



Society in the novels of Shashi Deshpande

Santosh Rani

PGT English.

VPO Hazampur Hansi Hisar

Abstract

This study is a detailed analysis of Shashi Deshpande's novel, revealing the author's deep understanding of the challenges facing Indian women. She received a lot of criticism and praise for her sensitive and realistic portrayal of a middle-class Indian woman in her work. Their work is praised. Looking at her work as a whole, it becomes clear that Chassis Deshpande is focused on various social issues. They are aware of the serious social injustices and inequality directed at them and is fighting the oppressive and unequal nature of social norms and rules that limit her ability and existence as a wife. increase. They are aware of the great social injustice and inequality directed at them. Opponents of Shashi Deshpande's writing have repeatedly argued that she is a feminist writer. however, the author herself claims that she only writes about people. In each of the works of fiction, patriarchy and the values it symbolises are subjected to criticism, both overtly and covertly. Patriarchy can be understood to operate in two distinct ways. The use of sexual and physical violence, as well as mental and emotional torment, is one of the more overt and obvious ways that patriarchy asserts its dominance. The study of Indian literature written in English is a legitimate endeavour that aims to showcase the ever-more-rare diamonds that are found in Indian writing in English. The list of accomplished Indian authors, which began with Shashi Deshpande and has since expanded significantly, is very long. In this paper, we will discuss Shashi Deshpande's views on feminism and social realism in his writings, and we will look at examples from his works.

KEY WORDS: Critical evaluation, patriarchal society, feminist issues, social realism

1. Introduction

"The Inner World of Indian Women" is the subject of almost all of the fictional writings of Shashi Deshpande, and she is considered one of the most prominent Indian female writers (Arvind137). .. The general observation that women are likely to be victims of injustice and social fronts serves as the driving force behind her fiction. Inequality is increasing rather than decreasing as a result of advances in modernity and rising levels of education. The strategy adopted by Shashi Deshpande focuses on finding out how

women are groomed, despite the challenges they face. Many generations have passed, and various situations and scenarios have occurred, but the position of women has not been significantly strengthened. Deshpande can represent people accurately and nuanced and acts as a mirror of society. His fictional character gives us the impression that they are our neighbors.

