Chapter Two

Myths and Realities

Myth has always been an integral element of literature. It has always had a very significant position in human psychology and society from its beginning as a primitive religious narrative to its recent adaptation as an aid in the exploration of the unconscious mind. Myth is seen manifesting itself in two ways in literature, the unconscious and conscious use of myth. The appearance of myth in literature or art should not be regarded as unauthentic or of secondary value. It is by virtue of myths that the literature created throughout the world for centuries has gained its significance and permanent value.

Originated from the word “mythos,” “myth” has passed through various stages of explanation and interpretation. In the words of Nand Kumar:

In general discourse it stands for something false, fictitious and far removed from reality and history. However, the psychoanalytical approaches to criticism have made it possible to evaluate the concept of myth afresh. Today, myth need not be a blatant tale of some fictitious character belonging to past, told in; however it can be a memory of the past, told in a fictitious way. (2)

Myths are prevalent in every society and they are handed down from one generation to another and the examples set by them guide the people in their day-to-day business of life. Myth, in essence, a necessary explanation of human condition, helps to structure a way of life and scheme of values in an organised
society and betrays a character of national culture. As the words of Kimball Young quoted by Vatsyayan in *Advanced Social Psychology* express, “Myths represent the fundamental beliefs, convictions and values of group” (184). These myths pass to the individual from his family and society as they are a very important part of the social and cultural heritage. In the words of C. S. Lewis in *An Experiment in Criticism*, “Myth is always, in, one sense of that word, ‘fantastic’. It deals with impossibles and preternaturals. The experience may be sad or joyful but it is always grave. Comic myth (in my sense of myth) is impossible. The experience is not only grave but awe-inspiring” (44).

Myths are not identical with legends. They possess greater degree of truth than the legends. Myths are part of the cultural heritage, and both help to maintain the continuity of the cultural life in the society. They are not mere stories but they have a sound psychological basis. Concerning the importance of myths in society, Vatsyayan quotes Kimball Young’s words in *Advanced Social Psychology* which read, “Without them the past and the present as well as the future would seem chaotic. With them the world takes new meaning and form and does not need to be constantly recast by or for us. They make our social-cultural reality stable, predictable and capable of being endured” (185). Myths also help to achieve a certain degree of synthesis in the social environment. In the words of Sunalini:

> Myths, legends and folklores are deeply ingrained in the Indian Psyche-especially those which are found in the epics and puranas. They are so much a part of our psychic make-up that it is in terms
of these myths and legends that we try to order our inner world and make sense of our experiences. These stories and myths are part and parcel of our lives. (39)

Every nation values its own myths with a unified sensibility as they hold communities and races more close than anything else. In myth one looks back and forward, undergoing a journey into the inner countries of the mind, heart and soul as it encompasses an individual and communal experience.

Northrop Frye’s contribution to the understanding of myths is also significant. In his lecture entitled “Creation and Recreation” at Toronto University, Frye finds a wide use of myth for the desire of freedom from the external repressions. This leads the arts to a process of decreating the present with a view to constructing a vision of the desirable. He sees the whole of literature as the perpetual recreation of fundamental myths and archetypes. Frye’s theory of modes and genres is related to and derived from myths and archetypes. He uses both myth and archetype not to trace the origin of a work of art, but to discover its structure and significance. Myth to Frye is a structural principle. The core of Frye’s theory lies in a secular apocalypse derived from Blake and he sees the roots of literature not only in myth but in nature. That is why his archetypes, unlike the dark archetypes of Jung, are said to have no metaphysical sanction:
They are a humanistic construct of common man in search of his dream which he creates out of his need for wish fulfillment. Thus the democratic universality of mythic structures is dependent on the universality, the commonness of the structure of human desires – even to the ultimately universal dream of man, the ‘classless civilization.’ (234)

While giving a new orientation to the speculation on the nature and significance of myth, Frye traces its vital connections with the primitive outlook. He tries to explore human consciousness by putting the quality of the primitive nexus and literary nexus together and finds them quite revealing. But the most convincing theory has been given by Jung who relates myths to the “collective unconsciousness,” the reservoir of racial memories and the most vital part of human psyche. The myths are viewed as the archetypes of human crises and psychological tensions in the history of human psyche which have been recurrent in different ages and stages of civilization.

Deshpande’s heroines are engaged in a serious conflict of ideas with their society. They question the assumptions of their society as the “misfits” of their families and community because they are unable to act according to the general code of conduct laid down for women. Their inability to adjust smoothly into their world becomes a means of disruption, of “tearing away the mask” of assumptions underlying society’s values, ritual and practices. The assumptions that define and delineate women in the patriarchal world come to a large extent from the myths woven around them. In a society like India that adheres to
tradition, ancient myths command respect and faith despite influences from other cultures. They continue to exert a strong psychological influence finding a new lease of life through revivalism and re-adaptations.

Modern myths are created as an outcome of cross-cultural interaction and also participate in the cultural life of the society. The Indian women are known for peculiar cultural experience that intersects ancient and modern myths defining women. And this experience reflects the complexity of their culture in the postmodern situation. The modern woman’s self-awareness is strongly beset with a conflict with the conventional images of a woman’s place and role in society. Women’s self-analysis reveals to them their entrapment, and opens out some space for greater insight. It is identified well in the case of Deshpande’s protagonists. Knowledge may not immediately bring freedom, but becomes a starting point from where they are able to define new selves.

Myths induce the feeling of security and assertion of one’s beliefs and they determine the social values that serve to maintain the social control. Every age and every culture develops its own body of myths, making human life meaningful. In their passage through time the form of the myths is modified considerably. They also form the basis of folk stories, songs, art and sculpture and constitute one example of a recurrent form, an archetype. An archetype is defined as an original pattern or model from which all other things of the same kinds are made. As archetypal theory proposes, that human experience reflects, in part, universal patterns common to all culture and civilizations and that human beings project these patterns of experience in universal sets of images and
symbols. In Jungian psychology, a collectively inherited unconscious idea or pattern of thought or image is universally present in individual psyches. In the study of the psyche from the methods of psychoanalysis, Jung differs from his mentor, Freud. Jung puts the unconscious in a broader perspective. To him, the psyche consists of various systems including the personal unconscious with its complexes and a collective unconscious with its archetypes.

It is Freud who discovered a method to examine the human mind scientifically. He views mind as consisting of two realms – the conscious and the unconscious. That part of the mind which we are aware of is termed the “conscious.” The major part of the mind, however, is comprised of the unconscious which includes all impulses, desires and is the core of the person. The unconscious can be studied through dreams, the slips of the tongue, free association techniques, hypnosis and projective techniques.

According to Jung, there is no limit to unconsciousness. He believes that there is a deeper and more significant layer of the unconscious which he calls the collective unconscious, with which he identifies the archetypes. These archetypes which Jung believes are innate, unconscious and generally universal. K. C. Baral comments in his *Sigmund Freud – A Study of His Theory of Art and Literature* as follows:

He believed that the deepest levels of the “Collective Unconscious” are common to all humanity, and it can even be extended to man’s primate and animal ancestry. The archaic heritage, Jung believed, plays a dynamic role in the psyche. The
“Collective Unconscious” helps to interpret man’s experience in relation to his ancestral past. (107)

Besides Freud and Jung, there has been another prominent psychoanalyst, Jaques Lacan. If Freud’s theories focus upon the relation between authors, readers or characters in literature, Lacan is responsible for the gradual move away from “persons,” i.e., authors, readers or fictive characters towards the text and towards the reading and writing operations. Lacan’s view of psychoanalysis involves the intermingling of human subjects and language. He also focuses upon topics such as ego, transference, psychosis, the death drive, repression and sexuality. According to Homer, “Lacan’s conception of the unconscious as structured like a language and the relationship between the symbolic order and the subject opened up a whole new way of understanding the play of unconscious desire in the text” (2). Lacan stresses that speech, particularly language is central to psychoanalytic practice and to any theoretical conclusions that may be extrapolated from it.

The term “archetype” is derived from the Greek “arkhetupon” where “arkhos,” means chief or beginning and “tupos” denotes the primordial form. Stated simply, archetypes are universal symbols and in the words of Jung, these “myth forming elements” are ever present in the unconscious psyche. As Philip Wheelwright beautifully explains in Metaphor and Reality, such symbols are “those which carry the same or very similar meanings for a large portion, if not all, of mankind . . . recur again and again in cultures so remote from one another in space and time that there is no likelihood of any historical influence and
casual connection among them” (111). These primordial images contained in myths and other cultural phenomena, considered as symbolic elements provide clues to the aspects of the working of human life and mind. The oft repeated archetype is the one that indicates the otherness of women in society from classical times.

In a patriarchal society, woman is supposed to be an ideal wife, a mother and an excellent home-maker with multifarious roles in the family. As a wife and mother, service, sacrifice, submissiveness and tolerance are her required attributes. Her individual “Self” has very little recognition in the male-dominated society. Hence self-effacement is her normal way of life. As a woman grows, she is inculcated with the ideas of pride in patience and of the need to accept a lower status through the mythical modes of Sita, Savithri and Gandhari. Following these models, she is taught to be shy, gentle and dignified as a person, pure and faithful as a wife and selfless, loving as a mother. For centuries, the Indian women have idealised the mythical models from the Ramayana and other Puranas. Indian women have been asked to get inspired by the archetypal women like Sita, the silent sufferer. Usually, an Indian woman is passive and accepts the given role in shaping her destiny. And, totally, the role of woman has been full of contradictions so far as Indian customs and traditions are concerned. Women need the propitation of their male counterparts for their emancipation. Due to their narcissistic attitude, men do not accept the reforms meant for women wholeheartedly. Women in this world really lose out by being women. The social inculcation is such that moves them towards the so-called natural vocation of being a wife and mother.
With the emergence of writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal who have documented the female resistance against a patriarchally maintained Indian culture, woman has started feeling dissatisfied with the inhibiting cultural, natural or sexual roles assigned to her from the unconscious dawn of the patriarchal India. A woman finds herself in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the “Other” and reduce her to the status of the second sex. Gradually a woman has developed an aversion for such compulsion but fails to show her defiance towards it. Actually, subordination or acceptance of male authority – whether of father, husband or son is a cherished Indian value sanctified by tradition. Though a woman is aware that her potentials are thwarted by the society of which she is an integral part, she remains passive as she cannot come out of the established pattern or customs fully. The confined space which is meant for a woman in the traditional Indian setup is in response to the mythical ideas or beliefs provided by the mythical stories. Even in today’s changing scenario, this indoctrination has been carried on by a woman because it is infused in her psyche by her parents, especially by her mother since her childhood days.

