Chapter V: CONCLUSION
Shashi Deshpande’s novels seek to explore painful experiences of the oppression of Indian women in the domestic set-up. Her fictional world offers some common themes: search for identity, man–woman relationship, silence as metaphor; marriage and sexuality and patriarchy of male. To her, family is the fictional world. Her novels are concerned with woman’s quest for her identity. That should be taken as an exploration into the female psyche. Her protagonists undergo an arduous journey to discover themselves self with the feeling of fear and facts. The novelist succeeds to depict woman in myriad roles, as a daughter, wife and mother.

The Dark Holds No Terrors is Deshpande’s first novel about well educated woman’s search for identity. It is a story of Sarita (saru) and her relationship with her parents and in particular with her husband. Mentally disturbed, she is unable to speak out what she wants. By keeping a guilty conscious she had deserted her parents in order to marry Manohar. She expects sympathy from her father. She thinks that, had her marriage been arranged one; parents would come to her rescue; at least they would be respective and sympathetic for her sufferings. Sarita is unable to seek any support from her family members particularly she does not get sympathy of her father, because her marriage was of her own choice. Hence she has to take care of herself with all oppositions and oppressions. Deshpande probes the inner recess of Saritas – psyche in order to discover the root of her silent suffering and passing resistance. Her life is a journey from self alienation to self identification. Her father advises her to live her present with determination. “Don’t turn your back on things again. Turn mind and look at them. Meet him” (Terrors, 1980: 216). This pep from her father builds in her total confidence to meet her husband and to face the situation.
My life is my own. Some how she felt as if she had found it now the connecting link. It means you are not just a strutting grimacing Puppet, standing futilely on the stage for a brief while between are as of Darkness. If I have been a puppet it is because I made myself one. I have been clinging to the tenuous shadow of a marriage whose sub stance has long since disintegrated because I have been afraid of (1980: 220).

She is not her own refuge and will never blame others. She has to face her husband fearlessly. The fear of darkness which haunted her mind so long now gets dissipated and resolves to face her life. Deshpande makes it plan that a woman’s life is her own and she must develop the thinking that she is an individual not a dependent but a being capable of withstanding trials in life alone.

Powerful use of silence is another common theme of Deshpande’s novels. silence as a powerful weapon. It is more important than sound silence. in Deshpande’s novels is a key metaphor to and understanding of the text. It is a significant work in the sense that with her novel. The silence maintained by the Indian woman is culturally conditioned it can be extremely articulate. There is much more that remains unsaid and unspoken. The silence maintained by the Indian woman speaks in many voices-each distinctly different. What the coy silence of the bashful bride says is very different from what is communicated by the nervous silence of new daughter-in-law or the frightened silence of the ill-treated wife. The silence of the angry woman conveys messages that are quite different from the resilient silence of the woman who has learnt to endure.

Deshpande through her novels has highlighted ‘the weight of the long silence,’ which connotes the very world of the Indian woman. She brings out through her works the imposition and the effect of silence on women of different age groups and social strata’s. Almost all her female

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characters either find themselves coerced into following this traditional sanction or are simply unaware of any other way of life. She shows through her novels how silence has been the most common strategy of survival for the Indian woman. Almost all of her female characters can be categorised into one or the other category of silence. Unthinking silence is that of the conformists, who unquestioningly make silence a habit. These women are rooted in patriarchal traditions and contribute in their transmission too. They imbibe the traditionally ordained qualities of woman from her very childhood and aspire to become the ideal self-effacing and enduring wives. They are unaware of any other way of life. The novelist uses silence as one of the important mediums through which she highlights the state of suffering of characters. By dividing her characters into three categories we realize how important silence is in their lives and how deeply it affects their sense of self.

