CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION
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To conclude, we can say that Shashi Deshpande has dealt sensitively with the problems of middle class educated women. In fact, initially, she always had in her mind people from the real life in India to write about, but as she proceeded, spontaneously and involuntarily, woman became the focus of her writings. When interviewed by Vanamala Viswanatha, Shashi Deshpande makes it clear by saying: "It all starts with people. For example, The Dark Holds No Terrors came to me when I saw a couple".

Among the other novelists experimenting consciously with the Indian writing in English, Shashi Deshpande has a unique place. She is uniquely Indian and her use of Marathi words very evidently presents the customs and traditions of the people belonging to Maharashtra and Karnataka. For example, words such as Kaka, Kaki, Atya, Dada, Etc. are essentially Marathi words and might be a bit difficult to grasp by the readers who do not know the language. She is basically Indian and writes for the Indians:
"If you try to make everything easy for everyone, then, you end up belonging nowhere. So, I’ve left it at that—characters in their locales, without providing glasses for the western readers........ Also literature can be appreciated even without understanding every word of it—one can still respond to the core of it."²

Deshpande is gifted with an unborn literary bent of mind which matured with her experiences in life. Even her graduation in Economics and Law did not seem to have much impact on her writing that came to her very naturally. Though she is the daughter of Sriranga, the famous Kannada playwright, who is known as the Bernard Shaw of Kannada theatre, yet she never got any guidance from him in this field. She repents the fact of being detached from her father. In response to a question of Vanamala Viswanatha, she says.

"If I should criticize him, I should say he was somewhat detached from us........never guided us. May be if he had directed us at an early age, I could have done better. He never did that"³
Deshpande writes not for publicity, but to mirror the society as she observes it. She is least bothered about name and fame. That is the reason why in spite of the fact that she had been writing for quite a long period, she still was unknown to many until her last novel. That Long Silence got published by the virago Feminist Press London.

"It's meaningless that people know me as a person and not know what I've written. I feel publicity is not a good thing for a writer. It detracts from your work. you become more interested in yourself as a person than as a writer. I'd rather be known for my books than for myself".

Her contribution to the world of literature is the presentation of the reality of the middle class woman: 

"I realize that I write what I write because I have to. Because it is within me. It's one point of view, a world from within the woman, and that I think is my contribution to Indian Writing".

Though Deshpande writes for women, presents their problems, lets the world know the problems that women of today are facing, Yet she can not be categorized among feminist writers. She "makes it clear that hers is not the
strident and militant kind of feminism which sees the male as the cause of all troubles. Rather her writing deals within the inner mind of the women.

Education and experience in foreign countries sets the women writers apart from the traditional Indian women. The traditional Indian women suffer, submit and adjust themselves to the circumstances. The women novelists like Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala have, in their novels, portrayed this aspect of women's life without having the first hand experience of it. Shashi Deshpande has projected this aspect of Indian women with more sensitivity and instinctive understanding as she belongs to this category, in the sense that, unlike other women writers, she is born and brought up on this soil, gained her education in India itself and wrote about India. The projection of the women in her novels is more authentic, credible and realistic. She knows what Indian women feel. Shashi Deshpande does not want to be categorized with other writers of Indian writing in English, she has a unique place among the novelists writing in English. She declares that she is just like any other
regional writer but her medium of writing happens to be English, as it is the only language she knows well. Explaining her position, Shashi Deshpande says:

"I'm isolated - I'm not part of any movement and not conscious of readers to impress. To get wider recognition here and abroad, you have to be in the university and places like that with the right contacts. I'm an ordinary woman writes sitting at home. None of these things are within my reach. This has, I believe, done me good. It has given me great freedom. I'm happy with this anonymity. Once you get publicity conscious, your writing becomes affected. I'm truly happy with this freedom"  

In concluding notes, it is pertinent to quote Shashi Deshpande's self-revealing remarks:

"I had learnt it too, to create an image of myself for the world to live within it hiding my real self so resolutely that at times I forget myself it was just a facade" (DT: 80). 

