has been conceived without a trace of sentimentality. She is graceful, even in crisis, she can leave the impression of her grace and courage and her old vivacity. After being deserted by her husband she shows boundless patience. Even in her parental house she has the air of being lost, of having no place. She cannot hate a person for long. She herself tells her daughter that she is not a good hater and that she cannot retain her anger or hatred for long. She is so self controlled that she
would not even talk about Gopal's act of desertion. She tells Devaki. "I have never been able to cry easily, you know that. And what do I say, Devi? That my husband has left me and I don't know why and may be he doesn't really know either? And that I am angry and humiliated and confused? Let that be, we won't go into it now".36 (p-107).

Sumi does not feel the wrench at all. In fact, sensitive and self-respecting woman's like her feel their misfortune keenly. A distinguishing quality of Aru is her rebelliousness. The 'desire to rebel' is deeply ingrained in her. Gopal's walking away on his family is, according to her "not just a tragedy, it is both shame and disgrace" (p-13). Even after the death of her mother and grandfather she is not prepared to seek any help from Gopal. She moves away from her father's arms and says to him: "yes, papa, you go. We'll be all right; we'll be quite all right. Don't worry about us " (p-246). She consoles Kalyani that she will be with the latter as her 'son'37 (233), who is regarded as the protector in the Indian context after the father's death and "the very reason of their existence". Probably the most important point about Aru is her finely individualized unconventional relationship with her grandmother, Kalyani. Like how A Matter Of Time represents three generations. The first generation representative is Kalyani the grandmother and her sorrow and sufferings as woman. The second generations' representative is Sumi to mother who
is deserted by her husband. And the third is represented by 'Arunadhati the daughter - who confessed, "I am never going to get married", she expresses her point of view to premi.

"I have been thinking about marriage a great deal .... What's there in it? I mean, look at Amma and now sumi.... What do you get out of it? .... And look at Goda-ajji and Bhauji-kaka, they're always scrapping. At their age and after so many years of marriage!"38 (p-138).

It is her interplay of feelings, “regarding marriage. But this is so because of her want of maturity and her vicarious experience of marriage like those of Kalyani and Sripathi, Sumi and Gopal and others. A Matter Of Time is a composite study in human relationships, and of the crucial role plays on familial and social systems of post-colonial Indian society.

Small Remedies - (2000): it is a complex novel. Chandra Holm said “It is a novel about myriad feelings - love, courage, honesty, truth, trust, about the power exerted by time and by words. It is a novel in which past and present are intermingled"39. This is a story of two women- Leela, the trade union activist and Savitribai Indorekar, a classical singer of Gwalior Gharana - Shashi Deshpande explores a journey which will bring past and present within a single pair of brackets, which will heal the wounds even if it does not provide all the answer. Madhu, who is going to write
the biography of Savitribai Indorekar and Leela. She visits Bhavanipur, attempting to unravel the puzzle that is past, present and future, understand the vagaries of time’s hand find remedies. During the course of this journey we witness various stages of Madhu’s life: as the motherless daughter of a successful doctor in Neemgaon her friendship at that time with Meeni, Savitribai’s daughter, Savitri bai and Gulam Ahmed, her moving to Bombay to Leela and Joe’s place when her father dies, the beginning of her love for English literature due to Joe’s influence etc Madhu’s own memories as well as those evoked by the association of the people around her acting like the only points to hold on to. These memories are so fresh that the border between past and present is easily obliterated. Madhu has come to Bhavanpur to write the story of Savithribai and her daughter Muni. She trying to establish the identities of the real Leela and Savitri bai amidst all the facts she has collected, Madhu sees parallels between the lives of these two women.

She thinks,

“I have begun to think that in writing about Bai, I am writing about Leela as well, and any mother and all those women who reached beyond their relationship. Bai, moving out of her class in search of her destiny as a singer, Leela breaking out of the conventions of widowhood, looking for justice for the weak; my mother running in her bare feet, using her
body as an instrument. Low speed yes, they are in it together. But they paid the price for their attempts to break out” (p.284).