The women, who conform to the patriarchal traditions, themselves, adopt unthinking silence as their resort. They abide by the rules as they had seen their predecessors do it. Unaware of the changing times these women become the carriers of stale traditions and pose an obstruction in the acceptance of new thought. Such is the life of Kusum in That Long Silence whose sole aim was to become an ideal self-effacing woman. Trying to achieve it she often emphasised her femaleness with exaggerated modesty. The way she pressurized herself into pleasing people and her failure to do so, proved to be a great setback for her. Her unthinking silence results in her madness. Her longing to be with her family and their indifference torturous silence, which increases her fear of being abandoned by her family and succumbing to it she jumps into a dried well to end her life. Saru's mother in The Dark Holds No Terrors herself adapts to this
unthinking silence because of her firm belief in traditional norms. In spite of her dominating nature she maintains a rigid silence regarding her problems and ailments. Her slow approaching death by stomach cancer could have been averted. When Saru learns about her condition she wonders about such woman whose lives are enveloped in a deafening silence that cannot be broken even in case of extreme pain. Saru feels:

> The myriad complaints, the varying symptoms, she thought, if put together it would provide a world of data for a treatise on the condition of women... all the indignities of a woman's life, borne silently and as long as possible... Everything kept secret, their very womanhood a source of deep shame to them. Going on with their tasks, and destroying themselves in the battan, for nothing but a meaningless modesty (1980: 107).

The plight of Atya in Roots and Shadows is similar. A penniless and childless widow, she returns to her natal home where she is given shelter by the rich matriarch, Akk. But her status in the family is that of a subordinate and passive member. Her life is spent to help her sister-in-law in household chores and looking after the children of the family as Indu realises,

> what else can a childless widow expect? Her in-laws had, true to tradition, ill-treated her after her husband's death. And then, grandfather had brought her home. Her home, where she worked from morning to night, every day of her life, expecting nothing (1983: 36).

Thus Atya resigns to her life of dependence and silence, keeping her feelings unexpressed. In The Binding Vine Deshpande tries to dispel the silence in the lives of other women through the character of Urmi. Urmi the most independent and outspoken heroines of Deshpande, seeks to bring to light the silent suffering of Mira, her dead mother-in-law and Kalpana, a lower middle-class rape victim. The fact is these two women were made to
endure the injustice done to them in silence angers Urmi. Mira’s untimely death and Kalpana’s unconsciousness may have silenced them but Urmi takes the cudgels to bring to light the violence suffered by them. She struggles to publish Mira’s poems with the aim to give voice to the silent discourse of the dead woman.

Aru who is lauded as the heroine of A Matter of Time is shocked at the resigned silence of her grandmother, Kalyani which speaks of the despondency of her life. Initially, she even fails to understand her mother’s silence at being abandoned. Her feeling that Gopal should not ‘go scot-free’ and her desire to make him pay for what he did to them, shows that she does not agree to Kalyni’s resigning to fate nor Sumi’s attitude of forgive and forget. Hence the woman’s silence makes her a voiceless shadow. The silence in the life of all these women is an evidence of the hopelessness and despondency of their lives. Their awareness of the lack of choice in their lives makes them silently pass the days. However this attitude results in their subordination and helps in establishing tyrannical patriarchal patterns.

Marriage and sexuality is another common theme of Deshpande’s novels. Traditionally in the Hindu marriage the position of husband and wife is clearly defined. Husband is expected to be the authoritarian figure; he always dominates over the wife. She should follow him as her master. This is the traditional concept of superior husband and subordinate wife had been the guideline of Hindu marriage. In Roots and Shadows, when Indu was in Bombay, her instantly in love with Jayant and decides to marry him in spite of Akka’s objections. Her love for Jayant makes her propose marriage. But once married she realizes that Jayant’s expectations were the same as any stereotyped Indian male. His traditional belief is that woman should be passive and not demonstrative of her love and emotions surprises
Indu. Her response to his love was unacceptable to him. It shocks him to find passion in a woman. It puts him off. “When I am like that, he turns away from me. I have learnt my lesson now. And so I pretend. I am passive and unresponsive” (1983: 83). Jayant’s views are coloured by the age-old traditions, which had defined woman, as a means to fulfill man’s needs and not as a human being with her own sexual needs. Whereas, Indu, a woman who disregarded such traditions and is passionately in love with her husband, is hurt to find her love rejected and suppressed by him. It upsets her that while she adopts passively and suppresses her emotions for his happiness. He takes her happiness for granted and ignores her sexuality.