Simone De Beauvoir rightly declares about woman in *The Second Sex* that “. . . it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature . . . described as feminine” (295). In the classical myth, Apollo completely dominates and suppresses Daphne, a river nymph. He usurps the laurel goddess Daphne’s sacred mysteries by ravishing her and setting himself up in her place. These myths of the origins of culture show that even gods have overtaken civilizations
along with other feminine powers and man has established himself up as the
“Subject” as opposed to the inessential woman who has been forced to the status
of the “Object.” Aparajita Ray aptly observes:

Initially this categorization met with severe resistance since the
concept of the other was considered as primordial as consciousness
itself. But in primitive societies or ancient mythologies where one
finds the expression of duality, the concept however was, not
attached to the division of sexes, it was fundamental to human
thought. It slowly gets incorporated with the passage from the state
of Nature to the state of culture that marked man’s ability to view
biological relations as a series of contrast, duality, alternation,
opposition and symmetry. (162)

The novels of Deshpande are a realistic portrayal of the Indian middle-class
educated women. Deshpande has portrayed an essential woman’s world where
men are present only by the power they wield over their women especially their
wives and daughters. The tragic predicament of these women is the outcome of
male domination in a patriarchal culture. Their silent suffering is socio-psyhic
in nature. Here is a world present in Deshpande’s novels, where women suffer
numerous losses but cope with each crisis with the passage of time. Of course
these sufferings and pain are necessary for one to develop one’s individuality.

Deshpande has delved into the problem of every woman in the
hypocritical society where she is rendered a second grade position but is
expected to be the lynch pin of the family. This double edgeness creates conflict in a woman’s psyche. She is confused about her own role in the society and family and as a result, she suffers a lot. Deshpande strongly believes in the influence of childhood on adult life. The uncommon experiences of childhood contribute largely to the inability of the protagonists to establish and maintain personal relationships in later life. They grow with vague fears and apprehensions which later on create a feeling of isolation and helplessness in a world that is essentially hostile. Deshpande fixes the cause of marital disharmony mainly in deprived childhood. Marriage is the end-all for orthodox women. As a result, the conventional women in Deshpande’s novels are still being mythical wives and mythical mothers. They are known for fear, panic, suffocation and helplessness. Especially the mother figures are not the matriarchs to be glorified but the suffocative and authoritative figures to be disdained. They bear all sorts of suffering patiently thinking of it as their destiny. Though some of Deshpande’s female protagonists are caught in the process of redefining their own roles and relationships with the social world as they are educated and self-willed, they too are caught in a dilemma at the end to retain themselves in modernity to take a revolutionary change. As a result, they have to take a decision in favour of family finally. In Deshpande’s novels, women are forced to return to their natal home due to unavoidable critical situations. In her novels, the home stands for a personal history which must be understood by the protagonists to achieve some sort of understanding of the contradictions in her social position. Of course their return demands some anchorage both
materialistically and psychologically from their natal home. Deshpande has looked into not only a woman’s changing perspective but also to her search for bonding within family as a mode of strength.

Apart from this, men are also known for their obsessive nature especially in sexual relationship with women possessing the archetypal truth that woman is man’s possession and man-woman relationship is mainly meant for sex. Thus men and women are fixed in their own ways and they have to pierce through the archetypal patterns to achieve a harmonious relationship especially in married life. This chapter analyses the following aspects that how childhood experiences go a long way in determining or influencing their adult lives, how women have become mythical mothers and mythical wives, how these women take a decision in favour of the concept called family after passing through various struggles and how they return to their natal home expressing themselves as archetypes and above all, how men are being obsessive husbands in marriage reminding us of the belief of the first man, Adam, that woman is created from man and that she is his possession.

Critics have never been at ease in grouping Deshpande with feminist writers despite the fact that her protagonists are women, the objects of cultural / social oppressions, encased in the straight-jacketed roles of daughter, sister, wife and mother in an age-long patriarchal society. It is well known that Deshpande has widely read the feminist theorists like Simone De Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf and novelists like Margaret Drabble and Doris Lessing and there is no denying the fact that feminine consciousness becomes the protagonists of her
novels. It is also true that they find themselves trapped and suffocated in the roles assigned to them by culture and nature. These protagonists revolt against their family traditions in search of freedom and quest for their “Selves” as they are sensitive, intelligent, career-oriented middle-class women and are familiar with psychology and life around them. They do try to redefine human relationship and behaviour. They incessantly question the concepts of love, marriage and sex. But some of the women in the novels especially the mother figures still remain archetypes though they are the victims of suffering as it is very difficult for these women to break the traditional beliefs in their life.

Deshpande’s approach is not only of feminist concern, but also essentially psychological. Her effort is to lay threadbare the inner psyche of her characters. Her protagonists are split personalities. They carry two “Selves” within their psyche. On the one hand, their inner “Self” rebels to break away from traditions; while the other, the cultural as well as the customary women archetypes ingrained in their psyche, forces these women to follow tradition. This dichotomy in their psyche results in “ego-self” crisis in Jungian terms. In *Ego and Archetype*, Edinger explains that when ego (consciousness) is separated from “Self” (unconsciousness), “ego-self” axis is broken. The state of “ego-self” separation is called “ego-inflation.” The protagonists of Deshpande suffer from this ego-inflation which is the root cause of their predicament. Their struggle is towards wholeness and towards realization of “ego-self” axis. They actually strive for self-identity, ego-self identity or proper communication between the two. Transcending proper human limits is a symptom of ego-inflation. Spells of
anger, power motivations of all kinds, intellectual rigidity, lust, an excessive unbounded sense of guilt and suffering are also symptoms of inflation.

Deshpande’s heroines yield to ego-inflation because of the improper child-rearing they have. Ego-inflation starts right from their childhood. It is actually a very sensitive stage in the development of consciousness. Psychologically speaking, every child is born in the inflated state but at the time of birth, ego does not exist. Ego is completely identified with the “Self,” which is “the centre and totality of being,” (7) in the words of Edinger, and it experiences itself as a deity. As a child grows, it develops ego coming across various experiences and thereby “ego-self” separation begins. Edinger rightly observes, “First half of life involves ego development with progressive separation between ego and self whereas the second half of life requires a surrender or at least a relativization of the ego as it experiences and relates to the self” (5). It can be said that the process of alteration between “ego-self” union and “ego-self” separation seems to occur repeatedly throughout the life of men and women in their childhood as well as in adulthood.

The protagonists of Deshpande have a strange childhood. When their strange childhood invades their “ego-self” axis, the result is ego-inflation. In The Binding Vine, Urmila for reasons unknown to her has spent her childhood with her grandparents at Ranidurg. Her grandmother Baiajji has showered infinite love and care upon her and she has also got a loving and loyal friend Vanaa, the stepsister of Kishore, her future husband. It is Urmila’s father who has sent Urmila away to his own mother at Ranidurg for the sake of punishing his wife,
Inni, for being remiss in her motherly duties. But Urmila has had a misconstrued idea that her mother has deliberately sent her to Ranidurg for her own convenience. She has been made to feel an inferior being, an unwanted child and a burden in the family. As her ego is hurt by this, Urmila develops a hatred for her mother. To Urmila, Inni fails to fit in the role of a mother, the first archetype, representing the unconscious for Urmila. Resultantly, Urmila lacks the necessary anchorage that a real and responsible mother could have provided. Another thing which hurts Urmila’s ego is her parents’ preference for her brother who, while she is sent away from her parents, is kept with her parents. As a result, the power motivation has been developed in Urmila to dominate and that hampers the process of individuation. Later, it compels her to marry Kishore, a man of her own choice against the wishes of her parents. But when her mother reveals the truth, Urmila understands her mother’s feelings and also her piteous status in her married life.

Kishore, Urmila’s husband too lacks the needed support from his mother as he has been a motherless child since his birth. Though he has been brought up well by Akka, his stepmother, he must have missed something that a real mother, the first archetype could have provided. The absence of a sheltering mother archetype is responsible for his harsh behaviour later in his married life. When his wife is in distress and is in need of solace, as a grieving mother over the death of their daughter, Kishore is unable to understand her feelings and comfort her.
If Urmila understands her mother at the end, Mira is not so fortunate, whose myriad questions remain unanswered, her mother being dead. Mira holds her mother responsible for her unhappy married life. Being a college-going teenager, Mira has been forced into a matrimony that she has dreaded from the beginning because of her nurturing. She is the victim of her mother’s poignant status in her house. Her mother is more of a caretaker than a decision-maker of her family with little stand or say in important issues. As an unassertive woman, Mira’s mother says, “‘Nothing is in my hands’” (126). None in the family ever bothers about Mira’s emotions and her unwillingness to marry the man is taken as mere childish resistance. What she has desired at this juncture is the support of her mother, who can refute an early marriage for her daughter or suggest delay thereby forestalling the marriage. Mira feels insecure and psychologically she is not prepared to enter into marriage. Perhaps she is pessimistic about marriage at the unconscious level, having witnessed the pitiable condition of her mother. This results in a malfunctioning married life for she fears her husband every night as she does not love him and does not cope with her husband resultantly. And it generates a thirst in her mind to achieve her freedom and identity and she does not want to be the shadow of her mother.

Though the novel, *A Matter of Time* does not show the crippling effect of poor childhood on the life of its women characters, it does tell how a mature woman carries the burden of childhood memories. Kalyani is the victim of the power game and she has endured the anguish of rejection. Manorama, her mother rejects her mentally for being born a girl-child; in addition, Kalyani
somehow fails her mother on every account – she has been neither beautiful nor intelligent and not even healthy. Kalyani herself admits to have been “a great disappointment” to her parents not only because she “was a girl” but also because she was “none of those things” which her mother “would have liked her daughter to be” (226). Kalyani’s ego is hurt by her mother’s preference for a boy. Though Kalyani does not generate hatred for her mother, Manorama’s treatment haunts her mind. This differential treatment creates a feeling of insecurity in her and she thinks she is not wanted or needed by anyone. She is made to feel an inferior being or a burden in the family. All this is responsible for “the hopelessness that lay within the relationship, that doomed it from the start,” (143) in her married life. She has adopted the strategy of resisting her mother’s dominance by her stoic silence. The same strategy is repeated later when Shripati, her husband, ceases all communication with her. Kalyani does not react with a show of emotions. She resists him by the same stoic silence and by building her own cocoon. Silence can be a powerful tool of resistance when it practises a lack of participation in the social power relations.

