Preface

Literature mirrors the society with all its strength and weaknesses. Indian Literature focuses on the life of Indians and cultural impact on their lives. Short story is a genre of literature which is deep rooted in the society. A child is first introduced to short story rather than any other genre of literature. Indian short story had its origin in the Vedic period and was a part of Vedas Upanishads, the Panchatantra and Kathasarithsagar. Indian short story is not the same in all the Languages of India. Based on the cultural and regional impact it differs from Language to Language. The present thesis focuses on Indian short stories in three different Languages viz. English, Tamil and Telugu.

Though women started entering the literary scenario along with men, there is a lot of difference between the writings of men and women. In the hoary past women were imitating men in their writings. Gradually there was a change. They started depicting the problems of women in their stories. Even among the women writers there are some differences in the way they write. But they all come under a single umbrella called women writers. Hence this thesis tries to compare the women portrayed by three women writers, writing in three different languages of Tamil, English and Telugu. Though the study was taken up excluding feminist perspective I could not help but look at their writings from feminist point of view at some places as the stories dealt with women’s problems.

The first chapter titled “Introduction” traces the History of Indian short stories and discusses its features and growth of Indian short stories in the four languages: English, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada. Though no Kannada writer is taken up for study, the history of Kannada short stories is studied since Shashi Deshpande who is an Indian English writer hails from the state of Karnataka. The influence of Kannada women writers might have an impact on her. Hence focus is given to Kannada short story also. In tracing the history of short stories in the four languages, the short stories written by men have also been discussed since they have set the legacy for the women writers to follow. Since many women writers entered the literary scenario at a later stage they had no legacy of their own to follow. But there are some women writers like Chudamani
Ra007Aghavan, Shashi Deshpande and Volga who did not follow either the women writers or the men writers of their age.

The second chapter titled “Chudamani Raghavan” discusses the life and works of the writer. Thirteen of her stories have been discussed in the chapter with a focus on the kind of women portrayed in those stories.

The third chapter titled “Shashi Deshpande” explores the short stories written by her and the depiction of women in those stories. Twelve of her stories have been taken up for study.

The fourth chapter titled Volga tries to analyse the short stories written by her and shows how the women portrayed by the writer in her short stories are different from the women portrayed by the other two writers. Women in thirteen of her stories are discussed in detail.

The fifth chapter titled conclusion compares and contrasts the women portrayed by all the three writers. An attempt has also been made to discuss the feminist point of view of these women.

In the appendix, the stories translated by me, my experiences with the writers and the letters written by the writers have been added.

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