



THE ROLE OF HEGEMONY IN THE IDENTITY: A CRITICAL STUDY ON SHASHI DESHPANDE'S STRANGERS TO OURSELVES

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Abstract:

Most Indian women have experienced hardships because they are expected to submit to and be obedient to their male-dominated, patriarchal households' traditional rituals. The civilization frequently transfers these customary rituals from one procreation to the next. For this reason, over the ages, these customs have been passed down from one generation to the next and are still being followed. The younger, more advanced civilization finds it unacceptable that the older generation is trying to force these archaic values on the younger generation. While traditional values hold significance in their own right, they also impose oppressive regulations on women in society. The women of the modern present civilization also want to be followed in those archaic customs by the blind followers and streakers of the customary conventional orthodox civilization. With each new scientific and technological development, global civilization is lurching forward, and women are leading the way towards the cutting edge of modernity. Shashi Deshpande has delved deeply into the inner psychic conditions of women and completed her important compositional work to provoke Indian women for their upbringing. These women bear the brunt of their own incapacity to resist the archaic customs of their society as well as their humiliation, devaluation, discrimination, and exploitation within the patriarchal mentality of Indian society.

Key Words: Indian women, Indian women, traditional rituals, oppressive regulations, Shashi Deshpande, and Indian society.

The presentation of human lives in all of their manifestations on a larger scale via language is called literature. Despite cultural, sociological, political, and geographic barriers, there are similarities in the content, style, concerns, and writing forms of twentieth-century literature from countries such as America, England, Africa, Australia, India, and the Commonwealth. The entire world appears to have become a single global village. Every practice and trend found in international literature is common.

Ironically, despite making up nearly half of the global population, women are never given the same treatment as men in practically every aspect of human endeavour. Even though every woman works extremely hard to ensure the growth of her family, husband, and children, they have been oppressed, suppressed, and marginalised when it comes to sharing the opportunities for the fulfilment of their lives. This is the global situation facing women. In Indian English literature, women have made notable contributions to both poetry and fiction. They haven't made any noteworthy advances in drama or prose. Following World War II, a constellation of distinguished female novelists emerged, whose creations have become essential components of contemporary literature. These women novelists were of high caliber. They've created a distinct style.

Every single one is unique from the others. Every individual has a unique perspective on the world, a unique set of experiences, and a unique style of acting out their roles. Their nostalgic elements make their works stand out. Additionally, there is the shared component of nostalgia. Additionally, there is a recurring element of conflicting values and rivalries between various lifestyles-between the literate and rural characters and the urbane and sophisticated characters. These writers' writings contain satirical and ironic elements. They display a strong awareness of how society is changing. Shashi Deshpande is a prominent writer from India who writes in English today. She's become one of the great literary figures. She portrays a realistic image of modern middle-class women in her writings.

Shashi Deshpande approaches the issues facing women in the Indian context from a fresh perspective, despite the fact that many female novelists depict women's sufferings. She has portrayed a number of contemporary middle-class women who are well-educated, focused on their careers, and who are aware of how things are changing. To put it briefly, Shashi Deshpande's literary works nearly always centre on the pitiful and heartbreaking situation of women in a society where men predominate. Her books had a notable exceptional English-language contribution to Indian literature. They focus on the protagonist's role in life, a woman's search for herself, and an investigation of the female psyche and our comprehension of its mysteries because of this, her books are well-known across the globe of literature.

The protagonist of the book, Aparna, describes her marriage. She had a tragically failed first marriage. She is the adored sole child of her parents, but her failed marriage has left her traumatised. She wants to get rid of everything related to her marriage because she is a "new" woman after deciding to end it. She throws away her ring and every "Mangalsutra." She chooses not to get married again after losing faith in unions. She has thus promised to stay unmarried. Working is the ideal way to escape, particularly for oncologists.