She again adds,

"We are always ashamed of our deepest emotions ....... Do I not, with Jayant, hide my real emotions
and urges and shelter behind a facade of caring... but not so terribly much. (Rs:130)

Deeply concerned with problems that agitate women, Shashi Deshpande presents case studies in which heroines probe their own selves to find how wrong had been their assessment of the self and how "stupid and silly martyrs" they had been by refusing to become normal. Having lived long in tension, having despised many, and having wronged almost every member of the family, they discover that hatred, jealousy or antagonism led one nowhere. It is love that makes life worth living because it is "the spring of life" and it alone can redeem.

In the process of introspection and antagonism, Shashi Deshpande's heroines fail to come to terms with reality and are maladjusted where as most of the males (barring the tyrants and rogues) are well adjusted. It is not that the males escape bruises or humiliation, but they have a capacity to push their humiliation to deeper recesses of unconscious and manage to keep them tightly suppressed. They do not parade their bruises. On the contrary, in spite of the wrongs meted out to them they
take the initiative to restore normally to break the ice, and to attempt a "forget and forgive" bid.

The hamartia of these heroines is their superior (?) intelligence. Intoxicated by a few success, they feel themselves wiser than their parents, though ironically, their own children prove how misplaced their confidence had been all the while. They pretend to be normal (ever in abnormal circumstances such as the death of an infant daughters). They refuse to admit their failures to their parents because that would hurt their ego. And all the time they go on pretending that their marriages have been successful. Whereas, as predicted by their parents before the plunge, they proved to be fiasco. In fact, if they are outside the mental asylum, credit must go to their respective husbands who, at all crucial occasions, swallowed such bitter bills and acted wisely. The process of self deception and Narcissism turn their children hostile to them and ultimately some events convince them of the absurdity of their approach to life. In the Binding vine, for example, it is the unlettered Sakutai, who acquires poise
and equilibrium in spite of two tragedies that befall her, makes Urmi realise:

I found her getting on with her chores. You can never out, you can never lay it down, the burden of belonging to the human race. (BV: 202)

It is during such a process of discovery to which these heroines stumble that they regain confidence in themselves and instead of seeking an escape they decide to face the facts squarely. Long had they remained "enclosed behind walls of negation." As saru's father advised, "Don't turn your back on thing again. Turn round and look at them." (DT. 197) Now she realises:

.........all those selves she had rejected so resolutely at first, and so passionately embraced later. The guilty sister, the undutiful daughter, the unloving wife......... She had to accept these selves to become whole again.....If I have been a puppet it is because I made myself one........I have been afraid of proving my mother right..........But I have been my own enemy (DT: 201)

Thus thematically as well as ideologically, Shashi Deshpande's novels have a kind of continuity. From the
point of view of intertextuality we find not only traces of one novel in the other but also obvious repetitions. As in the Bombay films, the same story seem to be recounted with different names and permutations and combinations. We have already seen how these heroines share the same traits. They married outside the caste and persons of lower financial/ social status and had to leave the parental house in protest or disgust. Out of the three heroines, two have antagonism against their mothers and the third Indu (of RS) lost her mother at the time of her birth. Sarita and Urmi have doting fathers who support them much to the dismay of their respective mothers. Indu's father is a wanderer appearing on the scene unexpectedly. All are educated persuing some career and are slightly better placed than their respective husbands.

We can thus trace that Shashi Deshpande occupies a prominent position as a novelist. In the contemporary Indian literature in English, her introspective and psychological settings make her Par excellence in revealing the subconscious and unconscious world of psyche of her women characters. She is a master artist of the twentieth
century, who is much more vociferous invoicing her fears and concerns regarding the future of women in uncongenial surroundings. Her female protagonists are sensitive, self-conscious, brilliant and creative. Her protagonists are desirous to revolt against the stereotyped roles as women assigned to them by the society. Deshpande has concentrated on Indian women in light of their conflicts and predicaments set in the background of contemporary society of India. The career woman emerges out of her being a feminist in context of her socio-culture ethos and values prevailing in the society. The character of women and her role as a mother, sister and grand-mother also decides her predicaments and adjustments in her relevant world.