Children are deprived of love due to various familial circumstances of which a broken family is the foremost. Kalyani’s daughters, Sumi and Premi are the victims of the above circumstance. Both Premi and Sumi have been denied love from their father. Both are the victims of the desolate life of their deserted mother. They are left psychologically insecure about matrimony and the unconscious ghost of the fear of insecurity haunts them later when Gopal walks out on family. Premi reveals, “‘My father did not speak to me until I was ten’”
When she comes home she is troubled by a sense of deprivation. Now she is a professional and the wife of a successful lawyer but she says, “The moment I come home, all this dwindles into nothing and I can feel myself sliding back into adolescence, getting once again under the skin of that frightened child Premi who’s always waiting here for me” (17). These lines show how Premi is affected by the atmosphere at home due to the relationship between her parents, Kalyani and Shripati. When she comes to know about Gopal’s sudden decision to leave the family, the unconscious ghost of the fear of insecurity makes her worry and urges her to meet Gopal and argue with him for the sake of his reunion with her sister, Sumi.

Unlike Premi, Sumi does not feel the wrench in Gopal’s walkout. She remains silent as she has already witnessed the same sort of rejection at her parental house. Here, unlike her mother, she adopts the defense mechanism of “reaction formation” and behaves in a way that is exactly the opposite of her own true feelings. Actually she suffers inwardly much and she does want to raise questions to Gopal regarding his attitude. But she does not express her feelings to others. Instead, she shows boundless patience and she seems to take it with ease. Actually Gopal’s walkout makes the fear of insecurity so strong in her that she becomes concerned about the future of her three daughters and of their happy married life. Sumi and Premi, the children from a broken family, carry the ghost of their childhood throughout their lives and it resurrects in their later life in the form of power motivation and alienation.
Gopal also has a traumatized childhood. Gopal’s father has married his brother’s widow who later on becomes Gopal’s mother. Regarding the image of his father, there has been a firm conviction in his mind that his father is “A man who sinned against his brother by loving his wife. The brother dying of grief and the wife and the man marrying immediately after” (42). He finds his father as a man succumbing to his passion for his brother’s wife and after the brother’s death, a marriage of convenience is solemnized. In this opinion concerning his father, Gopal has found the reflections of incest, and in his moral idealism, Gopal has found himself lost. His divided consciousness has made him a cripple to observe human relationship in the right perspectives. His anguish echoes in his confession, “my father was never a father to me – not after I knew their story. He was my mother’s guilty partner, he was Sudha’s uncle, her stepfather, he was my mother’s husband” (43). This state of mental conflict only stirs him to take an easy step to escape from family and ultimately thrusting the responsibility of the family on the shoulders of Ramesh, his student.

Similarly, in Small Remedies, Madhu has a traumatized adulthood. She has had a sexual encounter with her father’s friend which takes place many years ago. Actually the incident has left no impression on Madhu’s mind that she has put it behind her. However, she comes across a painting in an exhibition many years later when her son Aditya is almost seventeen years old. Something in the painting and the knowledge that the painter has committed suicide brings back to her mind the incident which has probably laid buried in her unconscious mind. As she is shocked at her own discovery, Madhu confides in her husband, Som,
about her pre-marital sex encounter with her father’s friend, expecting understanding and sympathy. As his ego is hurt by this revelation, Som is transformed overnight into a suspicious, violent, angry and unforgiving man. The revelation of these suppressed distressing thoughts is mainly responsible for Madhu’s lamentable status in her married life and later it resurrects in the form of alienation.

In *Moving On*, Manjari’s conscience is closely involved in the process of self-discovery with the concern to discern the truths about the realities of life. Her childhood is also to be considered as important in the process of progress of the conscience of Manjari. Manjari’s ego is hurt by her mother’s preference for her younger sister, Malu. The presence of the younger sister in the family has been both an excitement and loss for her. Mai’s involvement in the care of Malu has made Manjari feel lonely and nervous. Manjari is still happy with the family as a unit consisting of all four, “Babu – Mai – Malu and I was my world” (41). Manjari declares about Malu, “And she was the little tyrant who knew her power, who used it to get what she wanted” (44). Her insecurity in the presence of Malu gradually takes a hostile turn. In spite of her best efforts, the shadows of this hostility play a part in her treachery against Malu in future. Even in her adulthood, she has been treated differently by her mother and her ego is hurt by her mother’s words and treatment at her selection of Shyam, her lover and life partner who is much below her father’s social status. Though Madhu’s wounded ego does not generate in her a hatred for the mother figure, it develops the tendency to dominate. It creates a compulsive urge in her to lead a successful
married life in the presence of her parents. Manjari’s wounded ego refuses to get the necessary support from her parents in her critical situations and even after Shyam’s death.

Similarly in *In the Country of Deceit*, Devayani, the protagonist has a “history” which might justify her “primeness.” As an adolescent, Devayani has almost been abused by a man in a deserted grove while returning from school with her classmates. She has escaped but unfortunately one of her friends has been left behind in the grove while Devayani and the others have fled. Devayani has considered the one who has been left behind as unlucky. This story of desertion haunts her mind and makes her so sensitive towards the feelings of others and it reflects in the form of maladjustment later in Devayani’s life and it provides room for negative ego inflation. Thus, this negative ego inflation makes Devayani accept the love of Ashok, a man who is much older and married and the one who moves her to the extent of sacrificing herself to him. Childhood, thus is a very important period for the formation of character and for the emergence of a value structure as Mani Meitei says:

Childhood experience is of vital importance in the study of mind’s behaviour, for that lies embedded in the individual consciousness as latent content that appears and reappears as drives and urges in the individual’s unguarded moments. If the person is fully or partially under control of this aberrant mental process he is subject to neurosis or hysteria according to the degree of the force of drama that is inside the mind. (76-77)
Psychologists are unanimous in stressing the importance of childhood experience and environment in the evolution of personality. Dominating, over-protective, intimidating, partial or indifferent elders not only endanger a child’s free emotional growth but also curtail his sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. R. D. Laing, a psychologist stresses that the family is responsible for the sanity of its members and explains, “It is not simply an individual’s bad luck in the genetic card game that leads to his madness, but the tricks of the other players that drive him crazy” (36). In the novels of Deshpande, the innocent world of children is permanently damaged by the apathy and insensitivity of the adults. As their wounded young psyche cannot mature into a wholesome character, all along they suffer as the possessors of a battered childhood, incapable of facing the vagaries of childhood. Battered adulthood too is responsible for the woeful future of the characters like Madhu in Small Remedies. As Deshpande strongly believes in the influence of childhood on adult life, she stresses how childhood experiences go a long way in influencing the adult lives through the characters of the above discussed novels.

The traditional society, following the precepts of Manu, does not grant woman a separate identity apart from the role of a daughter, wife or mother. According to a traditional Indian belief, the only redemption for a woman is her achievement of motherhood. The role of the mother has been extolled even in ancient epics and scriptures. Especially the relationship between mother and daughter is characterized by love and affection. It is generally conceived as the most sacred bond replete with care and concern. Swami Vivekananda has
eulogized motherhood as marvellous, all suffering and unselfish. Thus motherhood has been glorified and celebrated since times immemorial and mother has been projected as a self-effacing, sacrificing person. Motherly love has been represented as consistent in both religious and social documents. Such types of stereotypical representations are strengthened by their recurrence in literature and carried out from generation to generation. But recent observations of modern writers, especially feminist writers have questioned the socially constructed phenomenon called motherhood. Actually the mother, an ordinary human being, with her own passions and emotions is miserably ignored in the patriarchal society. She should not aspire to anything beyond her wifely and motherly roles.

The word “identity” is incomprehensible in itself, meaning both sameness and distinctiveness, and its contradictions multiply when it is applied to women. Through this, it can be understood that “identity” for a female is both identification with the mother and a distinct “Self.” This contradiction is the result of the fact that mothers are not all that doting, sacrificing ones, but are also instruments through which the patriarchal society exercises its values. Usually the mother’s world is not a female world but a world of man-made values. They are merely exercisers of the patriarchal ideology under the pressure of their own gender. Mothers, being women, are themselves conditioned by their mothers first and next by the society at large. Mothers take it as their responsibility to condition their girl child into the norms of the patriarchal society.
Motherhood is not valorised in Deshpande’s novels. Marital disharmony and the resultant frustration create only a succumbing type of woman. This type of woman lacks the strength to oppose the social setup and turns her protest against herself bringing self-destruction. Such women are known for the loss of identity. But in their life, they also come under the processes of self individuation and internalization. In Jungian psychology, internalization is the gradual integration and unification of the self through the resolution of successive layers of psychological conflict. It consists of three parts – (i.e.,) becoming conscious of the shadow, one’s dark side, containing those things that one has repressed for one reason or another and wants to hide from the world, secondly, becoming conscious of the anima or animus which represents the functions which filter the contents of the collective unconscious through to the conscious mind and thirdly, becoming conscious of the archetypal spirit and of the soul. Actually individuation is an ongoing endless process. Jung has seen individuation as the process of self-realisation. Though the process of individuation occurs in the life of the mythical mothers, they do not take efforts by which they can fulfil their potential to become all that they can be as they are strongly oppressed by the accustomed beliefs.

Generally internalization is the process of consolidating and embedding one’s own beliefs, attitudes and values when it comes to moral behaviour. When these mythical mothers are often abused and ill-treated by their husbands, they automatically come under the process of internalization receiving the needed ideas from outside. Though their unconscious desire is to get relief from the
suppression in the male-dominated society, they are helpless at least in
developing their ego as the established values that are so infused in these women
force them to look upon the suffering and miseries inflicted on them by their
men as belonging to the natural order of things or a matter of their fate.