She realizes, “that both were women courageous women that both were who worked for and got the measure of freedom they needed that both were ready to accept wholly the consequences of their actions.” With this understanding, the realization dawns upon Madhu that life has simply to be lived, no matter what happens, even when things look so very abysmal. (very bad) Many incidents and instances troubled her heart when Madhu listen to Hasina singing a Vachan by Akka Madhevi- that is “I saw a dream, I saw a dream”. (p.319) Madhu feels, “she’s speaking of my dreams too, so many of them, all woven about Adit. And some dreams for his son. It is all over now, there are no more dreams left for me, for either of us”. (p-319). There arises a doubt in her. “Does this mean that there are no remedies in life? Of course, there are remedies. But the remedies that are available are small remedies”.

**Feminist Elements in Shashi Deshpande’s novel**

After 1950 Feminist novels started becoming more prominent. Women writers discussed freely the day to day problems such as marital disharmony, sex, violence, divorce, extra-marital affairs,
role of conflict, problems of working woman, spinsters etc. Shashi Deshpande is not a feminist writer essentially, but she certainly has some feminist elements in her novels, a fact which has inclined some critics to think of her primarily as a feminist. In fact, her attitude to feminism has been changing with time. Talking of her early views, P. Ramamoorthy writes. "Shashi Deshpande feels embarrassed to be called a woman writer and she is not very enthusiastic about the label feminist". But within a few years Ms Shashi Deshpande came out with statements like. "I now have no doubt at all in saying that I am a feminist in my own life, I mean. But not consciously, as novelist. I must also say that my feminism has come to me very slowly, very gradually and mainly out of my own thinking and experiences and feelings. I started writing first, and only then discovered my feminism. And it was much later that I actually read book about it".

In an interview given to Stanley Carvalho in 1990, she said, "It is debatable whether my books are feministic or not". While she had told M.D. Riti in 1988. "I began reading feminist writing only recently, while my writing has reflected feminist ideas right from the start". The two feminist writers she mentions as having read are ‘Simone de Beauvoir’ and Germaine Geer, but she also says that she read them quite late, much after she started writing, and that they stimulated her. The other feminist
writers she is known to have read are Betty Friedan, Virginia Woolf, Margaret Drabble and Doris Lessing. Naturally their influence pressured her to write novels on feministic idea. P. Ramamoorthy was so right in asserting, "However much she may be deny the influence of feminism in her novels, it is the core of her novels ... it becomes quite obvious that the women she has created are feminists, if she is not one". (Apparently this was written before Shashi Deshpande came out with the statement that she was personally a feminist). The ideas in her novels which incline critics to see feminism are: The protagonists in her novels are all women, they are more intelligent and capable than men. All the novels are first person narratives, which naturally express the feminine point of view. They react to outmoded traditions and superstitions which tend to impinge upon their personality. They are against arranged marriages and are inclined towards sexual freedom, but sexual freedom is a minor matter. They assert themselves in doing what is nearest to their hearts. They play a wider role in the social framework than the average woman as teacher, wife, novelist, journalist, doctor, social worker, union leader, classical maestro. They are depicted as having the capacity to lead independent lives and make a success of it. This is how, her characters react in the society. Shashi Deshpande's "Roots and Shadows" – deals with the problem; dead weight of tradition in a joint - family under the
patriarchal system and retarding the natural development of a spirited but sensitive young woman. The members of the older generation still suffer from superstitions – the wife must not utter her husband’s name: if she does his life-span will be shortened: if she goes round the tulsi plant, it will be lengthened – Indu – the protagonist of the novel feels sorry for their elders condition. She does not follow all superstitious blindly. Indu who opposed the custom and married her own choice feels sorry for the helplessness of Mini and of thousand of other girls not only as a feminist but as a simple human being. Indu opposes to submit herself to her husband she explains to Naren “You know the word, ‘deflowered’ they use for girls, Naren? ………. But I told myself my body had burgeoned into a flower of exquisite felicity”\textsuperscript{47} (p-90-91). There was a time when she had derided the traditional concept of an ideal woman one who loses her identity in her husband’s. including this protest of Indu there are several elements which are feministic attitude in the novel. The right to have an education, the right to marry whom one likes, and the right to have extra-marital affairs. The feminists would like both sexes to have freedom to include in extra-marital affairs rather than that they loyal to each other. In this regard what P. Ramamoorthy writes. “The novel (\textit{Roots and Shadows}) gains its feminist stance in Indu’s exploration into herself”\textsuperscript{48}. The critic goes too far in implying that self-exploration is a feminist
activity. It is natural that questions arises like cannot women who are not feminist undertake this activity. The women who are after certain thing in their life is that there is no such thing as love, "Love ...... she scorned the word now. There was no such thing between man and woman. There was only a need which both fought against, futility, the very futility turning into the thing they called 'Love'. It's only a word, she thought. Take away the word, the idea, and the concept will wither away"49. (Dark Holds No Terrors P - 72) This is an inner fury of Saru. The main reason for this disillusionment is her husbands sadistic behaviour. Manu has become a psychic, he cannot tolerate her wife's progress, people gives importance to her because she is a successful doctor but what is he? What he expected from his wife complete surrender. The traumatic story of the novel is of a psychological conflict of mother and daughter, and of wife and husband. The first one is Saru - a daughter intelligent and strong willed: a mother - who is tradition-bound and custom-fettered. The second one is between husband who starts from position of success and acclaim, but move down hill and wife, who starts from a point where she has been rejected by her mother, but rises through grit, effort and intelligence. Saru's struggle for attaining self-identification is a mark of feminism in the novel.
The Dark Holds No Terrors has a striking beginning. Sarita, comes back to her family home to escape from the nightmarish brutality her sadist husband, Manu, inflicts on her every night. When Saru reaches her father’s home, she recalls that her problems had started right from her childhood. Her younger brother Dhurva’s death overshadows all other memories of her life as if that was the point of her fall. Saru’s mother continuously accused her of Dhurva’s death and cursed her, “why didn’t you die? Why are you alive when he is dead?” (29-30). This leaves a traumatizing effect on her. She had become a non entity long before she left her mother’s home. She remembers; “I just did not exist for her. I died long before I left home.” (p-27) In fact, male-oriented societies structure females in such a way that they work against even those of their own gender.