The Binding Vine begins with the life of Urmila, an intelligent, independent, outspoken woman, who is trying to cope up with the grief of her daughter’s death. Deshpande has roped in the story of Mira and Kalpana and with them other characters to show the sexual wrongs done to women in patriarchal Indian society. Considering the woman as weak and dependent the Indian tradition had empowered the male members to take control of her life. Mira is one such woman who becomes a victim of such traditions. A budding poet and an eager student, Mira loses her right to education because a man decides to marry her. With an obsessive love the man plots to get married to her, living her with no choice. Mira’s unwillingness to marry and her interest in studies have no significance for the man, who nourishes the dream to possess her.

Traditionally marriage is the only goal of women’s life. Fearful that they may not get a better match, Mira’s parents decide to marry her to a man much older to her in age, instead of letting her discover her poetic talents or pursue studies. Her fear of marriage and the right it grants to a man over a woman’s body is expressed in her tears: “But tell me friend did Laxmi too
twist brocade tassels round her fingers and tremble, fearing the coming of the dark clouded, engulfing night" (Vine, 1993: 66). Emotionally immature and sensitive at heart, Mira could not accept her husband's love and obsession that was limited to sex. Belonging to the second generation of Indian English writers Deshpande is popularly hailed as a feminist writer. She takes into her province the entire range of potential human experience. Her novels contain a lot of material for feminist thought such as sexuality, the gender roles and self discovery. But she can be called a feminist only in a specific sense. This is highly sensible approach and it is found in almost all her novels. Commenting on the Roots and Shadows Parvati Bhatnagar says,

it deals with a woman's attempt to assert her individuality and realise her freedom. It depicts how it brings her in to confrontation with the family. With the male world and the society in general (2001: 133).

Her women protagonists, hail from the urban middle class, are seen caught in a struggle to free themselves from the hegemony of patriarchy. None of her women is cast in the stereotype image off an Indian woman the passively suffering, self-abnegating angel in the house. All of them are intelligent and refuse to conform to tradition. They realise that marriage is a cage of women. Unlike the women portrayed by Bharati Mukherjee in Wife, Anita Desai in Cry the Peacock or Mahashweta Devi in Draupadi, Deshpande's women protagonists do not resort to any violent course of action. Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors, Jaya in That Long Silence, Indu in Roots and Shadows and Urmi in The Binding Vine inscribe their protest, foreground their right for individuation and then realistically enough go back to their family fold. They wish to survive and want to help those around them to live respectably; they act in the interest of familial
harmony. Thus Deshpande writes about the middle class Indian women and their feelings not as their champion but as their articulator. Deshpande has voiced her displeasure on being called a feminist. She says, “My enduring concern is for human relationships I certainly do not think my novels are men vs. women issue at all” (Femina, 8 may, 1993).

In her novels women characters are not only at the centre, but also they throw the male characters into the background. They are courageous and strong, while the male characters are mediocre. In The Dark Holds No Terrors, Saru overshadows her average husband who tortures her under the cover of darkness, trying in vain to prove his manliness to her. The same is the case with Saru’s parents. Indu in Roots and Shadows is more perceptive and forceful than her materialistic husband. Indu’s Aunt, Akka who rules the family with an iron hard, is more interesting and strong than her puppet like brother. Indian family and in particular the mantel life is soul of her fictional world. Her protagonists actually start overcoming their inner problems, the moment they move house. The importance of the house in this case Deshpande states an interview:

Fore me, every novel starts with people. One character, may be two. And then there is the locale. In the case of Roots and Shadows, there was Indu and there was the house. It was only when they came together that there was a novel. For me it is essential – almost as essential as it is for a movie director as an architect does all the rooms, even if I may not use them. If I have that clear, then the rest of it can happen (1998: 243).