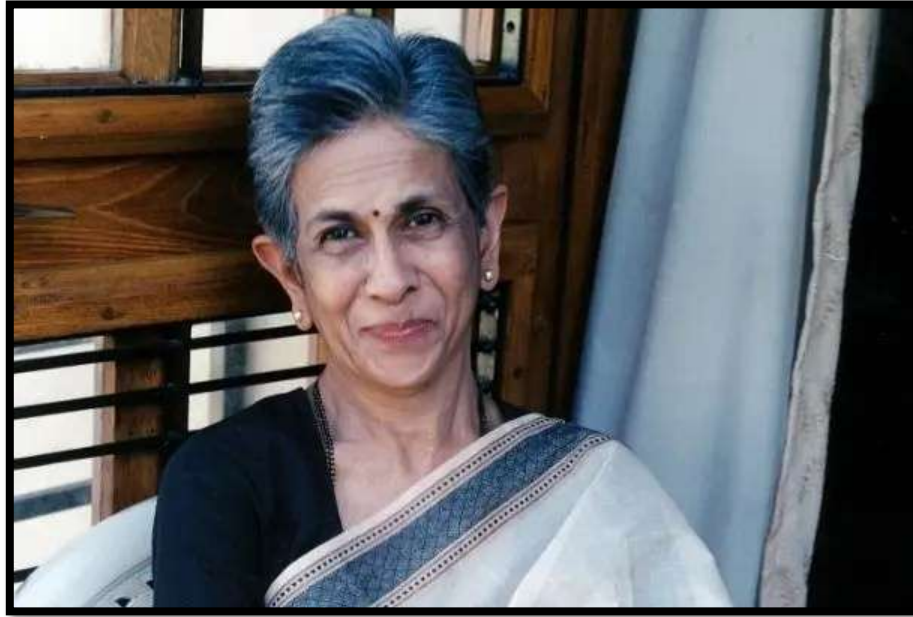


Figure: 1 Shashi Deshpande

A detailed analysis of the chassis Deshpande novel reveals the author's deep insight into the plight of Indian women who feel choked and constrained in traditional, male-dominated societies. She brings female characters to life by revealing their hopes, fears, aspirations, and frustrations. These women are aware of their abilities and weaknesses, but are unable to achieve their goals, primarily due to the resistance and pressure of society characterized by the ideas of the patriarch. She pays attention to their subordinate position and the consequent decline in life in a male-dominated society. First as a daughter and later as a wife, Deshpande's female protagonist is a victim of widespread sexism in society. They are aware of the serious social injustices and inequality directed at them and are struggling with the oppressive and unequal nature of social norms and rules that limit their wives' abilities and existence. They are aware of the great social injustice and inequality directed at them. They challenge the subordinate status that society has given them, despite being constrained by their role in the family. She received a lot of criticism and praise for her sensitive and realistic portrayal of a middle-class Indian woman in her work. Their work is praised. Her deep and sincere interest in women and the difficult life she leads shines in all of her books. The women depicted in Deshpande's work are exemplary members of the new society. They are anxious for modernity, uplifting and progress. In a male-dominated society, the women she writes are ambitious and independent,

seeking to find her own identity. In the context of their marriage, their protagonists are looking for ways to express their unique identity while navigating the tension between modernity and tradition. In her statement, Chassis states that she "does not believe in the simple opposition of bad, bad men and good, good women." I have no reason to believe that the world is like that. (Holmström.22.

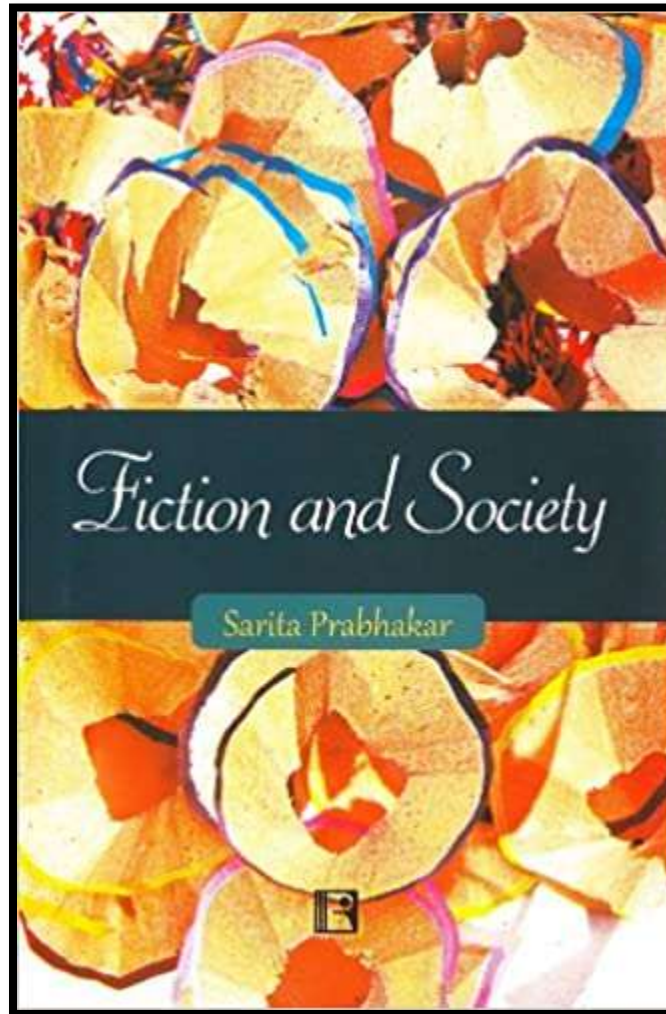


Figure: 2 Narrativisation of realities in the novels of Shashi Deshpande

Deshpande does not consider all traditions to be negative and potentially harmful. Her view is that tradition supports the principles of harmony and coexistence that symbolize the Indian lifestyle. For her, the expression of an independent individual's identity defines modernity. She seeks a solution to the problem by changing her way of thinking about men and women in Indian society. She does so while respecting the long-standing traditions of Indian society. The world dominated by men is now witnessing the thinking process of women. It is impossible to change it without first changing the way people think. Siddhartha Sharma criticizes the novel by Shashi Deshpande as follows:

She used methods of denial and affirmation to construct patriarchal and oppressive motifs. Her protagonist is a victim of Indian patriarchy, and their first submission reflects the author's view that women must claim themselves in marriage in order to maintain her personality. Resist oppressive situations.

Born in Dharwad, Karnataka in 1938, Shasidespande is considered one of India's finest contemporary writers. She was the second daughter of Adya Ranga Charya, a prominent Kannada playwright and Sanskrit scholar. She was educated in Dharwad, Karnataka. She moved to Bombay at the age of 15, where she earned a degree in economics and she worked as a journalist for Looker magazine for several months. Her first collection of short stories was published in 1978, and her debut novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, was published in 1980. In 1990 she won the Sahitya Akademi Award for her work *That Long Silence's* best novel. In 2009 she won the Padmashri Award. The protagonist of her novel is a modern Indian woman who is educated and belongs to the middle class. Her novel "Roots and Shadows" was recognized as an outstanding Indian novel published between 1982 and 1983. In 2014, her latest novel, *Shadow Play*, was one of the finalists in the Hindu Literary Awards. *If I Die Today* was published in 1982, *Come Up and Be Dead* was published in 1983, *The Binding Vine* was published in 1992, *A Matter of Time* was published in 1996, *Small Remedies* was published in 2000, *Moving on* (2004), *Country of Deceit* was published in 2008, and *Ships That Pass* was published in 2012. These are just some of her other novels.

As an Indian English writer active in the 21st century, Shashi Deshpande has great value. Through her writing, we gain insight into the pressing issues of family relations in Indian society and the identity of Indian women. She is keenly aware of the subordinate and secondary status of Indian women involved in the customs and traditions of ancient Indian society. This puts Indian women at a disadvantage. Women's lack of education, weakness, subordination, and love for husbands and children have forced them into lower social status. This is because they lack the old customs and the strong motivation and courage to fight taboos. Educated married women face the challenge of freeing themselves from the constraints of traditional society in order to grow into new women. Prasanna Sree describes Indian women as follows::

Indian Woman-She is a torn person between tradition and modernity, a quest for identity, a person who seeks to give shape and content to the existence of an individual in a sexual society ("Shashi Deshpande's novel"). Conflict and Identity in ", 1219).

Looking at her entire work, it becomes clear that Chassis Deshpande focuses on various feminist topics. Not only are all her protagonists women, but she tells stories from her perspective throughout the book. Only in one of the four novels she wrote, *A Matter of Time*, she moved to ubiquitous narration, but in this novel

too, the female perspective is most prominent. In her long silence, Jaya is a housewife and creative writer. In *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, monkeys are doctors. At *The Binding Vine*, Urmi is a college teacher. And in terms of time, Sumi is educated, but she only later she works. Therefore, Deshpande seems to believe that it is her educated and creative woman who first liberates herself and contributes to the liberation of the woman positively and through her actions. An upper class woman, in contrast to the working class, is a slave to the material comfort she sacrifices. Women come from lower social classes and have less opportunity due to lack of education and economic progress. Apart from that, Deshpande puts more emphasis on creative efforts than any other aspect.

Dark Holds No Terrors is a clear example of a man who is intolerant of playing a subordinate role in marriage and how masculine is violated when his wife gains a superior position in society. is showing. This is exemplified by men who are intolerant of the idea of playing second fiddle in marriage. The increasing prominence of Manu's wife, Saru, causes him to feel both embarrassed and insecure.