When Saru became a famous doctor, It made her socially economically superior to her husband. This is a mark of Slowly “an affected indifference”. Started gleaming through his stone, because “ there were nods and smiles, murmured greetings and namastes ......(36). This upside down alteration destroys their marriage. She realizes the falsity of the notion of equality she had read in book, “ a+b was not, definitely not equal to b+a. It became a monstrously un balanced
equation, lopsided, unequal, impossible"\textsuperscript{51}(p-37). Sara remembers imaginary advice given by her to the girls in Nalu's college.

"A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband ........ That's the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage. Don't ever try to reverse doctor-nurse, executive-secretary, principal-teacher role, women's magazines will tell you that a marriage should be an equal partnership. That's nonsense, rubbish. No partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it is unequal in favour of your husband. If the scales tilt in your favour, god help you, both of you."\textsuperscript{52} (p-24).

But she realized with honest astonishment that she had not made this speech after all. Shashi Deshpande has portrayed with tremendous power the struggle of her protagonist Sara, who survives in an andocentric world which offers no easy outs to women. Her bridging of the gulf between realism and reality is significant.

That Long Silence - is a typical novel that speaks to us of our own situation. The image of woman underwent a metamorphosis when the contemporary woman decided to cast off her traditional role of living undershade of her husband. Jaya, the heroine of the novel, gives us the new image of the Indian woman who now tries to stand on her own legs and seeks to break the age-old silence by refusing to dance to the tune of
her husband. The image of which describe Jaya’s married life “A pair of bullocks yoked together....”(p-8) suggests a world of meaning, but a woman has to bear more pain than a man. Jaya suffered from isolation, her husband could not understand her feelings. She was fed up with the routine work like changing the sheets scrubbing bathrooms and cleaning the house etc. the protagonist of the novel rejects the image of traditional women.