Feminism is a means to create a more balanced and saner equality between the sexes in order to achieve a respectable individual liberty for women in order to keep their natural instincts and characteristics intact. Though equality at various levels of society is a major issue yet one of the fundamental areas where this equality matters in the most conservative standards of feminism is in the area
of marriage. The female categorisation as a sex object is vehemently opposed. Women who were victims of sexism within the family were attracted to feminism. The goal of feminism became to eliminate sexist oppression prevailing in the patriarchal society. Feminism as a movement might have originated in the west, but with the deteriorating the status of women in India, the subsequent efforts made during the freedom struggle to pave the way for equal access to education and equal status, have been evoked by the western women and their Indian counterparts have taken up the issues as challenges of times. Some of them have lost their balance as well s context, while others love to the command respect, confidence and responsibility.

Feminism is, thus, to breakup the "Masculine image" seen in the mirror of the woman's "looking glasses" of Virginia woolf which reflects the image " of man at twice is natural size" Alice jardine considers feminism as a movement from the point of view "of, by and for woman." Shashi Deshpande, for her portrayal of the issues of middle- class educated Indian Women, their inner conflicts and quest for identity, parents -child relationship and
disillusionment, has been called "a feminist" after publication of That Long Silence by Virago Press. But she has contradicted to be called as a feminist in her interview to Geetha Gangadharan:

"Yes, I would, I am a feminist in the sense that, I think, we need to have a world which we should recognise as a place for all of us human beings. There is no superior and inferior. We are two halves of one species. I fully agree with Simone De Beauvoir that "the fact that we are human, is much more important than our being men and women" I think that's my idea of feminism" 10.

Shashi Deshpande is against categorisations and she loves to be called as "an individual writer" instead of calling her as "women's writing or feminist writing and says:

"Today we have women writing about women, for women, These works are being published by women, criticised by women, read by women and studied in the women's studies Departments and so on. I hate this "Women's lib" separating women's writing. It is just self-defeating.11
Shashi Deshpande in her interview with Ashvini Sarpeshkar- Tandon, makes it clear to take up 'Feminism' in a narrow sense and declares.

"I don't like to be branded this or that because life is more complex than that. My enduring concern is for human relationships. I certainly don't think my novels are a man Vs. Woman issue at all."

'Being a woman herself she sympathises woman and says, "If others see something feminist in my writing," it is not consciously done, but it " is because the world for women is like that and I am mirroring the world"

Feminism from the western world is a wave of freedom, equality and opportunity which blows in Indian sky. The Bristol Women's studies group, London, edited a book titled, Half the Sky: An Introduction to women's studies (1979) which defined 'feminism' as "the awareness of women's position in society as one of disadvantage or inequality compared with that of men and also a desire to remove those disadvantages" But Shashi Deshpande's feminism is not western but Indian and she loves to treat
'woman as a woman'- a true human being that she tells Lakshmi Halmstrom:

'But to me feminism is not a matter of theory; it is difficult to apply kate Millett or Simone De Beauvoir or whoever to the reality of our daily lives in India. And then there are misconceptions about feminism by people here. They often think it is about burning brass and walking out on your husband, children etc. I always try to make the point now about what feminism is not, and to say that we have to discover what it is in our own lives, our experiences. And I actually feel that a lot of women in Indian are feminists without realising it 14.

Professor R.S. Pathak considers the feminists approach of Deshpande as "A highly sensible approach" and estimates that "unlike hard-care feminists, does not agree that being a wife, or mother is something that is unnecessarily imposed on a woman" 15.

Shashi Deshpande feels, "It's needed" and craves for "a greater sense of balance" self-confessedly, she loves and experiences to be trapped in woman's world,"...... may be I want to reach a stage where I can write about human
beings and not about women or men. For I don't believe in having a propagandist or sexist purpose to my writing. If her writings present such a perspective, it is only a "coincidence".

Shashi Deshpande, as an Indian woman novelist, has concentrated her novels on the problems and dilemmas of Indian women and she tries to understand herself in light of her identity as wife, mother and, above all as a human being in the traditional bound and male-dominated Indian society. She is not a feminist in a western sense but she is a lover of freedom beyond chains and bonds of life, she neither idealises nor sentimentalises womanhood but concentrates on the image of reality of woman as woman and woman as a human being beyond her family and personal relationships.

There is emergence of 'Career Woman' as a new woman which is a result of feminist movement which concentrates on the freedom of woman from the clutches of the male. Such woman is independent and establishes herself beyond the cultural typical western nor as a totally liberated woman, nor the typical western, nor an orthodox
Indian submissive female. Shashi Deshpande's 'Career Woman' creates a balance between extreme feminism and the conventional role of submission and self denial in Indian context. The 'Career woman' as a new woman also faces conflicts and challenges against her career inside and outside her home.