The main reason for this is these women have been brought up by their
mothers in their childhood in orthodox ways. Their mothers’ conventional
beliefs, and the way of treating their daughters are imprinted in the minds of
these women and force them to respond to their own daughters and treat them
also in the same manner when the time comes. As a result, they put themselves
in “role reversal” which is nothing but a technique where one is asked to
exchange roles with another person. In that way, one is able not only to
experience a different perspective of the situation but also to witness one’s own
behaviour from the other side. Thereby, the technique of “role reversal” can
bring significant abreactive and mental catharsis, insight and transformation.
Naturally, they become role models to their daughters and these mythical
mothers have a fear that the future of their daughters may turn wretched if they
deviate from the assigned path of an essentially patriarchal society.

In *The Binding Vine*, Shakutai, a deserted wife as well as the mother of a
rape-victim, Kalpana, hails from the lower stratum of society looking for means
of livelihood. She is a woman who has got no security even in marriage as her
husband has abandoned her for another woman. In such an aggrieved state,
Urmila meets Shakutai in the hospital where her sister-in-law, Vanaa, works and
Shakutai’s daughter, Kalpana is under treatment. Shakutai urges Bhaskar, the
doctor in charge to repress the truth that Kalpana has been brutally raped instead of finding a way to get justice for her daughter. As a traditional mother, she is very conscious of her social status which must be protected for the sake of the future of her two daughters. And so her argument is “‘who’ll marry the girl, we’re decent people’” (58) and “‘I have another daughter, what will become of her’” (59).

When Shakutai’s husband abandons her for another woman, she of course suffers from the loss of identity. She seems to try to attain her individuality by bringing up her children alone but she arrives at the same conclusion, which the conventional mothers usually take at the end for the sake of their children. Shakutai’s anxiety about Kalpana and Sandhya’s marriage, practical advice of Vanaa, the indifference of police, all collectively contribute to constitute a psyche of alienation and nothingness in Shakutai. She does not want the incident that happened at Kalpana’s life to become a burning issue for the sake of Kalpana’s future and she is firm that her daughter’s reputation must be safe guarded. Shakutai’s reaction is that of a typical Indian mother bred in an oppressive male-dominated society. The fear of public opprobrium is more terrifying to Kalpana’s mother than the desire to find the culprit and punish him. She wants to provide her daughters the best in life even those things which she has failed to achieve in her married life. What Shakutai has got from her married life are trauma, misery and children.

Like most orthodox mothers, Shakutai naively hopes that somehow her daughters’ lot in marriage would be better than hers. Bhaskar wonders how
women like Shakutai, who themselves have had no peace and happiness in marriage can think of marrying away their daughters. Though she loves her daughter very much, Shakutai puts all the blame squarely on Kalpana as she bursts out, “ ‘Cover yourself decently, I kept telling her, men are like animals. But she went her way. You should have seen her walking out, head in the air, caring for nobody. It’s all her fault, Urmila, all her fault’ ” (147). Urmila tries to explain the fact that Kalpana is not responsible in any way for the brutal rape but she fails to convince Shakutai. Actually Kalpana does not want to be the shadow of her mother and her inflated ego refuses to obey the advice of her mother, Shakutai. Here we find Shakutai’s reaction born of the values ingrained in her by the age-old patriarchal setup.

Mira’s mother is another mythical mother like Shakutai. She has no voice or identity of her own apart from being wife or mother. A traditional woman herself, she does have her own world of dreams about her daughter and hence she remains contented seeing Mira married and pregnant. The fact that marriage means everything to woman is strongly invested in her psyche. She has no right of decision-making. Mira holds her mother responsible for her miserable state. She recalls the attitude of her mother, “ ‘Don’t ask me’, she used to say to us. ‘Nothing is in my hands’ ” (126). Mira’s mother is well acquainted with Mira’s misery and trauma as her married life has become aberrant. She is left psychologically insecure and the unconscious fear of insecurity makes her feel that marriage is enough for her daughter and makes her provide the advice for the sake of her daughter’s life that Mira should submit herself to her husband to
get her life blessed. Mira’s mother reels under the loss of identity, which is mainly responsible for her agony, anger, helplessness and fear. Her advice to Mira explains how the advice to obey is handed down the ages from mother to daughter. Mira expresses her mother’s advice as she writes, “. . . never utter a ‘no’; submit and your life will be a paradise” (83). Mira’s mother does not seem to worry about individuation as she fully convinces herself with traditions. Mira says, “She knew I was not happy, I know she knew it; but she was afraid to ask me, afraid I would admit it” (126). This fear only obstructs the process of individuation in the life of women like Mira’s mother that they expect their daughters to be bound by tradition and play the conventional roles of daughter-in-law, of wife and mother, whatever may be their situation.

Like Shakutai, Kalyani in *A Matter of Time* is also a traditional woman who believes that the fate of women is being measured only through their marital status. She has her own traumatic married life in which she has been punished by her husband who has not spoken to her for more than thirty years, for the mentally retarded son who has been lost by Kalyani. It is this sense of rejection that urges Kalyani later to argue and struggle for her daughter’s, Sumi’s life, when Gopal, her husband, leaves the family suddenly. She too suffers from the loss of identity. Gopal’s walkout wounds Kalyani’s silenced ego and urges Kalyani to raise several questions to detect the reason for his leaving the family. Kalyani implores, “. . . don’t let it happen to my daughter, what happened to me’ ” (46). It is not a question of Gopal’s independence or Sumi’s emancipation but a repetition of her own painful story of silence and suffering.
Kalyani can be addressed as a powerful woman who represents the survival power of women which tides her across her mother’s ill-treatment and her husband’s rejection. But unlike her mother, Manorama, Kalyani gives emotional support to her daughter. Thus Kalyani is known for her stoic self as she is the one who knows the hurt of desertion, who has experienced the anguish of rejection and the one who does not want her daughters as well as granddaughters to be the shadows of her in future.

Similarly, in *Moving On*, though Vasu, Manjari’s mother does not suffer much like Kalyani and Shakutai, she too lacks her identity in some aspects. In the early days of her married life, she has not been a passionate love maker as equal to her husband, Badrinarayan, and has not fulfilled her husband’s sexual desires and thereby has become frustrated and met its consequences. She has to develop herself in love making just to obey her husband and also to make up the situation “Living among women who had to be aggressive and strong to survive the endless drudgery and continuous lechery” (125). Vasu is a real writer of romanticized marriage stories. She has written the stuff she does not believe in. Her world of writing provides her a sort of comfort and it has helped her develop her ego in the process of self-realisation. Though she is revolutionized in her thoughts, she proves herself a traditional woman by not accepting the love marriage of her daughter. She is very conscious of the traditional fact that the marriage of a girl must be decided by the parents. Like Shakutai, Kalyani and Mira’s mother, Vasu too worries about the future of her daughter. So when Manjari decides to marry Shyam, who is much lower in his family status than
theirs, she gains only protest from the side of her parents. Vasu especially is not ready to accept Manjari’s love for Shyam as she has already experienced a life of denial, suffocation in the service of man, with no promise of anything for her. Naturally she wants to become a role model to her daughter. Fear regarding marriage at her unconscious level alerts Vasu’s ego later to clash with Majari’s to save her life as Manjari has been only eighteen at that time. Though Manjari’s immature behaviour wounds Vasu’s ego, Vasu struggles to the maximum to save her daughter from love marriage. Manjari, a student of Medical Science herself is highly obsessed with the body and its throbs that she is unable to control the uproar of her body. And sometimes it is reflected in her behaviour like kissing her lover in the presence of others and this behaviour of Manjari alerts Vasu to be conscious of Manjari’s future. Like Shakutai, Vasu too scolds her daughter harshly as she wants to provide the best, secure married life to her daughter. Vasu tries to make Manjari understand the fact that her decision to marry a man of her own choice is a violation of societal norm implying that marriage must be decided by parents only with the right person at the right time.

In the novel, *In the Country of Deceit*, when Sindhu, Devayani’s aunt comes to know about Devayani’s adulterous relationship with a married man, she feels sad and is worried about her. After the death of Devayani’s parents, Sindhu treats Devayani and her sister as her own children as she has so much love for them. When Devayani does not bother about the world, especially, about the ethics designed for women and wants to continue her illegal relationship with the married man, Sindhu is shocked at her behaviour.
Devayani’s behaviour of course wounds Sindhu’s ego. And her wounded ego makes Sindhu write to Devayani recommending marriage for her, from her daughter’s house in the US, “Our country does not allow women to fulfil these desires without marriage” (42-43). The findings of Sindhu’s super ego that violation of any sanctified norm will lead one to meet the disastrous end only, make her worry and being conscious of Devayani’s pathetic situation, she shows a real concern and offers advice. Devayani’s negative inflated ego is unable to accept the advice of her aunt, Sindhu. But, like mythical mothers, Sindhu thinks of it as her responsibility to struggle and save Devayani from the illicit relationship because the mythical idea about “chastity,” that it is essential for a woman to make an entry into marriage, is buried in her mind at the unconscious level.

The above discussion proves how mothers are conservative in their thoughts and attitudes in contemporary Indian society. It also points out the traumatizing effect of motherhood on woman which sets limitations for her. Shakutai and Mira’s mother turn out to be mothers of silent suffering. They simply stand by their unfortunate daughters as they dare not defy the norms of the society. While Mira’s mother remains silent and stands helpless at the misery of her daughter, Kalpana’s mother, Shakutai, hovers over the family name. Compared to them, Kalyani, Mai and Sindhu are being revolutionized that they not only try to provide the needed advice to their daughters for the sake of their marriage, but also silently protest against the customs of the patriarchal society.
These mythical mothers unknowingly voice the ideology that is integral to patriarchy. They hold those values as ideal which patriarchy has taught them to be so. And when their daughters rebel against such values they take it to be a rebellion against themselves. In addition to this, the mythical mothers are firm believers as Simone De Beauvoir puts it “what was good enough for me is good enough for you, I was brought up this way, you shall share my lot” (533-34). Thus Deshpande views the relationship of the mother with daughter in the broader context of woman’s situation in the patriarchal domain and manifests that willingly or unwillingly, these mythical mothers force their daughters into traps, in which they have already been caught in all their lives with the secret hope that their daughters’ fate would be better than their own.