The marriage is almost on the verge of wreckage and “It’s the Indian male” (p-27). Who emerges as the villain and the fourth burden on the Indian woman”53. Incidentally, the pattern of relation remains more or less the same in various sets of relationships in the novel. This is what a symbolic reconciliation between the husband and the wife. Not only in the narrator’s family but in all other families too.

As a family touch invokes many aspects in her novel - haunted ‘evil’ which is the greatest human problem compels her to take up another problem - revengefulness, lasciviousness and proneness to commit murder. Critics considered it as a defective aspect of wanting. In her novel “Come Up and Be Dead”. - appears three forms of vengefulness, which represented by Varma, - a member of the board of governors of the school, who makes school-girls serve as call girls for the simple reason that his own wife had deserted him soon after marriage.
Lasciviousness makes its appearance in Sanjay, Sharmila, Mridula and the unnamed stranger to whom Mridula is taken as a call girl. Sanjay has made Sharmila his mistress, who has been one since she was fourteen; Mridula becomes pregnant even though she is unmarried. The proneness to commit murder is there in Sanjay.

Revengefulness takes a very ugly form in Varma as he is deceiving innocent girls into the morass of immorality for the humiliation he had to suffer on account of his wife deserting him. A revengeful man, if he outs logically, can cause harm to the person who has harmed him rather than the persons belonging who has harmed him rather than the persons belonging to the sex of the offender. But here Varma is causing harm to the girls, who have caused no harm to him. But Varma treats the whole female sex as his enemy. In the same way Shashi Deshpande illustrates, how degenerative one becomes in the state of lasciviousness, can be seen in the character of Sanjay. His relations with Sharmila are, from the Hindu point of view, incestuous, as Sharmila is his cousin. For Hindus, a cousin has to be treated as his sister. Moreover, it is Sanjay who is responsible for Mridula’s pregnancy, but he neither marries Sharmila nor Mridula, both the girls become lascivious for different reasons, one is for her teens another for impression that by having boy-friends and lovers, she would become ‘modern’ Deshpande tries to expose - the post-
independence pseudo-western values which have become quite popular in Shashi Deshpande's novels. Shashi Deshpande suggests that steps have to be taken against people indulging in wrong doing.

Existential - Humanism in Shashi Deshpande's Novels

The protagonists of Shashi Deshpande feel it is their right to seek happiness, biological and material, to which they are entitled like any other human being. They are also humanists in that they reveal an interest in human aspirations, a confidence in man and reason. They stress the worth of every human being as an individual. The values they hold are the product of human relationship, they do not believe in traditional religious rituals. They feel that man is the measure of things. They exercise their choice rationally and do not shrink from the responsibility of their choice. And when they are disillusioned about what they have got either because where they have got is not what they wanted to get or because what they have got is less soul satisfying than they thought it would be. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists are not philosophers but intelligent, sensible and sensitive human beings who feel frustrated in a world of turmoil and changing human values, try to achieve inner integration which will give them a sense of fulfillment.
They are atheistic existential humanists. Not a single one of them has in him/her the “unique dimension of being which is capable of responding to God’s wishes by carrying them out unflinchingly and with pleasure”\textsuperscript{54}. It is clear that with Shashi Deshpande, self-realization or self-identification is a psychological term and not a metaphysical concept. The Upanishadatic concept of moksha (salvation) is far from thought. She has neither belief nor interest in the supernatural or divine. But the psychological self identification and metaphysical self realization.

In her novel \textit{Roots and Shadows}, the protagonist Indu is born in a joint family which has several members belonging to four generations. The family is ruled over by Akka, a widowed sister of Indu’s grandfather. Meaningless superstitions and outmoded conversations had an equally suffocating hold on the members of the family. But Indu herself went to school and breathed the air of freedom and enlightenment as against conventional modes of thought and traditional ways of living. This is the one assumption of existentialism. Like a true existentialist, she takes her own decision. She takes bold decision of getting married to Jayant. She does not allow outside forces to determine for her. And like an existentialist, again, she does not hold anybody else responsible for her unhappiness which is a result of her choice. In this assertion of
significance of the personal responsibility like her existentialism, and in the assertion of her to happiness her humanism.