Shashi Deshpande is a realistic in her approach while handling the problems and predicaments and she treats woman as woman. She is a type of feminist who does not condemn man but she tries to establish a bond of love and understanding between men and women beyond the feminist definitions about rights and individualities of woman's world.

Shashi Deshpande creates her characters in a natural background of spontaneous situations. For Deshpande, every novel starts with "people". Characters thus occupies a pivotal position in her fiction. As compared to Deshpande's woman characters, her male characters are generally "thin" and "typed". She neither idealises nor sentimentalises her characters that she points out to
stanley Carvalho, "My characters are all human beings one sees in the world around" "No supermen" 17.

In another interview, she revealed:

"My characters take their own ways. I've heard people saying we should have strong women characters. But my writing has to do with women as they are.18

Shashi Deshpande's women characters have strength of their own, and in spite of challenges and hostilities, remain uncrushed. Urmila in the Binding Vine, for example declares, "I am not going to break"19 She feels for not creating a "rounded" characters of the opposite sex like Tolstoy's Anna, she declares:

I'm not Tolstoy in the first place. Tolstoy had so many years of male writing behind him. The female Tolstoy is yet to come. As Virginia Woolf said, Shakespeare's sister is yet to come20.

Shashi Deshpande is a novelist of limited range like Jane Austen. Her novels are more or less, fictionalisation of autobiographical experiences. Most of her characters are a typical middle-class housewives and her main concern is "the urge to find oneself, to create space for oneself to grow
on one's own"21 Her novels depict characters as persons who are frustrated either sexually or professionally. They are centred around human relationships as well as family relationships which are bonds and bondages stronger than iron chains. "It's needed", she reiterated to Vanamala Viswanatha:

It's necessary for women to live within relationships. But if the rules are rigidly laid that as a wife or mother you do this and no further, then one becomes unhappy. This is what I have tried to convey in my writing. What I don't agree with is the idealization of motherhood- the false and sentimental notes that accompany it P.22.

But Shashi Deshpande is conscious of dignity of a woman and had a strong feeling against woman as "a breeding animal' and her consideration only in terms of physical functions like menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth:

'I have a very strong feeling that until very recently women in our society have been looked upon just as 'breeding animals'. They had no other role in life. I have a strong objection to treating any human being in that
manner......The whole chronology of their life centres around childbirth.............. The stress laid upon the feminine functions, at the cost of all your potentials as an individuals, enraged me...........23~

Deshpande is, at heart, a realist. Her India is of eighties and "She believes in presenting life as it is but not as it should be, like Jaya of that Long Silence, and many Indian Wives group "about their fate, but unwilling to do anything" as "to find themselves" in "the big, bad world of reality" 24.

Shashi Deshpande's world of characters is full of conflicts and problems of middle-class educated Indian women, their inner conflicts and quest for identity, issues pertaining to parent child-relationship, marriage and sex and their exploitation and disillusionment. But she treats her characters not as a feminist but as a realist, not woman liberated beyond family relationship but "woman as woman" or "woman as a human being"25. She nurtures the natural place of a woman in context of her world of problems and with her dilemmas and solutions.
Shashi Deshpande carefully avoids the western feminist's concept of emancipation and presents the Indian version of the modern woman who searches for the whole of her 'identity' and for fragmentations of her 'self'. Out of swirling restlessness, Saru, in The Dark Holds No Terrors, Urmila in The Binding Vine, Jaya in That Long Silence and Indu in Roots and Shadows emerge as a 'whole woman'. The 'whole woman' is completely independent, self-confident and self-dignified. Deshpande cautiously puts aside the western notion of a woman's emergence in terms of separation from her life partner, for it endangers existence without any relationship with male as well as society. A life in isolation becomes a meaningless existence. Having suffered the long conflict between the cultures of the colonized and the colonizer, the Indian women, Saru, Urmila and Jaya establishes herself neither as a totally liberated woman, nor the typical western nor as an orthodox Indian the submissive female. In this respect, she is truly a representative of the middle class woman who builds a bridge between values of the old and the new, between tradition and modernity.
If we may take context of Shashi Deshpande's women characters we can find that Deshpande's protagonists are women struggling to find their own voice in a male dominated world had "become fluid with no shape, no form of......(their) own" 28 Jaya in That Long Silence, undertakes a futile search for herself.