Our society is known for its own paradoxes. Here a female is considered to be a peripheral member of the family both in her parents’ house as well as in husband’s house. Throughout her life time, a woman is unable to decipher her roots and this leads to her insecurity. As the daughter is closer to the mother, this insecurity is rubbed on to her also. As a result, the daughters also become mythical wives bearing all sorts of suffering patiently like their mothers. If they are educated, these women struggle to get their identity and want to be treated as individuals but tradition suppresses them.

These women’s struggle to achieve the quality that constitutes their individuality is of course not an easy process as they have to come across various stages which are necessary. The “Self” is the regulating centre of the psyche and facilitator of individuation. To achieve their integrity, they go under
the processes of self-rationalization, individuation and self-realization. Individuation is a process of psychological differentiation, having for its goal, the development of the individual personality. An innate need for individuation leads them to explore their wretched status. This natural process is called individuation or the process of becoming an individual.

According to Jung, self-realization can be divided into two distinct tiers. In the first half of their lives, the humans separate from humanity and they attempt to create their own identities – (I, myself) which are for young men to be destructive. In the second half of their lives, the humans reunite with the human race, and become part of the collective once again. The adults contribute to rather than destroy humanity as they are more likely to pay attention to their unconscious and conscious feelings. Totally, self-realization is a common theme for young rebels to “search” for their true selves and to realize that a contribution to humanity is essentially a necessity for a whole self. Jung proposes that the ultimate goal of the collective unconscious and self-realization is to pull us to the highest experience and this of course is spiritual.

Archetypal pedagogy finally helps a woman to get knowledge and to understand the meaning of life. Archetypal pedagogy is the discovery of selfhood and knowledge by means of the archetypes. According to Jung, archetypes heavily influence the human life cycle, propelling a neurologically hard-wired sequence which is called the stages of life. Each stage is mediated through a new set of archetypal imperatives which seek fulfilment in action. This may include being parented, initiation, courtship, marriage and preparation for
death. Hence, archetypal pedagogy provides needed knowledge to women to come out of traditions to reach their essential character. The main purpose of undergoing all these processes to reach their true spirit for these women is that they do not want to be the shadows of their mothers. The shadow is nothing but the opposite of the ego image often containing qualities with which the ego does not identify but which it possesses nonetheless.

Men’s activities also make one wonder that though they love their wives, they do not take efforts to understand their wives’ feelings and thereby not ready to create space for their wives to achieve their identity. So it can be well understood that men are also living with the archetypal truth that woman is man’s possession and that she should sacrifice her essentiality to fulfil man’s desires. And man cannot realize the plight of a woman because of his spirit of masculinity and his traditional ego or gender superiority. But, because of their education and understanding of the world, Deshpande’s “New Women” struggle to restore subjectivity by making revelations via two modes: conversing with others or writing to an imaginary listener. Alienation does not lead to an understanding of one’s uniqueness; instead, relation with others is required to embrace one’s whole identity. In spite of knowing this well, Deshpande’s women struggle to achieve their identity because the established doctrines are strongly planted in their psyche.

In *The Binding Vine*, Shakutai is of course a mythical wife who bears the oppression and ill treatment in the lower strata of the society. Having waited for a year after her marriage, Shakutai finally has come to stay with her husband
who has been jobless and homeless in Bombay. Sometimes, she has to cope with her husband for the sake of fulfilling his sexual desires even in the public. She has felt that she has been humiliated but she has suffered as there has been no space for her selfhood in her married life from the beginning. When her husband has left her for another woman, her condition has become very miserable. Since then, she has taken care of her children by herself. She does not think of the “Self,” the facilitator of individuation. The conservative mother’s concern for her children always snaps her mouth and ties her hands. The idea that marriage is safe for woman is so strongly lodged in her psyche that she does not walk out on marriage. Instead of realising her uniqueness, she realises the limitations of her choice because the Indian society and its traditions do not allow a woman to walk out on marriage and it does not even provide room for her to go under individuation to develop her ego. Even in the matter of her daughter, Kalpana, a rape-victim, the only conclusion that Shakutai, the mythical mother with her suppressed selfhood arrives at is “‘We have to keep to our places, we can never step out. There are always people waiting to throw stones at us, our own people first of all’” (148). Thus Shakutai willy-nilly submits herself to the tradition and this makes her think that women should confine themselves to the space without yielding themselves to rationalization because the confined space allotted for them is known for its own restrictions poised by the society for the sake of their trouble free life.

_The Binding Vine_ projects Mira, another woman who finds a ray of hope in the blind alley of married life. Mira suffers like anything at her husband’s
obsession which moves towards physical intimacy rather than mental co-
ordination. To Mira, marriage is only a trap to lure her into a life of denial and suffocation, in the service of man, with no promise of anything for her. Motherhood to Mira is not an outcome of the mutual understanding between them but it is imposed upon her that “He forced himself on her in spite of it; it is out of this that Kishore was born” (83). Mira vacillates between thoughts of submission and rejection and finds marriage to be degenerating with no involvement except in sex. Mira’s dreams and aspirations are oppressed by the mainstream indoctrination which states that the duty of a married woman is to keep her family satisfied. But Mira’s ego is not ready to accept this and tries to find a relief through her writing, a means of self-expression and individuation.

With the passage of time, the concept of submission is inculcated in her. What has sustained Mira in the claustrophobic atmosphere of her marriage is her writing only as Urmila rightly observes, “Cloistered in a home, living with a man she could not love, surrounded by people she had nothing in common with – how did she go on?” (127). She has got solace only through her writing whereby she gets a chance to express her true personality in her poems and diaries. Mira’s inflated ego learns to say “No” when her husband approaches and pleads her for conjugal relationship. But she does not stick to her point afterwards. Her individualized soul raises many questions regarding marriage indirectly as she has been fed up with her married life. But she wants to live for the sake of her child. In her poems, she mentions the child as “he” as she is scared of possessing a daughter because she has developed paranoia for men.
Mira, as a girl, transforms into a mother, her one and only aim is to give a safe and secure life to her child and thereby she starts resurging from her desolate state. Mira is known for her silence suppressed with anger which shows the inability of her to accept unquestioningly the injustice that is a part of her daily life. She tries to attain her selfhood in all possible ways rejecting the traditional customs. She does not want to be the shadow of her mother, a victim of same sort of suffering, in her married life. But she has not done anything and she has lived with a kind of silence which must one day break. Unfortunately, she meets her death at the delivery of her first baby. However, this kind of life of silence exists only in adherence to the customary code of conduct and often to maintain peace and harmony.

Sulu, Shakutai’s sister represents the women who are the epitome of submission because, to them, husband is the sheltering tree and one cannot act beyond that. Sulu is exploited on the pretext of her incapability of producing progeny which she accepts without resistance. Sulu increases her fortitude for she is implicated for not being capable of achieving motherhood. She has silenced herself, for she always has a fear of what her condition will be if her husband walks out on her. This fear prevents her from thinking of her identity. She lacks identity and she hardly takes efforts to realize her distinctiveness. Her submissiveness works as a slow poison which eats away her dignity and self-respect. The denouement of it is that she has to give the penalty of her own life when her husband dishonours Kalpana, her sister’s daughter. Shakutai always praises Sulu as very affectionate, helpful and good-natured. Shakutai tells
Urmila, “After marriage she changed. She was frightened, always frightened. What if he doesn’t like this . . . what if he throws me out? Nobody should live like that, Urmila, so full of fears” (195). It clarifies here how sometimes marriage makes a woman extremely meek and submissive. Sulu’s fear silences her and that she is even ready to marry off her sister’s daughter to her husband just to fulfil her husband’s desire.

In the life of Harish and Vanaa too, Vanaa’s submission is there just to keep her marriage intact. Though economically independent, she is emotionally dependent on her husband. She longs for a son and the same is denied to her by her husband. But she does not bother about this and she keeps doing domestic chores perfectly. As she feels satisfied with this, she does not bother about her own desires and thereby makes her character silenced. Though she is educated and capable of realizing and rationalizing her spirit, she is quite satisfied with her silence. And so, there has not been provided space for ego development in her life. Urmila gets terribly irritated at Vanaa’s constant refrain like this, “‘Harish says.’ ” She tells her, “‘Assert yourself. You don’t have to crawl before him, do you?’ ” (80). But Vanaa, like any other orthodox woman, submits herself fully well to oblige her husband because she feels real happiness in it and thereby she leads a life dominated by resigned silence.

In *A Matter of Time*, Kalyani is forced to marry her maternal uncle, Shripati. Kalyani’s real tragedy begins when her four-year old son, Madhav, is lost at the railway station while she boards the train to Bangalore. Soon after this incident, Shripati sends her back to her parents’ home with his two daughters.
He returns after a few months. But his return makes no difference in her life as they live under the same roof as two separate individuals. It lays bare the social compulsion and the vulnerability of women in a male-dominated society. Kalyani is known for her silenced soul, as she has already been suppressed in her parents’ house. That is why, even if nothing is left of the married life between her and her husband, Kalyani suffers in silence just to keep their marriage going. Kalyani’s fear is based on the patriarchal oppression that condemns women to the margins of silence. She is forced to realize her plaintive status that while losing her son, a male heir, she has abandoned her motherhood as well as her right to be a wife. The punishment given to her is that she has to live with this psychic wound throughout her life.

In the social construction of body, Kalyani, the subject, is denied agency and is compelled to accept her destiny. For nearly thirty five years, Kalyani remains a second sex, a passive silent sufferer. Shripati is also known for his silence. He punishes Kalyani by abandoning her severing relations with her. Shripati’s dissociation from his family because of his lost son can also be perceived as his way of rejecting a marriage he has been forced into. The silence that he adopts as a means of punishing his wife isolates him from his own family and a life of normalcy. Kalyani, a woman rooted in tradition calls her husband’s obstinacy her fate and considers her situation better than widows. As a result, no such processes like self-realization and self-rationalization occur in her life after her husband’s desertion. Much to the bewilderment of her granddaughter, Aru, Kalyani carries her husband’s name and the mark of matrimony in spite of his
desertion. Sumi reflects her mother, Kalyani, in that with her kumkum she can move in the company of women with the pride of a wife. But Kalyani’s silenced, rationalized selfhood projects out when she advises Gopal after his walkout that the tragedy which has already happened in her life should not be repeated in her daughter’s life. But Shripati’s death in an accident not only ends Kalyani’s hopeless marriage but also her hope of being reconciled. And the heart shattering cry of Kalyani which Aru hears at night after Shripati’s death speaks of the agony and despair of a lifetime wasted due to her husband’s stubborn rejection of her.