Sarita Indu and Sumi’s parental homes can be considered from many angles but in any case, they do share many affinities. Although they are not exactly the protagonist’s real homes thereafter I will simply refer to Sarita’s, Indu’s and Sumi’s homes out of convenience these are the homes where
they live for a certain period. Sarita, Indu and Sumi arrive there abruptly, in some cases unannounced, intending maybe to spend only a short time; new-evolving relationships redesign original plans to stay in the house. They decide to stay on and take a direct part in the life of their own original families, totally neglecting their family nucleus, and in some circumstances being unfaithful to their husbands.

Deshpande's house is a real place and stage where all protagonists attracted towards this space. There are at least two meaningful aspects of this house. In the first place, Deshpande's male characters in general do not reveal specific fondness and affection for their family houses nor for the ones they live in. In particular, the heroine's husbands do not show strong ties with their background and original families. Their behavior obviously exposes them as counter parts to female characters that show obvious magnetic attraction for their houses and roots. The family is the world where women can reorder their lives but more importantly, it is the longed for space where they can live without men, even it only for a short period. Thus family is the world in the fiction of Deshpande. In her novel, homecoming, traditions, mothers, families past resolutions appear to be woven.

The relationship of women to each other is another theme to be found in Deshpande's fiction. The mother-daughter relationship is of particular interest in this regard. Although the mother is once seen as dominating, when the daughter grows up, she realizes that in reality her mother was not dominating but dominated. The dominated figure dose not provide a very adequate model for the daughter, who is caught between her conscious realization of her mother's victimize and her infantile identification with her. In The Binding Vine Urmi harbours
misunderstanding about her mother for years together, until she learns the truth as a grown-up woman. Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* tries very hard to win back the same place in her mother's mind that she had before Dhruva's death. To achieve this, she becomes a doctor and creates her own place in the world. But until the end, her mother keeps saying that she has no daughter; she only had a son and he was dead.

Besides the mother–daughter relationship, there is bonding between women only becomes they are women who happen to understand each other better. This boding cuts across the barriers of caste, class and education. This upper caste, educated Urmi in *The Binding Vine* becomes a part of the world of Shakutai, a working class, illiterate women. Jaya, *That Long Silence* goes to hospital with her maid Jeeja. She can understand Mohan's mother's silence more then Mohan does himself. If the joint families portrayed in *Roots and Shadows* and *That Long Silence*, the worlds of men and women are totally different. But sometimes we also see jealousy and the desire for domination, as between Sunanda and Anant's wife (*Roots and Shadows*) or Jaya's mother, grandmother and Vanitamami (*That Long Silence*).

It is quite known to every reader that Deshpande's fictional world is revolved around same common themes. But exceptionally some novels disclose rather the exotic themes. *If I Die Today* is a detective novel. The novel does not present a macabre picture of this physical fact, but concentrates on the human response to it. This is a story about Sumant and Vimala who have suddenly come out in the novel. Sumant is trying to keep up a normal façade but Vimala has turned into a "hunted animal (1982: 69)". Sunita has lost her poise and calm almost overnight. These are strange rumours hinting at a foundering of the Puri's marriage but both Sunita and
Shyam keep a resolute silence. The same shadow of disbelief also falls on Manju and Vijay. Manju feels that everyone looks a vijay. After creating such a ghastly atmosphere, Deshpande introduces death in it. One evening Guru calls all of them together a "sudden impulse if you can call it" (1982: 53). And the next morning he is dead. He has died in his sleep. It is a cold-blooded murder. Vidya's psychic derangement is responsible for the final action but it is Guru who starts the process of rotting. All of them hold Guru responsible for the disastrous commotion in their otherwise placid world. It is not hinted here that Guru instills evil in them. There is no attempt to justify Vidya on any account but it is significant to note that doubts regarding the propriety of Guru's action have been voiced after Guru's death. It is a matter of contention whether Guru is a saint or a blackmailer. To Manju, Guru is the best friend the one who understands her mind helps her, consoles her in loneliness.

