Preface

In India, from ancient period to the current post modern age women are considered a weak, meek and the second sex. Women are treated by men as emotionless object. They are forced to take up traditional roles. Their individuality and emotions are brutally hushed. Their cries are silenced in the process. Most of the women take such brutalities as a part and parcel of their life. A few women reach the farthest state of liberation. On the other hand, some women struggle hard to make alternation in the existing structure to suit them. Such women struggling for their progression and equality are the protagonists of Shashi Deshpande’s fiction. Shashi Deshpande is very much influenced to present the psyche of human beings especially women.

The title of the thesis: ‘From Suppression to Progression: A Study of Women Characters in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande reveals Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists’ psychological sufferings and their seeking intellectual solutions to overcome the tribulations and walk towards the path of progression in a tradition bound patriarchal hegemonic society by her eleven novels: The Dark Holds No Terrors, If I Die Today, Come Up and Be Dead, Roots and Shadows, That Long Silence, A Matter of Time, The Binding Vine, Small Remedies, Moving On, In the Country of Deceit and Shadow Play.

As a prolific author, who has woven complex fictional patterns around the socio-political condition of the contemporary society, Shashi Deshpande offers scope for further literary research. The subtle variations in theme and the innovations and originality employ in techniques call for new reading strategies and critical approaches.

This thesis has reached fruition is due to the guidance and support of Dr. S. Victoria Alan, my guide and supervisor. My deep gratitude and thanks to her for her extra-ordinary patient coaching, for her unlocking of the world of scholarship, and for the part played in the emergence of this study from the beginning.
I thank Prof. S. Franklin Jebakumar, Assistant Professor, Department of English, TPML College, Porayar for his support and encouragement during my research.

I am indebted to Dr. D. Paul Dhayabaran, the Principal, Bishop Heber College, Thiruchirapalli, for his support and words of benevolence in completing my thesis.

I express my gratitude to Dr. Sobana, the Head, Department of English, Bishop Heber College, Thiruchirapalli, for the support she has rendered during the course study.

I attest my sincere gratitude for helping me in my entire endeavour to Dr. V. Sridhaya, Assistant Professor of English, National College, Thiruchirapalli. I thank Dr. Sheeba Princy, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Bishop Heber College, Thiruchirapalli, for his constant support and encouragement during my research.

I thank Dr. J. Manalan, the librarian, Bishop Heber College, Thiruchirapalli for his unrelenting help in all my activities during my research.

I thank the staff at SCILET for their kind support.

My heartfelt gratitude to all of my family members, my friends and colleagues for their encouragement.