In *Moving On*, Vasu, Manjari’s mother too leads a life of suffocation. As she is too shy, she struggles at the initial stage of her married life to fulfil her husband’s needs especially his sexual desires. Like Mira, Vasu is also a good writer of romanticized marriage stories published in popular Marathi magazines. To her, writing is a substitute for her lived experience, a world of make-belief that she has fantasised in her stories. Though she is a writer of the popular novel “Manasi” which has been made into a film, there is an enigmatic silence about her. Her husband, Badrinarayan, the doctor of bones does not seem to care about the other side of Vasu’s real world, the world of writing. These two people inhabit two different worlds – the former’s being the physical world and the latter’s the emotional, the huge chasm between the two is never bridged. In the company of Vasu, Badrinarayan expresses the perfect passion of a lover. In spite of his passion for Vasu, both Badrinarayan and Vasu survive with distinctive images of life. Though Vasu asserts her individuality in her writings, her
individualised selfhood has had its own silence, boredom and displeasure in real life. In spite of the passionate attraction between the two it is only Vasu, the wife who modifies herself according to the family traditions of Badrinarayan. Like Mira in *The Binding Vine*, Vasu adapts to creative writing as a remedy for her frustration and of course it is an expression of her repressed feelings. Manjari realizes that there is a marked contradiction between Vasu’s “real self” and her “creative self” and also there is “a maverick self hidden behind that decorous woman so conscious of the proprieties, a self that she was constantly battling against” (125-26). With this fraction of the “creative self” and the “real-self,” Manjari realizes that a woman can never express her real personality. Vasu’s negation of her real identity in her stories, suggests that Vasu has taken up for an activity which she has regarded perhaps “not only as being outside her domain, but worse, something that could be called selfish and self-indulgent” (189) as Deshpande expresses in “Masks and Disguises.” The different reasons such as deprived childhood, socialisation, tradition, culture and incompatibility are responsible for the failure of these women as wives. A woman’s sense of insecurity leads to her submission. The word “compromise” is meant for women and is the decision made by men which is *fait accompli* for her.

Deshpande effectively emphasises on family values, which win over the claims of the individual in the battle of priority, in her novels. Of course, her protagonists are women and they find themselves trapped and suffocated in the roles assigned to them by culture and nature. As some of them are educated, intelligent and independent, they revolt against their family traditions in search
of freedom and in quest for identity. They are undoubtedly changed women of a changed time. They do try to redefine human relationship and behaviour as they have the capability to analyse their own role in their subjugation, rebelliousness and the quest for an identity. And they undergo a process of introspection and self-analysis to realize their place and role in the family. But when they struggle to reach their goal, they undergo a process of “behaviour modification” which is nothing but the systematic use of principles of learning to increase the frequency of desired behaviours or decrease the frequency of problem behaviours. And sometimes when they feel that they are crossing over the boundaries of tradition, they adopt a self-regulatory technique namely “bio feedback,” by which an individual acquires voluntary control over nonconscious biological processes. Though Deshpande’s women try to attain freedom from the bondage of culture, love, marriage and sex which are defined by male-chauvinism, they finally take a decision in favour of the concept of family as they cannot give up the traditions which are strongly instilled in their psyche. These women are known for attachment – the capacity to make a full commitment – sexual, emotional and moral – to another person. This quality prevents them from releasing themselves from emotional bond and achieving their identity.

In *The Binding Vine*, Urmila is a lecturer who is actually grieving the death of her one-year old daughter. She is an intelligent and independent woman. Against the wishes of her parents, she marries a man of her own choice named Kishore, who works in Merchant Navy. As she is financially emancipated, she develops a kind of super ego in herself which prevents her from submitting to
her husband, Kishore. The denial of submission lies in the fact that Urmila wants to assert herself. Though Urmila succeeds in escaping her culture-bound role by not using the money sent by Kishore to run the family, she cannot go away from her nature-bound role, the role of the sex-partner.

Since the beginning of her married life, Urmila finds that the bond between her and her husband is not that of love though their marriage is a love marriage. Regardless of traditions, Urmila dreams of building her relationship with Kishore on understanding. But Kishore’s job in the Merchant Navy disrupts her dream of a normal life. She struggles to develop an emotional relationship as she feels frustrated with his short visits and lack of time together. The long separation creates automatically a thirst in Urmila to have her husband permanently by her side and also provides room to bloat her ego. Kishore, the archetypal Indian husband never understands the depth of his wife’s feelings. Every time Kishore goes, his parting is like death to Urmila. Her efforts to express her feelings to him are always answered by Kishore’s passionate love making. Dissatisfied with this behaviour of Kishore, Urmila remains unfulfilled and realizes that “sex is only a temporary answer” (139). It makes her understand her subjugation and creates a thirst for identity in her.

A marriage that suppresses Urmila’s human demands, a marriage that denies her fulfilment forces her to take refuge in Bhaskar, her alter ego. Her wounded selfhood gets some solace in her friendship with Bhaskar. She finds in him, a friend, a patient listener who understands her emotions and helps her and makes her feel complete. Though this alter ego provides needed companionship,
it comes to an end with Bhaskar’s open declaration of his love for Urmila. Bhaskar is very hopeful in getting a positive reply from Urmila as he knows well about the strained relationship between Urmila and her husband. Even though Urmila is tempted, she cannot uproot herself from her conventional role. Besides, her love for Kishore has a firm hold on her marriage. She modifies her behaviour for the sake of her marriage. She overcomes her temptations and finds it much simpler “to just think of virtue and chastity and being a good wife” (166). Finally, in order to fulfil the responsibility as a wife and a mother, she prepares herself to sacrifice her self-identity. She hopes that her true love for Kishore will bring down the barriers between them and will create a peaceful life again. Though she fails to achieve an absolute integrity in her life, her paradoxical feminine selfhood that craves for self-expression finally finds its roots in the home with her husband and son. And she takes a decision beyond the illusion of self-identity for the sake of her married life and family.

Similarly, in *In the Country of Deceit*, Devayani is a young unmarried intelligent woman. She is just recovering from the loss of her mother and starting life anew as it is symbolized by the demolition of her ancestral home. She lacks the necessary anchorage from her mother as she has recently lost her mother and is living alone. This makes her accept the love of a married man namely Ashok, a superintendent of police who promises love but no future. She loves him much though she knows that she cannot expect anything of Ashok as he is a married man. And she yields herself to him wholeheartedly. She does not bother about the norms designed for women. Her aunt, Sindhu, advises Devayani to save her
from the illegitimate relationship. But Devayani’s inflated ego makes her not to worry about all these things. Moreover, she does not like others to find a man for her as she is fully satisfied with Ashok’s love. Devayani, in her efforts to assert her individuality realizes her freedom but rejects the age-old concept of the ideal marriage.

Ashok’s love and care provide a sort of comfort to Devayani as she has been living alone in the town. But Ashok does not bother about the life of Devayani who is a spinster and much younger to him. In being together, the lovers find tenderness and understanding though both know quite well that they cannot exist in each other’s functional world. Their ecstasy outweighs the pain of separation in this life. Ashok means a lot to Devayani and she embarks on her relationship with the married man, undergoing all the guilt and remorse. But this relationship does not affect Ashok inspite of the fact that it is he who has a spouse. In the society, as a man, he is not expected to shoulder the burden of societal shame in the prohibited relationship. But this is not quite the same in the case of Devayani that the illegal relationship troubles her more. When her family members come to know about her relationship with a married man, they provide needed advice to her. Their advice of course makes her undergo the process of rationalization and thereby makes her understand and realize her subjugation. Her rationalized ego recollects her firmness about the ethics of marriage which she has known once, at the initial stage of her love and then it transforms into the other “Self” of her psyche which is known for rebelliousness and finally she understands the importance of marriage. She says, “I believe in marriage,
I believe that marriage means loyalty, it means being honest. I think it is wrong, treacherous to deceive your wife. I am always on the side of the wronged wife or husband, I’m against the wrong doer” (94). But suddenly she stops herself and thinks in a different way, “Why did I have to say these things to him? It was he who needed to think of marriage, to talk of marriage, it was he who had to agonize over loyalty and faithlessness” (94). Devayani is quite conscious of her state. She has realized the ugliness of this illicit relationship at times and reveals her anger to Ashok in this manner, “I was angry with you. I wished you had left me alone. I thought, I still think, you had, you have, no right to put me in this position” (30). This of course reveals her indirect quest for identity.

Devayani’s sense of being unique and extraordinary on the one hand and the archetypal ideas which form the other “Self” of her psyche leads to a split in her consciousness. Thus the dichotomy in her consciousness deters the possibility of the essential rapport between her ego and the selfhood. Devayani finds that in her quest of completeness, her real nature chases her shadow to her disappointment and frustration. As she belongs to a traditional family, she cannot help thinking of mythological archetypes such as Sita and Draupadi. The advice from her family, her realization of her own mistakes and her attachment to her own family make her adopt the “bio feedback” technique and she acquires voluntary control over her nonconscious biological processes. This automatically leads her to the modification of behaviour and she decides to give up her relationship with Ashok. Her strong attachment to her family forces her to take an inevitable decision in favour of the elusive concept called family at the end.
Marriage inadvertently re-affirms the quality of reticence in a woman. The established image of an enduring and sacrificing wife looms large over her. The fact that she must mutely follow her husband’s will leave a woman with little choice. With the help of education and social changes, woman has become a well-informed person and with it she tries to find her voice in stating her opinion about things. But the general patriarchal attitude remains the same. For example, though Urmila is an educated woman, she has never dared to express her pain at Kishore’s departures for his look of distaste quells her. In the case of Devayani, though she is educated and brave enough to be a part of an illegitimate relationship, she struggles to be firm and at the end gives way to her family. Of course Urmila and Devayani belong to the category of “New Woman” who is conscious of her individuality and who tries to ascertain her rights and is determined to fight for equality with men. But the struggle of these women to give shape and content to their individual existence in a sexist society culminates in a crisis and ends in compromise. As a result, they take a decision in favour of family compromising themselves and becoming stereotypical women who are known for the clichéd virtues like patience, devotion and sacrifice.