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* - the freedom of choice that an individual has and the acceptance of the responsibility for the consequences of that choice are important aspects of existentialism. Sarita chooses to study medicine, selects the man she would like to marry, decides to flourish in the profession and takes the necessary steps to do so by setting a post-graduate degree and consulting rooms with the help of Dr. Boozie. the need for self-understanding, for without it there can be no real happiness. Self-identity is most important to interpretation of life, this is what Saru wants to gain in her life. When she was young her identity was nurtured by her mother, when she became a successful doctor her husband became impatient and behaves like a sadist. Saru’s study of medicine, marrying Manu, never telling her children that they had a grandmother, and are some root of egoistic actions. Some of them are consciously and other unconsciously directed against her mother. A time comes when she realizes the cruelty of her behaviour to Dhurva and her mother. She has understood herself to some extent at least and accepted herself. This is existential acceptance of herself. That is what existentialism emphasize human existence, that is, the distinctive qualities of individual persons. And like an existentialist Saru is a
sensitive individual who finds himself alone, frustrated, fragmented and almost destroyed by the exigencies of life.

Existentialism in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* is explained through attacking middleclass hypocrisy, a falsification and fragmentation of human existence, suffering from alienation. It means living with the certain meaningfulness. Man is free to choose and he is responsible for the choice. Mohan has an egoistic philosophy, the motive of which is to grow rich and respectable, since he haunted by his past life. Jaya and Mohan are the opposite of each other in the sense that she has making of an existentialist and he has not. Her honesty with others and more importantly with herself reveals her integrity of character. The axiom the pair of bullocks is repeated five times. If two human beings yoked together, and if they have no choice about how to act, then there is no significance in being human beings. The milestones which stands for the evolving significance of the imagery of the two bullocks yoked together, are a path from unauthentic to authentic life, for choice is an important tenet of existentialism.

*If I Die Today* - makes it out of crime fiction, but the real theme of the novel is not murder and violence, but the existential humanistic philosophy that man can achieve true freedom only through revealing himself to himself and not wearing masks to conceal himself from himself.
and others. This involves the two fundamental principles of existentialism. Viz...a) a search for self-identity and b) man is free to choose, but he is entirely responsible for his choice. And it is an irony of life that the man who advocates and practices such philosophy. Manju - narrates the ambivalent feelings of the people she know. Shashi Deshpande unveil the masks of medico professionals including Guru. Manju begins to think that "Guru had begun to see himself as a spectator, above and different from all of us. That's when a man becomes dangerous, yes, dangerous, because he imagines himself god and loses his touch with humanity."(P.9) That is, Guru sees himself above humanity and wants men and women to overcome weaknesses which are usually associated with human beings. Besides, he was in the company of doctors who as Tony says, "get to feeling they're something above other humans" (p-84). It turns out to be a kind of conflict between self-consciousness which means people dropping their masks and seeing themselves as their truly are the psychologists. Self identification and existentialist's effects the medico's, and students and doctors advice.

Kshama is apparently on the way to self discovery - which is an existentialist idea expressed in Come Up and Be Dead. From the time Mridula died at the beginning of the novel it has been a steady decline in
Kshama’s self confidence and egoism until she reaches the nadir of her egoism, which becomes the moment of the birth of humility.

In The Binding Vine, Shashi Deshpande explained the existentiality through a protest in the name of individuality against the concept of reason and nature. Urmi is the one who has the integrity to act according to her feminist conscience. The very first sentence of the novel states the problem which Urmi is facing: “we all of us grow up with an idea of ourselves, an image rather, and spend the rest of our lives trying to live up to it. But for me, I suddenly realize as Vanna” (p-7). Urmi aware that she is not living up to her real image. Even though later she became a lecturer in a college instead, but her ways to self discovery lie in the directing social service, which was unaware of Urmi’s innate potentiality, unconscious pretences is for social work and helping individuals in need. But the younger generation became cynical which dominant element in the attitude and behavior of the people. Urmi’s conflicts and predicament search for self identification and emphasis on the inner experience are the real ideas through which Shashi Deshpande expressed her existential humanistic ideas in her novel The Binding Vine.