In *That Long Silence*, Jaya's marital problem is due to her husband allowing her to deviate from the traditional role of an obedient wife. He encourages her to speak her heart. He expects her to hide with him when threatened with her allegations of corruption. But when she refuses, he leaves her house very angry. As a result of following her Vanita Mami's advice, Jaya becomes unhappy and she believes her husband resembles a "tree of protection." Without his protection, her family is vulnerable and at risk. She does, but it leaves her and her children in an unstable and exposed position.

Shashi Deshpande addresses the topic of rape within marriage in his novel *The Binding Vine*. Women have no choice but to keep quiet while their husbands sexually assault them night after night, as was the case with Mira, Urmi's mother-in-law. Other women, such as Shakutai and her sister Sule, as well as Kalpana and her sister, have their own tragic stories to tell. The man who is married to Shakutai is a drunken opportunist who deceives his wife and children with another woman. He is a useless man. Sulu's husband, Pravakar, brutally raped Carpana and sexually assaulted him. Urumi undertakes the Carpanus case and guarantees that the perpetrators will be brought to justice. Urmi's husband serves in the navy, so while he is gone for extended periods of time, she gets antsy for some kind of sensual experience. Her close relationship with Dr. Bhaskar affords her a wealth of opportunities; however, she is careful not to cross the bounds that are established by her marriage. Her husband does not appear to recognise this excellent quality that she possesses.

Matter of Time is another book in which the male protagonist leaves the family and consists of the female protagonist's wife and three daughters. Sumi is so awesome that she's completely silent, but she seems to

be trying to stay as normal as possible for her daughters. Leaving them is a cause of great humiliation and psychological trauma, as it is not only about great shame and shame, but also about the bitter perception of unwanted things. This is due to the fact that it is a matter of great shame and disgrace. The expressions of sympathy from her relatives are ultimately ineffective in comforting her. She has respect for herself and her daughters, so she gets a job to support the three of them. Even though her husband, Gopal, has returned, she is not the same Sumi anymore. She has displayed a remarkable lack of emotion throughout this entire ordeal.

Deshpande creates characters that guide readers through the social hierarchy of urban societies. However, her interest is increasingly focused on middle-class and upper-class women. An educated woman who fights for her place, her place in her family, and her place in a social and cultural environment. The actions in their story are private, even with respect to rape, which can only be considered private to a limited extent. This setting serves as the background for their story. *The Dark Holds no Terrors* is her first novel, published in 1986, and she first addressed the delicate issue of her spouse rape in one of her early stories entitled *The Intrusion*. I did. She continued this theme in both *The BindingVine* (1992) and *Shadow Play* (1996), both of which she wrote later in her career (2013).

That Long Silence, which was published in 1988 and is considered by Deshpande to be her most autobiographical work, focuses primarily on the practise of silencing, both within the context of the family and in broader society. She described it as a loud shriek of despair, and that description is accurate. The central character, on the other hand, is successful in breaking the silence and speaking out, thereby gaining agency. The book was originally written in English and published in Britain; however, it has since been translated into Hindi, Marathi, and Kannada.

The subject and theme of her novel, as well as the cultural context, seem to reflect Dechandess' own family and the cultural environment in which they grew up. Literature, Indian mythology, Indian traditional music, medicine, and intimate, or at least intimate relationships with fathers, are all *A Matter of Time* (1999), *Small Remedies* (2000), *Moving On* (2004), and most direct. Is an element that has been picked up by strangers. ourselves. There is also a relationship between *A Matter of Time* (1999) and *Small Remedies* (2000). (2015). All Deshpande novels are about her family. The novel is built on the foundation of the family in all the influences of the family, including how it is passed down from generation to generation. By the way, readers, especially Western readers, can easily understand their complexity by drawing a family tree with a piece of paper and a pencil. The complexity of this foundation is not limited to the complexity of

the family. It also comes with memory complexity. This is what shapes a woman, whether divorced or separated, how it shaped a woman, what she experiences, and what she leaves behind.