The woman in order to achieve her freedom seeks marriage as an alternative to the bondage created by the parental family. The simple requirement to be independent eventually becomes a demand of the inflated ego and takes shape as the love for power over others. She resents the role of a daughter and looks forward to the role of a wife with the hope that her new role
will help her in winning her freedom. But a woman’s need for social and economic self-determination and her loss of liberty disrupt the institution of matrimony. Deshpande’s women rebel against their authoritarian family and try to escape its clutches but soon realize that their freedom is illusory. They are continually struggling and undergoing the tortured processes of self-recognition and self-assimilation. At last, grievously they are rejected by their husbands and as a result remain alienated. With this trauma, these pathetic wives struggle to take a decision. Usually the parental home, symbol of tradition and the old world values has no room for Deshpande’s women, for they breathe the air of rituals that obstruct the growth of a woman as a being. But, anyhow after the desertion of their husbands, they need some backing materialistically and psychologically. Of course, they are in a dilemma to take a decision but they are forced to return to their natal home. Deshpande uses silence as one of the important media through which she highlights the state of suffering of her women characters. Silence is important in their lives and deeply affects their sense of “Self.”

Kalyani in A Matter of Time is a victim of the silence. The silence in Kalyani’s life speaks of her resignation to her husband’s will. When her mother, Manorama is told about a boy’s interest in Kalyani while she has been in school, Kalyani’s life falters. Kalyani’s terrified silence over the issue is taken as the proof of her guilt as she fails to defend herself. Thus Kalyani is forced into a marriage with her maternal uncle, Shripati. Kalyani’s plight in marriage is in no way less poignant than that of Sumi’s. Three children are born of this marriage – Sumi, Premi and Madhav, a mentally retarded child. Kalyani’s real tragedy
begins when her four-year-old son is lost at the railway station. Shripati’s wild search for his son that lasts for three months ends in vain. Abandoned by Shripati, Kalyani returns to her natal home with her two daughters, Sumi and Premi. Kalyani is here rejected and alienated for losing her only son.

Kalyani lives with her parents hoping to get reconciled with her husband. But Shirpati’s return makes no difference. Since then, Kalyani maintains silence. She suffers from absolute hopelessness. Since the day he returns, Shripati uses his silence as a punishment for Kalyani and rejects her. Kalyani also endures it without complaint. Preferably, getting comfort from her parental home, she suffers due to her husband’s silence. Being alienated by her husband, Kalyani’s wounded selfhood remains suppressed. Hence there is no possibility of nourishing her ego in her life and she does not even want to tell her status to others. With this trauma, Kalyani, as an orthodox woman, thinks that living with her husband and daughters in the same house is enough for her and considers her status as her fate.

When Gopal walks out in *A Matter of Time*, his wife, Sumi shows no violent reaction and accepts Gopal’s walkout without anger and resentment. She does not question this rejection and does not react to the humiliation and disgrace of a deserted wife as she has already witnessed this sort of desertion of her father on her mother at her parental home. In her alienation, Sumi suffers inwardly. But the over-consciousness of her responsibility as a mother makes Sumi insensitive and indifferent to her own needs as a wife and a woman. To the amazement of her daughters, Aru and Charu, Sumi maintains perfect stoicism.
spite of having her façade of normality, Sumi has a kind of blankness that makes them feel uneasy. Aru, their eldest daughter realizes the panic and disorientation of being lost but she is matured enough to realize the far-reaching consequences of these events. For Aru, Gopal’s walkout is not part of a tragedy but it is both a shame and disgrace. She realizes the apathy of the society and personal humiliation from which retreat is not possible. There is a social stigma that they now have to bear. One plausible reason for Gopal’s decision is his sense of alienation and loneliness born of his abnormal childhood. Gopal is unable to come to terms with the fact that he was born of the union of his father and his father’s brother’s wife. He gets completely shattered at the realization that his sister Sudha and he have not shared the same father. And he later reflects, “That was a betrayal that cut away at the foundations of my life” (52). Gopal has been nurturing a sense of alienation and loneliness since his childhood. This makes Gopal think that all human ties are of course only a masquerade. It is perhaps this realization that leads to his walking out on his family. Sumi and her daughters are torn between financial crisis on one hand and torture of societal shame on the other. They need some foothold to comfort their wounded “Selves.” As a result, Sumi with her three daughters, returns to her parental home called “Big House,” for the sake of the future of her daughters.

Similarly in *Small Remedies*, Madhu is the motherless daughter of a famous doctor in Bhavanipur. After the death of her father, Madhu passes through a phase of complete loss of identity in her new surroundings amongst strangers. Then with her marriage to Som, Madhu becomes the part of a real
family for the first time. But it is her son, Aditya’s birth that finally gives her identity. Motherhood unconsciously provides a sense of security to Madhu. Madhu’s over-involvement in the life of Aditya makes her apprehensive. The presence of the child often creates isolation in male psyche and of course Som is a victim of this. Madhu’s fear is well expressed in her confession, “It’s as if I know that this happiness is a bubble that can burst anytime, that I have therefore to capture it, put it on record” (106). She feels that she has failed to balance her marital relationship with the commitments of motherhood. Meanwhile Madhu’s revelation of her episode on pre-marital sex to her husband shatters their married life. This makes Som suspicious of Madhu and henceforth violent arguments and quarrels ensue between the two affecting the tender psyche of Aditya. Soon Aditya leaves the house never to return for he dies in a bomb blast. Both the parents are guilty for Aditya’s going away. After Aditya’s death, Madhu survives with the “frightening emptiness” all around herself. Som’s indifference and the memories of Aditya haunt her and she finds herself nervous and alienated.

Deshpande expresses that “motherhood” is an integral part of the female “Self” and to some extent, the loss of the child is the absolute loss of a female’s identity. Of course, the untimely death of Aditya is the cause of the ruin of Madhu’s personality. It creates chaos in the mind of Madhu and she becomes insecure within her own “Self.” She considers Som responsible for this pathetic situation and resolves to keep herself away from the company of Som. Thus Madhu becomes more alienated by leaving Som and tries to divert herself by
reviewing her creative talent through writing the biography of Savitribai. In discovering the life of Bai, her loneliness, her alienation from her daughter, Munni, Madhu seeks a justification for her own security. To Madhu, it is a method to find a solution for her own loneliness and traumatic experience and for the sublimation of her own obsession. She discovers her true personality through introspection and she recovers from her state of confusion and accepts hopefully that compromise with Som and the mourning at the anniversary of the death of their son together is the only possible consolation for her. She overcomes her dilemma and decides to return home to live with Som and make their married life meaningful.

In this way, the protagonists of Deshpande fail to attain their freedom, completeness, and to realize their selfhood. Neither their revolutionary mode, nor their adherence to the stereotype role-model, nor the pendulum-like state of swinging between the two extremes helps them realize their identity. It is the balanced “ego-self” axis which makes revelation of their real selfness. Their return to their ancestral houses symbolizes, in a way a dialogue between conscious (ego) and unconscious (the self). Their looking back to their past makes self-analysis possible. In the process of their psychological journey into their memories, not only their relationship with their roots is established but also the causes of their sufferings are revealed.

The select novels are also the stories of the self-absorbed husbands who suppress their wives physically and mentally. While projecting the personality of those as the creatures of sensual heaven, Deshpande seems to have had in her
mind the image and statement of Adam, the first man in Christian mythology, who after the creation of woman from his own rib comments, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen 2:23). Traditionally, in the institution of marriage, the position of husband and wife is clearly defined in the Hindu as well as Christian mythology. The husband is expected to be the authoritarian figure whose will should always dominate the life of the wife. The wife should regard him as her master and should serve him faithfully. Hence the traditional concept of superior husband and subordinate wife has been the guideline of marriage.

In The Binding Vine, as a “New Woman,” Urmila wants to assert herself. Grieving over the death of her one-year old daughter, Anu, Urmila feels insecure as Kishore works in Merchant Navy. She tries to reveal her emotional insecurity whenever Kishore goes away from her. But he affirms her only sexually. Urmila suffers because of her husband’s affected nature. But to Urmila:

... 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. (139-40)
Here Kishore is being an archetypal husband as he gives primary importance to sexual desires rather than to his wife’s feelings. Like Mira, Urmila too with her wounded ego, has to resume her responsibility in the sexual relationship with her husband. Though she wants to assert her freedom and individuality and reject the traditional concept of the ideal woman who sheds her “I,” who loses her identity in her husband’s, she is unable to do anything as she wishes. So, she has to submit herself to her husband. But to her great shock and surprise, Kishore takes her submission for granted and she goes on submitting herself to him in the name of love much against her will.

Mira is another such character whose life introduces Urmila to the traditionally guarded life of the Indian woman. Considering the woman as weak and dependent, the Indian tradition has 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, leaving her with no choice. Mira’s ego is hurt by her parents’ compulsion. Mira’s unwillingness to marry and her interest in studies have no significance for the man, who nourishes the dream to possess her. Mira’s parents are fearful about their daughter’s future that they decide to give her to a man much older to her in age. Mira is fearful about marriage. Mira’s fear of marriage and the right it grants to a man over a woman’s body is expressed in her verse:
But tell me, friend, did Laxmi too

twist brocade tassels round her fingers

and tremble, fearing the coming

of the dark-clouded, engulfing night? (66)

As she is emotionally immature and sensitive at heart, Mira finds it difficult to accept her husband’s love and obsession to sex. His expression of love shatters the sensitive Mira. Her inability to cope and his forced love making make her nurture a dislike for him. Without understanding Mira’s feelings and thinking it as his right, Mira’s husband goes further and further in love making. Thus, submitting to the traditional role of a wife, Mira writes:

I give him the facts, nothing more, never my feelings. He knows what I’m doing and he gets angry with me. I don’t mind his anger, it makes him leave me to myself, it is bliss when he does that. But he comes back, he is remorseful, repentant, he holds me close, he begins to babble. And so it begins. ‘Please,’ he says, ‘please, I love you.’ And over and over again until he has done, ‘I love you.’ Love! How I hate the word. If this is love it is a terrible thing. I have learnt to say ‘no’ at last, but it makes no difference, no difference at all. (67)

Mira’s ego is silenced by her husband’s harsh treatment and it brings “submission,” the accustomed role of a wife in Mira, and it obliterates the possibility of the revelation of her real character. Mira too becomes a victim and
endures the violation of her body in silence. Apart from this, Mira’s mother’s advice also makes her ego wounded as follows:

Don’t tread paths barred to you
obey, never utter a ‘no’;
submit and your life will be
a paradise, she said and blessed me. (83)

These lines showcase the archetypal truth that in marriage a husband has the right over his wife’s body and it is the duty of the wife to satisfy the physical needs of her husband. It also dictates that the husband has the right to satisfy his biological needs irrespective of his wife’s willingness, thus allowing crimes like marital rape as the conservative thought that woman is man’s possession is imbued in his psyche.