"The real picture, the real "you" never emerges. Looking for it is as bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different face"29

Indu in Roots and Shadows experiences, " This is my real sorrow that I can never be complete in my self30 and in her husband, Jayant, she tries to find " other part of my whole self, but finally realises, "this was an illusion". Still wife in India finds it difficult to live without her husband as "A husband is like a sheltering tree".31

Marriage plays a vital role in the life of a woman,. The importance that our society attaches to marriage is reflected in our literature and it is the central concern of Shashi Deshpande's novels. Simone De Beauvoir's well-known statement that"one is not born but rather becomes
a woman", is enacted in our society where the girl learns early that she is 'Paraya Dhan' (other's property).

It is the responsibility of her parents to hand over to her rightful owners. Finally, marriage becomes the ultimate fate of a girl's life.

Though marriage is important both for man and woman, but woman is not enjoying the same freedom like her male counterparts. In this relationship between the sexes, women have been forced to occupy a secondary place. This has resulted in the failure of women to occupy a place of a dignified human being or as free and independent beings. Therefore, marriage becomes not a bond of love but a trap or cage for women. It is no longer a sacrament but a convenient arrangement for man and disadvantage for woman. Shashi Deshpande's Manju, in If I die Today summarises the predicaments of being married succinctly:

A marriage, you start off expecting so many things. And bit by bit, like dead leaves, the expectations fall off. But........... two people who have shut themselves off in
two separate glass jars. Who can see each other but can't communicate. Is this a marriage? Roots and shadows observes; The central figure in Roots & Shadows observes; It's a trap that's what marriage is A trap? or a Cage? a cage with two trapped animals glaring hatred at each other And it is not a joke, but a tragedy.

To Urmila of The Binding Vine, the back of the bridge's neck nervously awaiting the first night onslaught, looks like a lamb's waiting for the butcher's knife to come down upon it. That Long silence, a couple is compared to a pair of, bullocks Yoked together.

"Two bullocks Yoked together......It was more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different directions would be painful, and what animal would voluntarily choose pain."

Besides portraying gender discrimination and violence against woman, Shashi Deshpande makes sever attack on the arranged marriage. In her writing she has tried to define the Indian marriage where, Getting the daughters married is treated as a sense of achievements for the parents. There are no emotions involved in bringing
the two different entities together. In the novel, Roots and Shadows, Indu defines a traditional marriage contemptuously as "two people brought together after cold-blooded bargaining to meet, mate and reproduce that the generations might continue" (P.3)

In the Binding Vine, Urmila calls arranged marriage an absolutely cold-blooded affair because in such a marriage the girl's feelings are ignored and she suffers and remains vanquished throughout her life. Unable to assert herself, she lives like a slave for her husband and his family. Vanna's and Shakutai's marriages are the living examples of such marriage life.

Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors, as a marriage woman catches "The desperation of trapped animal." Her grandmother is a story of neglect as her husband has deserted her but she "had never...... complained" and had accepted her plight as her "luck" and believed that it" was written only my forehead" Saru's mother didn't have "a room of her own" and "silence had become a habit."

Marriage has thus become a history of suffering and tolerance the odds for happiness of family. In her novel, A
matter of time, novelist believes, "only the movies can elevate marriage" and her characters feel that it is like "............. a pedestal, making it the culminating event of a life time of several life times". In the Binding Vine, Sakutai, feels that her 'mangalsutra', made of Gold, is useless and meaningless to her as "the man himself so worthless, why should I bother to have this thing made in precious gold". It speaks about the frustration of a married woman that Shashi Deshpande has tried to articulate in the novel.

Describing the traditional norms of Indian society, S.C. Dube Points out about the supremacy of male as a husband:

"According to the traditional norms of the society a husband is expected to be authoritarian figure whose will should always dominate the domestic scene. The wife should regard him as her 'master' and should 'serve him faithfully'. The husband is 'superior'. The wife is his 'subordinate'.

The Dark Holds No Terrors tells the story of a marriage on the rocks. Sarita (called Saru) is a "two in-one-
woman" who during the day time is a successful doctor and at night "a terrified trapped animal" in the hands of her husband, Manohar (called Manu), who is an English teacher in a third rate college.

