

CHAPTER-VI

Conclusion

Indian English writing has created its own place in the twentieth century English literature. Short story is one of the important forms which has made considerable contribution to the enrichment of Indian English literature.

The modern short story is a new form of literature having only a hundred and fifty years brief history. Edger Allan Poe is the father of modern short story. Oral and written are two forms of short story. There are many definitions of short story. Short story is a narrative prose fiction that is shorter than a novel. Short stories vary in length. The difference between short story and longer fiction is that the main literary elements-plot, setting, characterization are used with greater compression in the short story than the longer fiction. Short story generally concentrates on either the presentation of a character, a cleverly devised plot or the development of an idea or theme. The theme is the highest purpose of the short story writer. Short story normally deals with the fewer characters and less action. It usually depicts a single incident. The brevity, the economy and singleness of effect are the parameters of the short story.

In Indian English literature male writers like R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Khushwant Singh, Ruskin Bond, Manohar Malgoankar, Arun Joshi, Bhabani Battacharya, Chaman Nahal, Manoj Das are some notable names in the field of short story writing.

Women writers also have contributed equally to this form. Ruth Praver Jhabwala, Jai Nimbkar, Gouri Deshpande, Nargis Dalal, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande are some famous short story writers.

Contemporary women short story writers see their women as individuals not as types.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the few writers who writes equally in both forms, the novel and the short story. She has five short story collections, nine novels and four children's novels on her credit. She began her writing with short stories. So short stories play very important role in her writing career. Her stories were published in Eves Weekly, Femina, The Illustrated Weekly of India and the Mirror. Her short stories are collected in volumes.

Shashi Deshpande comes from the middle class family and so is well aware of the Indian women's predicament of this class. She writes about the Maharashtrian middle class women. Her writing deals with the problems of women in the society. Primary focus of her works is the world of women, the struggle of women in the context of modern Indian society.

The novels of Shashi Deshpande depict the woman's search for self, a vivid picture of female psyche, place of female in the society. She puts forth the problems which a woman faces in day to day life. Her experiences and observations are reflected in her novels. The novels *Dark Holds No Terror*, *Roots and Shadows*, *That Long Silence*, *The Binding Vine*, *Small Remedies and Mooving On* depict the domestic life of an individual. *If I Die Today*, *Come Up and Be Dead* are her two detective novels.

Her four novels for children have made genuine efforts to provide them with Indian adventure stories, stories of imagination and fancy.

Shashi Deshpande in her short stories deals with the emotions, dilemma and conflicts of the modern woman. She deals with the themes of loneliness, marital discord, sexual violence, death and the loss by

death, mother-daughter relationship, woman's search for self-identity, man-woman relationship and extra marital relationship in her short stories. Many of her short stories are based on Hindu mythologies like Mahabharata. The three themes- the theme of mother-daughter relationship, man-woman relationship and woman's search for self identity are often found and beautifully discussed in the selected short stories of Shashi Deshpande.

The stories selected for the study under the theme of mother-daughter relationship are *Why A Robin?*, *The Awakening*, *My Beloved Charioteer*, *It Was Dark, And Then...?*, *The Cruelty Game* and *Madhu*. The mother in the story *Why A Robin?* is successful in establishing the warm relationship with her daughter. The mother-daughter relationship in this story depends on fulfillment of the child's wishes, needs and requirements. In *My Beloved Charioteer* Deshpande portrays the three generations mother, daughter and grand-daughter. The mother –daughter relationship in this story develops at the end as both understand each others needs. The mother in *It Was Dark* is a strong woman. She protects the future of her daughter and decides to change the conservative views about the rape. In *And Then...?* mother is not totally sacrificing mother. Deshpande in this story takes a more realistic view of motherhood exposing not only the excitement of being a mother but also the frustrations and disappointments. *The Cruelty Game* depicts how conservative approach of society about the remarriage of a widow weakens the relationship of mother and daughter. Unlike her other stories the daughter represents the conservative approach and a mother a modern one. Shashi Deshpande in this story discusses the issue of remarriage of widow along with the theme of mother-daughter relationship. There is a portrayal of an aggressive mother in the story *The Awakening*. Mother gives priority to her son. The story ends on an optimistic tone. The letter

awakens the feeling of responsibility and Alka's ability to achieve her aim. In the story *Madhu* the lack of mutual understanding creates a gap between the relationship of mother and daughter.

Through these stories Deshpande shows how the mother-daughter relationship is developed and maintained. The natural arrangement, daughter's knowledge of male dominance to victimize her mother, mother's strongness to protect the future of the raped daughter are the factors which maintain the relationship. Deshpande also shows how the mother-daughter relationship is weakened due to the idea of widow's remarriage and the career oriented approach of the daughter.

