

## A Study on Disharmonious and Distressful Relationship of Man and Woman “A Liberated Woman”

Dr. Rashmi Singh

Associate Professor, Jabalpur Public College, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India

### Abstract

Deshpande's fiction focuses on a woman's awareness of her situation, her desire to be recognized as an individual with an independent social image rather than as a woman, the shadow of her man. Deshpande portrays her woman protagonist's rebel against her man-woman relationships, first, in the form of father-daughter and then in the form of husband-wife. In the later, Deshpande makes her women character go through such a marital relationship, that even pleasure becomes an illusion for them and 'lovmaking' is degraded to a state of lustful, cruel, satiation of physical desire by the man. Happiness becomes a dream with grief attaining reality status. In 'A Liberated Woman', the protagonist is a lady doctor through whom Deshpande has come back to her favorite theme disharmonious and distressful of man-woman relationship. Deshpande's woman protagonist, trapped in an unhappy marriage with a husband who has only apathy for her as he is not able to digest her success as a professional. Deshpande's narrator expresses her pain and anguish as a reflection of the failure of her husband-wife relationship. Each statement of narration sounds as an anguished emotional cry of the hurt felt in her deep wounds. As she expresses her pain, she also laments on her unsuccessful marital relationship due to the weakness of the male psyche as she opines, that, "I can't cry, the birds may hear. I can't fight back either, he's too strong for me." (A Liberated Woman: 27)

**Keywords:** unhappy marriage, pain and anguish, emotional cry

### Introduction

As many Indian wives, Deshpande's protagonist endures an inner conflict due to her personal dilemma between duty and loyalty and a mask of public attitude. "Perennially, groping about their fate, but unwilling to do nothing that could result in their being tossed out of their comfortable ruts and into the big bad world of reality, to find for themselves." In her reflection of the educated middle class Indian housewife, Deshpande asserts her rights as a liberal feminist and rakes up women's problems in general without any propagandist and sexist purpose. Deshpande's focus is more on highlighting women's unhappy actuality of life with a depressing, melancholic and claustrophobic psyche. Deshpande's short fiction is woven around the lives of her woman characters frustrated and alienated in their husband-wife relationships due to clashing pulls of tradition and modernity, right to self-assertion and rational for adjustment in an aggravated marital life.

'The Liberated Woman', which is about a young woman who falls in love with a man of another caste and eventually marries him in the face of severe opposition from her parents. Ironically, as she grows in success in the medical profession, it becomes the cause of her marriage getting broken. "The theme of the liberated women had been a germ inside me for a long time. I had started with the short story 'A liberated Woman.' It seems to me when I finished this novel, I had come close to what I had wanted to write." In the story significantly entitled "A Liberated Woman" Deshpande creates a confrontation between a highly educated woman and a less educated husband in a less prosperous occupation. The deep-seated prejudices and complexes of the husband are set against the liberal outlook of the woman. The husband suffers from an inferiority complex and takes it out on his wife by putting her to sadistic tortures. But the wife is aware of her predicament in

a male dominated society. She articulates her protest not to her husband but to an old friend of hers. She smothers her will to protest openly and break her relations with her husband, because of the ethical constraints of society.

Shashi Deshpande's women are known to be assertive in their man-woman relationships. Sarita, a lady doctor, finds an unwelcome parental house when she seeks refuge there on being tortured sexually by her husband, Manohar. Through her fiction, Deshpande explores the Indian myth of man's unquestioned superiority and the orthodox, traditional norm that every-thing in a female's life is to be done under male supremacy and wishes. Spivak has stated thus, "Can the subaltern speak? Between patriarchy and imperialism subject constitution and object formation the figure of woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shutting which is the displaced figuration of the 'Third World Woman' caught between tradition and modernization" Like other typical Indian men, Sarita's father too expresses his displeasure at Sarita's homecoming due to a quarrel with her husband. In tune with traditionalist, he also opines that an Indian woman is expected to be at her husband's house till death does them apart.

Beauvoir has expressed the man-woman relationship as "man represents both the positive and the neutral, as is indicated by the common use of man to designate human beings in general, whereas woman represents only the negative, defined by limiting criteria without reciprocity. Man can think of himself without woman. She cannot think of herself without man. And she is simply what man decrees. She appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is sex, absolute sex, no less, she is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential."

Deshpande often develops her stories with specific cinematographic technique. In the situations related with the internal mental condition of her characters, Deshpande believes that the external descriptions are not of much significance. One of the fundamental roles her protagonists play is that of eliciting the reader's technique. In the situations related with the internal mental condition of her character, Deshpande believes that the external descriptions are not of much significance. One of the fundamental roles her protagonist play, is that of eliciting the reader's sympathy so that he or she is able to experience and enjoy the reality of the fictional world for himself or herself. In her short stories Shashi Deshpande has adopted the self-reflective mode of narration for her women protagonists. Deshpande introduces the situations and backdrop directly and allows her narrators to reveal their inner self, which facilitates capturing the emotions in their lives.

Deshpande has opted on descriptions and scenic presentations as an aid to create an appropriate milieu for her women characters to express their emotions, as they struggle in their respective man-woman relationships. In the husband wife form of man-woman relationship Deshpande also weaves her fiction around the inferiority complex and ego rundown of the man at public appreciation and recognition of the woman's success. The message that Shashi Deshpande wants to send across to her readers with reference to man-woman relationships through her fiction is that if women do not start believing in themselves and living life on their own instead of looking for a shoulder all the time, they really can't be saved from doom. They need to stand up and accept the challenges life throws their way, just like Deshpande's women characters. Deshpande's themes are woven around the stories of problems of hundreds of learned and professionally successfully women who became the victims of double standards of the community and society.

## References

1. Gayatri Chakroborty Spivak. Can The Subaltern Speak? In Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader ed. Patric Williams and Laura Chrisman Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheat sheaf, 1994, 93.
2. Beauvoir, de Simone. The Second Sex HM. Parshley & Deirdre Bair Translators & Eds. New Delhi: Vintage. 1989, 86.
3. Sheshadri, Veena. That Long Silence Literature Alive. 1998; 1(3):94.
4. Chhatre, LATA. Empowerment of Women: The Budhist Perspective.
5. Ed. Meena Kelkar and Deepti Gangavane. Feminism in Search of an Identity Context New Delhi: Rawat, 2003.