In A Matter of Time, Existentialism expressed through - Kalyani’s own deprivation - her estrangement from her husband - she is so actively conscious of the void in her own life. Sumi’s suffering
oppressed, wronged woman, yet who does not question the man. She
does not understand the forces outside of her that subvert the autonomy
of a woman and is subject to what feminists is to be aware of an alien and
hostile force outside of oneself which is responsible for the blatantly
unjust treatment of women and which enforce a stifling and oppressive
system of sex-role differentiation. (P-169). These are the ideas of

In Shashi Deshpande’s recent novel Small Remedies – Madhu who
is trouble hearted accepted the simple truth that it is not necessary to
know all the answers to the questions that life throws up. “That what we
call truth has nothing to do with the truth that emerges through
words”. (P-255) with this understanding, the realization drawn upon
Madhu that life has simply to be lived, no matter what happens, even
when things look so very abysmal. She thinks;

“So many of us walking this earth with our pain, our sorrow
concealed within ourselves, so many of us hiding our suffering, going
about as if all is well, so many of us surviving our loss, our grief. It’s a
miracle”. (p-315) In this moment, Madhu is like Kisa Gotami, whose
search for someone who can bring life back to her dead child had taken
her to the great teacher Gautama Budha himself. It is the revelation of
inner consciousness of Madhu the central character of the novel “Small
Remedies" and these are all the good examples of Shashi Deshpande's existential-humanism.

The Values in Shashi Deshpande’s Novels:-

The values which Shashi Deshpande advocates in her novels are essentially existential-humanistic, since existentialism does not prescribe a code of ethics. It is a philosophy, which is subjective and gives man freedom of choice and responsibility for the choice. In other words, every man has to create his own values. It should also be made clear that the values she has arrived at are impelled by humanism and animated by feminism. As a humanist she is interested in the welfare and happiness of men in the life here and not in the life hereafter: as a feminist, she believes that man has no right to exploit woman, and women have a right to lead their own lives: as a human being she holds that woman should not destroy man.

The most profound influence has of course been existentialism. In times of cultural crisis, when there is no external support for an individual to rely upon, the only meaningful point of reference is his own immediate consciousness. His salvation lies in his search for self identification or self-realization. With Ms. Shashi Deshpande self-
realization is a psychological phenomenon and not a metaphysical concept. She does not appear to believe in any form of supernatural or divine. This is psychological 'self-realization' is considered by some to be not different from the metaphysical 'salvation'. In fact, self-realization is central to Shashi Deshpande's system of values that the main concern of every protagonist of hers. Usually a woman who is sensitive, alone misunderstood, frustrated, fragmented in despair and almost destroyed by the exigencies of life before actualizing her potentialities. Shashi Deshpande is so much interested in human relationships that we find her novels the whole gamut of feelings ranging from ecstatic love to bitter hatred. In her novel *If I Die Today* – the Dean of the Medical College tells, Manju, "Humans....... we don't think of them enough. Ideas, we say, principles and ambitions and success. So many other things come first. But it is wrong, all wrong. It's people who matter most. Nothing should matter more than they do (p-7). This is what the intricacies of relation. It is in the acceptance of the ideas that human beings have a right to happiness and comfort. Indu (*Roots and Shadows*) has an opinion – "Families! And yet, since coming for the wedding, I had seen the concept of the family taking shape, living, in front of my eyes. It had struck me how suddenly, it is only momentarily, we had come an entity, a family, muted by a strong bond, a common loyalty. I was 'we' now not 'they' and
us" (p-4); reveals the broken joint family’s reality. Urmi and Vanna were childhood friends, inseparable always and later became sister-in-law, they never cease to love each other. This is a good example of the indispensability of relation between human beings. Indu, Saru, Vanna, Urmi, Manju, Madhu, Devi, Kalyani; survive because of their tensile strength. Humanistic values are expressed in all Shashi Deshpande’s novels.
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