Kalpana’s mother, Shakutai too is a scapegoat of this pitiful situation. Shakutai’s husband’s insistence on sexual intercourse even when they have to sleep in the corridor, with men walking up and down, has been the most humiliating for her. He is known for his perverted desires and he is ready to fulfil it even in a busy atmosphere and thereby he wounds her physically and mentally without considering her feelings. Thus, with her wounded selfhood, she submits herself to a hopeless marriage even after her husband leaves her for a younger woman.

Similarly, in A Matter of Time, though Gopal, Sumi’s husband leaves his wife and his three daughters, he has been once a romantic lover and husband in
their early marital life. Both Gopal and Sumi have found joy in their life together. Recalling his physical union with Sumi, Gopal thinks, “‘And I knew then that it was for this, this losing yourself in another human being, that men give up their dreams of freedom’” (223). The desire for sex is still at his unconscious mind and it urges him to recollect his previous days with Sumi. Here Gopal seems to be following the dictum in the Bible, “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh” (Gen: 2:24). After many months, even after his walk out on his family, his ego tries to dominate over his “Self” when Sumi visits him to reveal about her new job to him, “Gopal comes out of his thoughts, he becomes aware that the space between them in the room is filled with desire, his desire, that his body, after all these many months is awake. He is angry with himself, his very struggle against it making it difficult for him to subdue his body” (223). This desire, which cannot easily be erased, is buried in the innermost recesses of his mind at the unconscious level. When Gopal meets his companion again, it comes out to remind him of his sexual union with his wife. Infatuation with his wife’s physical beauty makes him forget for a moment his decision to leave the family.

In *Small Remedies*, marriage brings passion in Madhu’s life as she discovers her sexuality and her love for Som. Som calls his wife wanting the sexual intimacy and thereby proves himself a haughty husband, as revealed by Madhu, “‘Come on, come on’, Som says, while I prepare for bed, going through my last-things-at-night chores. ‘Come to bed, Madhu, come to me’” (182). Madhu too, as his possession, submits herself happily realizing her responsibility
to achieve wholeness in her married life. She recalls, “My delight in him, in what he is doing to me, our delight in each other, the laughter and conversation we indulge in while we’re making love, his hands moving all the while, teasingly, tantalizingly over my body – this is passion. It’s love too” (182). Like Gopal, Madhu’s ego is also disturbed by the moments of obtaining sensual pleasure as it is in her mind too at the unconscious level. Like Sumi, Madhu involves herself fully well in love making as she has a strong love for her husband and there is also a perfect understanding between them. Thus, confident and secure in Som’s love, Madhu rejects the thought of agony and distress in love.

Som’s ego is hurt by Madhu’s revelation of the past that she has slept with a man in her adulthood and he changes from a generous and affectionate husband to a “sad and angry man, distraught, possessed by a madness that seems to have no end” (257). Even after this, he does not give up love making. Instead, Som’s disgust over Madhu’s past makes him savage in his love making as Madhu reveals:

For a while he continues to sleep with me, though there is something savage in his love making. He throws himself at me in a kind of desperation and I sense a concealed violence that both frightens and infuriates me. I resist, but our bodies are so used to each other, they settle down, in spite of us, into a rhythm, a shadow of our earlier love making. (257)
Though Som, an archetypal husband does not have a mind to accept his wife who lacks chastity, he is unable to give up his love making with her as this nature is strongly ingrained in his psyche. The opinionated nature is revealed through his domination over his wife’s body expressing his real self.

In *Moving On*, Badrinarayan, Manjari’s father is a self-centred husband. As a medical practitioner, his passion is for body. He seems to be obsessed with the knowledge about the body when he writes in his diary, “Emotions can be faked, lips can speak untruths, but the body never lies” (108-09). But his wife, Vasu does not live upto his physical passion as he is a man who has all along believed in the singularity of the body’s need, its fire, and a man whose ardour for his profession matches his passion for his wife. Vasu, however, has escaped that vigour by creating a world of zeal in her writing. Badrinarayan has accepted the fact that his wife is not as passionate as he is, and “always a little remote even when she was in the midst of her own family,” (125) and has sought freedom, “freedom to be by herself, to be on her own, freedom from constant demands” (125). Though she wants to assert her freedom, she is unable to relieve herself from this mainstream responsibility.

The Indian tradition considers the marriage ceremony as one in which the husband and wife become one. But this “one” always refers to the husband who gets priority to fulfil his desire at all levels. As Indrani Jaising, an eminent lawyer opines, “It is assumed that by marrying a man, a woman has given her consent to sexual intercourse with her husband at anytime. Thus, even if he forces himself on her, he is not committing an offence (of rape) as her consent is
assumed” (147). Marriage, which has been a spiritual bond since the olden times, has become only a sexual and legal bond in the life of women like Urmila, Mira and even Shakutai. Deshpande’s perceptions have come close to the observation of Sarah Grimake, “Man has subjugated woman to his will, used her as a means to promote his selfish gratification, to minister to his sensual pleasure, to be instrumental in promoting his comfort; but never has he desired to elevate her to that rank she was created to fill” (10). The sexual aspect of marriage has been delineated through the lives of women like Urmila, Mira, Shakutai and Madhu. It brings in the open Deshpande’s belief which she expresses to Lakshmi Holmstrom that “men do use their power, their sexual power, in order to subjugate women” (244).

Indian mythology depicts woman more as an absence than presence. Woman’s sacrifice, surrender and effacement are approved because the heroic failures of the females ensure the victory of the males. Deshpande very interestingly manipulates the Indian myths to create space for women to face the difficult situations and to challenge the traditions of subservience and circumscription. Doubt, anxiety and a feeling of void of values push characters in Deshpande’s novels to intense self-examination. The women are particularly caught in the process of redefining their positions and relationships with their given social world. As the concerns of these women are primarily in the context of the family and the community, their perspectives change accordingly and they search for bonding within family as a mode of strength.
Deshpande’s young heroines like Urmila, Sumi and Madhu rebel against the orthodox ways of life and patriarchal values and struggle to transcend their restrictive roles. Through the lives of these young women, Deshpande depicts the changing attitude that leads to disharmony in their married life. The reactionary male fails to see that the woman also needs to realize her potential outside the domestic sphere. Even when not suppressed by dominating husbands, Urmila and Sumi feel an unbridgeable gap, created by their husbands’ indifference. Kishore’s life style as well as attitude makes Urmila feel difficult to reach his soul whereas Sumi in spite of her knowledge of Gopal’s capability to walk out is unable to understand the reason for his desertion. The fact is that a lack of communication adds to the inability of the husband and wife to acknowledge each other’s needs and this threatens their marriage. Women like Kalyani and Shakutai, confined to traditions, lead a life of self-denial and suffering. To retain their marital status, these women have to endure various kinds of sufferings throughout their lives. The sexual aspect of marriage has been delineated through the lives of Akka and Mira also.

Deshpande’s pre-occupation with man-woman relationship has led to her analysis of the institution of marriage in this age of transition. Analysing it from a woman’s point of view, Deshpande points out the uneasiness of a woman in the established role which expects her to be an embodiment of sacrifice and suffering and a monument of devotion and patience. In spite of their conflict with traditions they wish to live within the framework of family relationships. Being intelligent and well aware, they know the importance of marriage and they
are also aware of their individuality. But the indelible mark carved in the psyche of women by the conventions and norms established by the society, restricts them from exhibiting their true personality. The mode and style of their development inculcates in them submissiveness, silence and passiveness which have a stronghold in their psyche. Even modern, educated women consciously drape themselves with these traits and find themselves in a fix. These traits which have become the roots of femininity always cast its shadows in these women’s lives.

Myths are part of the cultural histories and they condition the idea of the human beings. In countries like India, myths are more powerful that they continue to be a reference point for people in their daily lives and they are part of the human psyche. The mythical models such as Sita, Draupadi and Savithri have become the ultimate role models for women and they have restricted the space of women in the society. But men are not expected to be like the mythical models Rama, Krishna or Lakshmana and they continue to enjoy their own freedom as they have no restrictions. To Deshpande, this discrimination seems unnatural and she believes that women are really fooled by the myths, which are purposefully created by men to fulfil their various needs. These myths have their own strong influence on human beings, and particularly women have struggled a lot due to their influence. Mythical women like Sita and Lakshmi are celebrated as Gods but in reality, women in society differ from them that they are ordinary human beings. Hence Deshpande, through her works stresses that there is no necessity for her women protagonists to emulate these stereotypical women as in reality women are treated much lower than these role models.
In her fiction, Deshpande creates avenues for her women characters to break the myths. She has provided room for archetypal men and women characters in her novels just to let the human beings know the reality and especially to urge women realise their position at present. The archetypal truth that man is superior and woman is inferior and woman has been created for man are strongly imbued in the human psyche and of course these ideas are responsible for the attitudinal flux in both man and woman. Deshpande, through her novels stresses that women, the sufferers should realise the truth that they are deceived and prevented by the myths to break the glass ceiling. Not only women, men also should come out of their internalised notions that they are the superiors to consider women equal to them. Deshpande affirms that women should create space for them without hurting others to impact a good man-woman relationship. Invariably in her fiction, Deshpande creates a positive ambience to build a good man-woman relationship. If man and woman flounder to come out of their strongly inherited traditional thoughts and accommodate themselves to reality, problems shall remain in their life forever and their relationship could become an unfathomable one.

A psychoanalytic probe into the psyche of both man and woman to unravel the subtleties of relationship thus becomes inevitable. The dialectics of “Self” and the “Other” and the other significant factors that barricade man and woman against their true realisation are dealt with in detail in the following chapter.