Shashi Deshpande creates a realistic picture of woman in her stories. The women characters in her stories are not just mothers, daughters or women; first they are human beings.

The stories selected for the study under the theme of man-woman relationship are *An Antidote to Boredom*, *It Was the Nightingale*, *The Inner Rooms*, *My Beloved Charioteer*, *The Intrusion*, *A Man and A Woman* and *The Awakening*. The story *An Antidote to Boredom* deals with the husband-wife relationship. There is no love, affection in their relationship. The relationship is just a habit. Protagonist's husband is not wicked but is unable to love and understand her. Lack of mutual understanding and neglectance of husband towards his wife causes the tension between both of them. Thus, her meaningless and routine life leads her to extra-marital relationship. In *It Was the Nightingale* protagonist's ambitious nature causes the tension between husband and wife. Shashi Deshpande has used the legendary character of Amba from Mahabharata in the story *The Inner Rooms*. Through this story Deshpande suggests that the man-woman relationship in India is always based on the superior-inferior status. The relationship in *My Beloved Charioteer* of husband and wife is of master and slave. But the

relationship of father and daughter is based on affection and care. In the story *The Intrusion* lack of mutual understanding and patience weakens the delicate fabric of the relationship of the husband and wife. In *A Man and a Woman* there is a focus on the woman's relationship with three different men on three different levels. Protagonist's relationship with her husband was like a bond, her relationship with her brother-in-law is based on fulfilling physical needs and relationship with her husband's friend is based on emotional attachment. In the story *The Awakening* there is beautiful portrayal of the relationship between the father and the daughter. Shashi Deshpande in above stories deals with the man -woman relationship in ancient and modern context and stresses that there has been no noteworthy change in the relationship.

Deshpande, through these stories shows that the man-woman relationship is influenced by the attitude of male dominance and the relationship has not undergone the considerable change even in the modern era. When her female protagonists try to break the traditional views they face the tension. At the same time Deshpande shows the need of mutual understanding in strengthening the man-woman relationship especially husband-wife relationship and father-daughter relationship.

The stories selected for the study under the theme of woman's search for self identity are *It Was the Nightingale*, *The Inner Rooms*, *Lucid Moments*, *Death of A Child*, *I Want...*, *A Man and A Woman* and *The Awakening*. In *It Was the Nightingale* the protagonist is torn between her ambition and love for husband. She sacrifices her conjugal bliss for preserving her identity. The story *The Inner Rooms* depicts the pathetic story of Amba. Lost of identity causes intense pain and agony in her. The men destroy her identity for which she was fighting. Another story *Lucid Moments* portrays a dying woman's search for her mother's name-the identity and in the process of ascertaining her individuality. The

protagonist in the story *Death of a Child* by asserting a woman's right to be individual, affirms her selfhood and rejects the definition of motherhood pronounced by the males. The struggle is between the role of mother advocated by the patriarchal society and desire for self-identity. The story *I Want...* tells that for the sake of so called security in the life, protagonist sacrifices her career. A woman is forced to sacrifice a part of her. In the story *The Awakening* the girl is forced to sacrifice her own wishes, life and ambitions for the betterment of her family. A youthful and beautiful widow in *A Man and A Woman* questions herself related to existence and self-identity. Her wish to fulfill the sexual need arises in her search for self-identity. Deshpande stresses that self-respect for woman is essential to give happiness to her and to others. She also intends to say that the loss of self-identity in woman causes many problems. Deshpande's women are not family breakers but they reject to play the role of Savitri which is a symbol of loyalty from wife to her husband. The image of Savitri demands the self-denial, ever suffering, docile woman but Deshpande's women protest explicitly and implicitly against injustices, apathy and humiliation.

Through these stories Deshpande depicts woman's struggle for self identity and shows that the feelings of guilt, restlessness, helplessness and tension are faced by the struggling woman.

Many of Deshpande's women try to get rid of shackles of tradition and some of them succeed in it however, a kind of tension is created in mother-daughter relationship and man-woman relationship. While struggling for self identity Deshpande's women face problems both at practical and emotional levels.

To sum up, Shashi Deshpande puts forth the middle-class Maharashtrian life as it is. She observes that woman has no place in the male dominated society. She wants that woman must be treated as a

human being in the same way woman should recognize her own individuality. She must try to understand her own self which is more important for her to live in such a rotten world.

The selected themes in the selected short stories create deep impression on the readers. Shashi Deshpande thinks about the middle class mentality. Her short stories inspire many to think about the place of woman in a male dominated society. As such, the short stories of Shashi Deshpande are significant contribution to Indian English short story.

•

.....