The role of wife in the present times is nothing less than walking on the razor's edge. Realising this fact, Saru was obliged to give ironically the following imaginary advice to future wives in Nalu's college which is pathetic as well as realistic in approach:

A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband. That is the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage. Don't ever try to reverse the 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 be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it's unequal in your husband.

Marriage subjugates and enslaves woman. It leads her to "aimless days indefinitely repeated, life that slips
away gently towards death without questioning its purpose".\(^4\)

Women pay for their happiness at the cost of their freedom. Such a sacrifice on the part of a woman is too high, for the kind of self contentment and security that marriage offers a woman drains her soul of its capacity for greatness:

She shuts behind her doors of her new home. When she was a girl, the whole countryside was her homeland; the forests were hers. Now she is confined to a restricted space........\(^4\)

The subordination of woman to male members of the society, deprivation of her economic rights, rape and exploitations are tools working against the growth of woman. In the Binding Vine, She depicts:

"If a girl's honour is lost, what is left? The girl does not have to do anything wrong, people will always point a finger at her"\(^4\)

Deshpande says that in traditional joint Hindu families, women are nothing more than puppets, without any identity, voice or name. There are no choices before
them. Like marriages, their decisions are made in heaven-
in their husband's mind. As Root and Shadows puts it.

"Millions of girls have asked this questions millions of
times in this country............. what choice do I have?
Surely it is this, this fact that I can choose that
differentiates me from the animals. But years of blind
folding can obscure your vision so you no more see the
choices. Years of Shackling can hamper your movement so
that you can no more move out of your cage of no-choice"

Shashi Deshpande brings out the burning problem of
marriage as an evil in society because right from the
beginning to the end, it is a history of woman's
suppression, a long drawn out drama of negotiation in
which she feels uncertain, is dragged all along the
thrashing floor of humiliation till she blunts out helplessly
"yes" whether the man is a rake or an idiot oran ill
cultured boor. This is a sad commentary on the
incompatibly in a hypocrisy of married life, which the
novelist has presented realistically. We can also witness a
realistic presentation of novelist in her novel If I Die Today,
in which narrator says, "These were not characters created
by Agatha Christie: These were real people. People I know. The marriage in a male-oriented society turns out to be for female partner both physically and spiritually dissatisfying. It creates confusion in her whether to take up the path of submission or rejection because both end in discontentment. If viewed critically marriage is found to be degenerating in which there is no involvement except in sex and everything goes on mechanically to carry on life. As a result marriage becomes meaningless and sex alone seems to sustain the man-woman relationship.

In The Binding Vine, Umi finds that the bond between her and her husband is not that of love, though she believes that the anchor which attaches one self to this strange world is the spirit of love. From the very first night of their wedding, she feels that the distant kishore, her husband, never understands the depth of her feeling. Each time you leave me the parting is like death, she tries to tell him two times, and both the times, he finds solution in the physical relationship. But to her,
...........sex is only a temporary answer. I came out of it to find that the lights had come back.........'Go to sleep,' he said. He was kneeling by me his face close to mine, but the closeness was only physical. His voice was cold. I could see the goose bumps on his shoulders, his chest. I did not look into his face. I was afraid of what I would see, I turned round and fell asleep.46.

Marriage which is considered a sacrament and a spiritual bond in the ancient times, has become now-a-days only a sexual and legal bond. While dealing with crucial aspects of woman like, sex, sexuality and her body, Shashi Deshpande declares in The Binding Vine that "sex is only a temporary answer" (P. 139), but it is the only answer, nonetheless, which governs man and woman relationship. That Long Silence reflects "A pseudo-puritanism" and "Shame" which should be settled. Indu in Roots and Shadows protests against her womanhood but as woman, she feels" hedged in my sex" (p.87) She finds "passive" and "unresponsive" in the males world because it shocks Jayant " to find passion in a woman". in a repressive atmosphere, Indu finds herself as " A woman
who loves her husband too much, too passionately. And is ashamed of it" It mirrors her suppressed feelings as a woman.

The time has come when woman's " body must be heard" and "woman must uncensor herself, recover, herself, recover her goods, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under real. She must throw off her guilt. 47—.