For the past few years, it seemed to me now, I had been longing for the perfect friend. And I had felt, I had found him in Guru. A man, who understood, sympathised with all my feelings. It had been an almost perfect relationship; I thought now (97).

Thus Deshpande's preoccupation with death murder and nightmarish suspense happens in this novel. Come Up and Be Dead is another detective novel of Deshpande. The nature of theme of this novel is totally different from others. Deshpande's interest in detective fiction is obvious from her review of A Woman's Eye, Come Up and Be Dead has been compared unfavorably with Agatha Christie's Cat among the Pigeons by one reviewer, became the setting for both novels is a girl's School where a series of murders take place. Hence Come Up and Be Dead and If I Die Today These
two are Deshpande’s detective serials which have been published as novels. Her fiction does not come out of any books or theories. They come out of people. In an interview with Pallavi Thakur she says, Simone De Beauvior’s book influenced me the most.

I don’t think that these books influenced my novels because my novels don’t come out of books, or do they come out of people. But these books did influence me as a person. They colored my ideas about feminism. were clear to me, except that I did not even know the word feminism. It took me sometime to realize that there was a movement like that. I was troubled by these ideas, but the climate was totally different in late 60’s. I got married in 1964 in 1960’s and very 70’s feminism still had not entered India. I think it world be 1975- the International Year of Woman – that for the first time a lot of things were out in the open; so until then these things were not so much talked about, not so much mentioned. Even in magazines like Femina you always find stories of girls falling in love, romantic stories. I could never write like that. I could never write romantic stories. It seemed to me so false because I could see the reality behind these things and there is always this disparity. That was the time when feminism was not really much spoken about and certainly in India it was very muted. It was not loud. For me I had to get it through my own life and I felt a confirmation of my ideas through these books. So it was like a confirmation of my own feelings (2003: 18-19).

And finally, my big question is: “why must I, each time I write a novel, present pictures of rebellion? Because I am a feminist. For God’s sake, I am a novelist, I write novels, not a feminist tract. Read my novel as a novel, not as a piece of work that intends to propagate feminism. Of course given my ideas about women and their roles in life, I am looking at the world in a particular way, I am asking many questions through the novel and its characters, but I do not provide any answers. And I consider that to bring polemic into fiction writing, to work out a feminist propaganda
through my characters is to create flawed writing. It would mean presenting a one-dimensional picture, a simple black and white picture of this complex word" (Journal of Literature & Aesthetics, 2005: 16).

In Indian women novelists Shashi Deshpande's novels are about our selves, about herself, and about Indian life. In her fictional work we find Indian culture, identity and relationships, Indian family system. Indian women novelists in English and in other vernaculars try their best to deal with apart from many other things, the pathetic plight of forsaken women who are fated to suffer from birth to death. Woman in the ancient times is sometimes upgrade and at other times degraded. But in the modern time women have shown their mettle in every field and in some respects far better than the male. Shashi Deshpande's novel The Dark Holds No Terrors deals with an unusual character Sarita, who dared to challenge the age old traditions to marry a man of outside of her cast. The love marriage between Sarita and Manu doesn't prove to be fruitful. Her recent novel The Binding Vine is feminine novel which represents woman as a spineless, wooden creature subjected to male domination. In That Long Silence Deshpande, makes an aesthetic plea to free the female psyche from the conventional male control, in short almost all the literary work of Shashi Deshpande revolve round the pathetic and hear trending condition of women in a male dominated society.