The struggle between tradition and modernity, the many traumatic experiences women experience from childhood to adulthood, the impact of social and political events on women's lives, the moral norms created by men, and the limits and power limits. A man-dominated society A woman's ability to overcome her tragic situation through the structure between herself, lack of educational and financial opportunities, her increased sensitivity, and the use of conscious effort. All are aspects of this conflict. These are some of the most prominent topics discussed in women's writing. These women shaped the vision of what a woman in Shashi Deshpande should be, and from the influence of this kaleidoscope she created her own image of what an Indian woman should be. Such an image emerges from their writing. Shashi Deshpande is a modern novelist dealing with women's issues, and although she is not identified as a feminist, she is a prominent author of this genre. Deshapande's creative talent and ideology have established her reputation as a great feminist writer who seriously considers the problems and fears that affect women. Her protagonist is a modern, educated middle-class woman who experiences choking and helplessness in a traditionally male-dominated society due to the constraints of her traditional role as a wife and mother.

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2. Literature Review

R. Kumaraswamy (2015) reviewed the word "tradition" has a very broad meaning, and it encompasses not only social conventions but also cultural practises, religious faiths, and familial and familiar relationships as

well. A rebellion against the organised forces of oppression and injustice toward women has been sparked as a result of the consistent burden that is imposed by traditional authority. The author Shashi Deshpande uses her works of fiction to spread the message that women should strive to break free of the repressive roles that society assigns to them. Shashi Deshpande has been successful in creating powerful female protagonists who refuse to be crushed under the weight of their own personal tragedies and who face life with a great deal of courage and strength. In this paper, I examine the tension between modernity and tradition through the lens of four novels written by Deshpande: *That Long Silence*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Roots and Shadows*, and *A Matter of Time* respectively.

Prajesh Jena (2021) reviewed For thousands of years, women have been forced to live and breathe in silence while being oppressed by patriarchal norms and expectations, and they have done so while "gazing." In its unwritten form, the inequality that exists between men and women was established with the establishment of patriarchy. This inequality manifested itself in the form of language, customs, rituals, myths, and practises. Myths, rituals, and customs all played a role in the formation of human society and contributed to its development over time. They arise from natural processes, but they are, in fact, societal structures, and they contribute to the formation of patriarchal ideologies. They are thought to have occurred naturally. As a result, they are absolutely necessary for the subjugation of women in our society.

3. Conclusion

In light of recent events, the mentality of female authors has undergone a shift. Their works are based not only on external behaviour but also on an internal adventure into the psychological realm of the female sensibilities. These observations and adventures were the inspiration for their work. They make a direct foray into the minds of their female characters, who are torn apart as a result of the stresses brought on by the conflict between the individual and the environment. Women who write novels in English make an effort to expand the role of the woman as the central figure, and they also introduce the dilemma that women find themselves in. Their natural perception of and knowledge about ladies' reactions and reactions, problems and perplexities, the complex workings of their internal identities, and their emotional contributions and disturbances assist them in portraying their ladies characters with all of their longings and aspirations as well as their trusts and frustrations. Shashi Deshpande is an author who writes about India during this post-autonomy period. Her protagonist is a middle-class Indian woman who has something to say. Her fiction is not pristine, abstract, or merely a reflection of reality. Her education and upbringing in the milieu of the middle class during those times seem to have instilled in her a certain set of values, which she has evidently come to respect. It would appear that Shashi Deshpande has chosen as her topic the issue of

contention that exists between the two societies that make up the family. All of her works that are being considered for this analysis, albeit with slight variations in emphasis throughout, are concerned over issues related to this contention. The narratives written by Deshpande have the veracity of a woman's signature all over them. She has rejected the masculine dialect as well as the masculine perception of temperance, relationship, and content, and she has laid bare before us the subversive part of tradition that perpetuates the secondary part of ladies, emphasising the need to discredit its legacies if ladies are to rise as liberated and emancipated creatures. This is necessary if ladies are to rise as free and independent creatures.

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