Aparna is introduced to Hari at a recital where she unexpectedly shows up. A vocalist with classical training. She revels in the enchantment of his music, which cuts through boundaries and directly touches her soul realizes right away that he is "exceptional." He was raised by devoted grandparents after losing his mother when he was a little child. has no relationship with his father or stepmother, despite living in a small town. He is passionate about his work, much like many up-and-coming artists and aiming for flawlessness. Aparna is struck by the maestro's immense, imperceptible humility. Eventually, a final, serious romantic relationship develops, and they start to intrude on each other's lives and residences, as though by "osmosis." Their bond grows stronger.

Aparna began to see love as a power struggle. Despite her desire to support and be supported by "Hari," as well as to love and be loved, she recoils from closeness. The idea of spending the rest of her life with someone else after her first marriage ended caused her great discomfort.

It was to be a holiday, to spend time together, to try for a reconciliation, to bridge the growing gap between them. But for him a holiday meant drinking, reconciliation meant sex. It sickened her finally, their coupling, growing increasingly loveless, more and more mechanical. 'No' she said one night when they got home after a late dinner. 'No' you're drunk, go to sleep.' He had insisted, kept savagely groping at her, tugging at her clothes. Ultimately, she had locked herself into the bathroom, she'd come out only when the silence told her he was sleeping. (195)

The failed marriage of Aparna's parents, Gajanana (gavi) and Sulabha (Sulu), has also left her disappointed. They were a happy couple who loved each other very much at first, but their happy ending came when her mother left the house and never returned.

She has made up her mind never to forgive her spouse for having an extramarital affair with an actress and singer. Their marriage unexpectedly dissolves. When Hari finds out about Aparna's parents' breakup, she is shocked. Then Hari recalls the contented and tranquil married life of his grandparents. They complemented, loved, and worked together. Their lives are now much simpler and have greater purpose thanks to them. From the day of their marriage, they had been a happy couple. "In this world where men pass orders and women carry them out, where men create situations and women live them, the only hope for a woman in another woman. Their experiences being identical, women alone can understand each other." (Pankaj K. Singh, 143).

Shashi Deshpande's female protagonist, Dr. Aparna, is fearless, independent, and has a modernistic outlook. She is indifferent to the antiquated traditional ideologies of Indian culture. She has an objective perspective on interpersonal relationships and a balanced view of the contemporary lifestyle that is influenced by western culture. Shree Hari Pandit has a traditional way of thinking that is influenced by the vibrant Hindu culture of India. He does not want to build any kind of relationship with his partner before they are united in the holy bond of marriage. On the other hand, Dr. Aparna is extremely eager for her and her lover Hari Pandit to establish a close marital relationship. Her philosophy of life was revealed.

Aparna did not have this kind of perspective from the start of her life, but because of the abuse she endured in her first marriage, where her husband treated her like a sex machine, her identity, her feelings, and her expectations were all severely damaged by her husband's actions, which were in line with the male-dominated culture of Indian society. Her viewpoint has since shifted from one of a follower of the established social structure to one of an updated, modern society that is influenced by western civilization.

This recently established relationship has reached its zenith, and the protagonist's lover is persistently pressuring her to get married. Dr. Aparna is aware of Hari's intense love for her, and in return, Hari gives her everything. However, she also recognises the disdain she has endured from her previous marriage. She is now a woman who is conscious of her unique identity and her future in the modern world.

Shashi Deshpande is a medical scientist with advanced training who is very knowledgeable about human relationships and anatomy. She is not surrounded by the society's superstitious orthodox dogmas. She has a comfortable lifestyle and earns a good living for herself. Without giving conventional rules or the traditional ways of thinking of the community she lives in any thought, she fairly and fearlessly forges her relationship with her lover, Hari Pandit, and relishes her married life together. She establishes a broad perspective for women in society, emphasizing that they should be respected for their uniqueness and that they should lead by example to live autonomous lives in the context of contemporary society.

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