The present critical endeavor is socially oriented. There can be no sustainable development of women without giving equal status to the half of the population of the world. Equality of women means that women should given equal opportunity as men regarding health care, education, work participation and above all decision making with seat in parliament, state assemblies and local level government. Women are bound to have a better...
perspective on vital issues such as environment, health care and education, particularly of the girl child as these affect them directly. Women need protection from discrimination and some positive action to overcome the disadvantages. Everything should be done in accordance with the norms and with a human touch. It is a high time that women are taken into confidence. We believe in values above everything else and are prepared to change their behavior till we get what we want. An average human being is capable of coming to terms with positive aspects and not with other negative realities. These days success depends on dependence on each other rather than slowly on oneself. There is the dimension in which individuals shape their identities and are being able to give direction to their personal life as this is central in empowerment. The major challenge to humanities today is in exploring the radically novel and critical ways of relating the human articulations. A man with a balanced state of mind always seems to cement the relationship. It is necessary to be truly awakened so that we can consciously participate in the life process.

Marriage and family as the social institution Shashi Deshpande women seek anchorage in marriage. They perceive it as and alternative to the bondage imposed by the parental family and opt for it. They are caught in the conflict between responsibility to oneself and conformity to the traditional role of wife however they do not accept to be considered objects of gratification. They challenge their victimization and seek a new balance of power between the sexes Indu in Roots and Shadows views marriage as a gateway to freedom and marriage Jayant, a man of her choice defying her authoritarian family. She finds herself a submissive wife and her longing for independence has been unrealised. Her confidence, sense of certainty and selfhood has been destroyed in her relationship with Jayant. Indu wants to
prove to her family that her marriage is a success. So she sacrifices her needs, compromises her aspirations, avoids conflict with Jayant and manages to maintain the façade of a normal marriage. She realise that her marriage has degenerated into a mere psychological affair. She decides to get back to Jayant but to seek freedom with the bonds of obligations and responsibilities of a marriage. Thus marriage and family is a social institution.

Aristotai rightly said, man is a social animal. In Indian society man cannot live without society and society is made by the men. Naturally women cannot separate from men. There is only one planet created by God for the sake of human being whether he is a man or she is a woman. The proper arrangement and organization to the function all the roles is the same. Of course, the man has no authority legally, socially and naturally to make the difference on the gender. And it is made up of both women and men. As women we share the problem and anxieties of our men, and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress. This kind of study is relevant to the society for creating women’s place and identity in the society. One can expect or make the healthy and wealthy society, which is based on our civilization and culture with joining the sacred hands of male and female. Therefore both need the oxygen of understanding by keeping in mind that they are made for each other.

Shashi Deshpande’s way of presentation is rather different. She explores the human relationship of Indian life and culture. She unlocked the Indian women’s heart very easily in the campus of male. Because of her writing, Indian women becomes to free, the female mentality from the control of male domination. In her writing we find emotional attachment, her attention is focused on feminine sufferings in Indian society. The old conventional notions of male dominated society were so rude, unbearable,
suppressive, oppressive and depressive that women's discourse takes a shape of movement. Their consciousness seeks to analyse and understood the material conditions through which gender has been constructed within specific language and bodies of literature.

A detailed study of shashi Deshpande's novels reveals her deep insight into the plight of Indian women, who feel smothered and fettered, in a tradition-bound, male-dominated society. She delineates her women characters in the light of their hopes, fears, aspirations and frustrations, who are aware of their strengths and limitation, but find themselves thwarted by the opposition and pressure from a society conditioned overwhelmingly by the patriarchal mind-set. She highlights their inferior position and the subsequent degradation in a male-dominated society.