Love and sex are foundation stones of happy married life, Man and woman, husband and wife build the bridge of their bodies for pleasure and happiness in their lives and it is not singular experience but reciprocal ecstasy of love. Jaya truly remarks in That Long Silence with love and belief in her husband and faith in life:

I' m not afraid anymore. The panic has gone. I'm Mohan's wife. I had thought, and cut off the bits of me that had refused to be Mohan's wife. Now I know that kind of fragmentation is not possible .....Two bullocks Yoked together...that was now I saw the two of us the day we came here. Mohan and I. Now I reject that image. 48
Shashi Deshpande is a realistic and existential in her approach which according to Muriel wasi, presents the face of woman "depressing, melancholic or claustrophobic" in her relevant world and feels that Shashi Deshpande should open "some of her windows and let the morning light fill her dark rooms". Significantly, her women characters in the end of novel The Dark Holds No Terrors reach the balance of life and loves to live in a compromise. Sara goes back home with:

.............all those selves she had rejected so resolutely at first, and so passionately embraced later. The guilty sister, the undutiful daughter, the unloving wife......all persons spiked with guilt. Yes, she was all of them, she could not deny that now. She had to accept these selves to become whole again. But she was all of them, they were not all of her. She was all these and so much more.

Shashi Deshpande's fiction is shorn of romantic embellishments and portrays women who......after a long, bitter struggle......are able to overcome and free themselves from the stultifying traditional constraints and can cherish a spontaneous surge towards life. Sara in The
Dark Holds No Terrors, Indu in Roots and Shadows, Jaya in That Long Silence and Sumi and Aru in A Matter of Time are some examples.

Thus we can witness that in her novels, Shashi Deshpande has presented a woman of different shades and has depicted roles of different aspects of middle class woman in India society. Her heroines are feminists not in western context but still they have a sense of freedom and want to build the values-oriented Indian society. She has presented a conflict between male and female world and has showed a path of compromise and adjustment in order to solve it. Psychological frustration, anger, ego and ego-conflicts can be seen in her woman characters which is the result of their conflicts and struggles. Through the character of Indu, Deshpande has portrayed the inner struggle of a professional woman and that of a domestic woman. It express herself, to discover her real 'self' in her inner and instinctive conflicts which paves way for potential creative writing.

Her new woman is a career woman, who balances between her individuality and social responsibility as a
member of human society. Instead of fighting against the patriarchal society and male domination, she has taken a balance/view of life from a woman's point of view. Shashi Deshpande says that a woman's role is not only confined to the centripetal needs of the family in which she lives but also fulfils its centrifugal needs. A woman has to be more than a submissive housewife as she has become a "society lady" according to Shobha De.

Ultimately, it can be said that the women in Shashi Deshpande's novels play different roles as a daughter, mother, wife, friend and companion to a man. But life is a great balance which depends upon the mutual love and respect, co-operation and co-ordination of husband and wife. Shashi Deshpande's women in her novels are not revolting and reactionary but they lead towards the path of love and harmony as the final solution of their problems. As a woman novelist, Shashi Deshpande loves to treat her "woman Character as woman" or to regard herself as a human being. The spirit of dignity as a woman is ever maintained in her novels beyond any sort of compromise. But she seeks a balance of emotions as a mark of freedom.
which exists between love and harmony of man and woman while playing the different roles. Apart from these roles and faces of women, as depicted by the novelist, the real face of woman is yet to come in the coming times because of the changing scenario of society, that she may project the new character of woman in the mirror of her novels with a new awareness and with new challenges of times. In brief, she is a true woman novelist who is full of feminine consciousness in depicting her female characters.
REFERENCES


2. Cit op.cit.

3. Ibid., p.9.


5. op.cit.

6. op.cit.

7. Interview by Vanamala Viswanatha, p.11.

8. The textual citations from the following editions have been used: Shashi Deshpande, The Dark Holds No Terrors, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1980 (abbreviated as DT); Roots and Shadows, Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1983 (abbreviated as RS; References are from Disha Books edition of 1992); and The Binding Vine, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1993 (abbreviated as BV)


10. Ibid.


20. R.S. Pathak, p. 17

21. 14 Literature Alive 1/3, p. 13


34. Ibid, P. 181.

40. Ibid.'