Deshpande's women protagonists are victims of the prevalent gross gender discrimination, first as daughters and later as wives. They are conscious of the great social inequality and injustice towards them, and struggle against the oppressive and unequal nature of the social norms and rules that limit their capability and existence as a wife. Fettered to their roles in the family, they question the subordinate status ordained to them by society. Although she has a small volume of writing to her credit, her works have been drawn great critical attention and acclaim for her sensitive and realistic representation of the Indian middle-class women. Her sincere concern for women and their oppressive lot is reflected strongly in all her novels. Shashi Deshpande states,

that she does not believe in a simple opposition of bad bad men and good good women. I don't believe the world is like that at all" Thus, she has constructed motifs of patriarchy and oppression by employing the method of negation and affirmation. Her protagonists are victims of the Indian
patriarchy and after initial submission view that a woman must assert herself within marriage to preserve her individuality (A Feminist Study, 2005: 111).

Shashi Deshpande keeps her narratives female–centered and gives an intimate insight into the psyche of the middle-class Indian women who feel oppressed and hemmed in by their patriarchal socialization. She provides new ideals for better man–women. To her, tradition is the values of harmony and coexistence that symbolize the Indian way of life, and modernity is the assertion of the independent, individual identity. After having passively played out their socially ordained roles, her protagonists move out of their cloistered selves to assert their individuality as human beings.

Deshpande feels that the woman must be true to her own self if she wants to realize herself. The straitjacketed role imposed on woman only bogs her down in mire of negation and suppression. She must venture out of the familial framework to give full expression to her individuality and identity. Although she is not an avowed feminist, shashi Deshpande occupies a place of pre-eminence among the contemporary woman novelists concerned with women’s issues. Deshpande’s creative talent and ideology have established her as a great feminist writer genuinely concerned with women’s issues and anxieties. Her protagonists are modern, educated, middle-class women who fettered to their stereotypical roles of a wife and mother, feel smothered and helpless in a tradition-bound male-dominated society.

Shashi Deshpande’s novels are a realistic depiction of the anguish and conflict of the modern educated middle-class women. Caught between patriarchy and tradition on the one hand, and self-expression, individuality...
and independence on the other, her protagonists feel themselves lost and confused and explore ways to fulfill themselves as a human being. Deshpande’s concern and sympathy are essentially for the woman. She has given and honest portrayal of her fears, sufferings, disappointments and frustrations. Besides revealing the woman’s struggle to secure self-respect and self-identity, the author lays bare the multiple levels of oppression, including sexual oppression. Deshpande’s primary concern for the woman makes her a feminist writer.

Undoubtedly Shashi Deshpande is a feminist writer but with a broad humanistic outlook. Her novels are essentially reflective of the unenviable situation of the beleaguered contemporary Indian women, which she has depicted with great artistic finesse and astounding originality. Her commendably realistic depiction of the contemporary Indian women’s situation and the pragmatic solution she puts forward, accord her novels an imperishable importance for their affirmative eloquent message for women and the whole humanity as well.

Thus by studying Deshpande’s novels we come to the conclusion, that her protagonists are categorized in the middle-class women. They emerge to awakening through crises. In her novels offers extreme forms of love, ranging from sexual abuse and cruelty to altruistic love that transcends sex. Both implicit and explicit forms of patriarchy have been criticised in all her novels. It is also interesting to note that, for all her protagonists, writing is an important means of liberation. That is like a catharsis her protagonists are in search of an identity. This common quest leads to her repetition of form but not of content. Her novels reflect changing times through man-woman relationship. Breaking up of the joint families, the empowerment of the suppressed, communal violence, corruption and more and more
liberation are some of the major changes. Against the backdrop of globalization.

The present thesis has been carried out the major themes of Deshpande's novels. That is providing a new direction to the society and to the human being. The study of themes of Deshpande's novels would certainly contribute in large measure to build a society based on human values of understanding and trust rather than on the prescribed roles of discipline. By studying Deshpande's work of art, it is known, the theme is the soul of all the novels. In order to study the themes of her novels, we have taken into consideration various ideas and aspects. In her novels the story is not important but the theme and philosophy is more valuable which we minutely studied. Thus the theme implies the central idea of any work of art.
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