

**REALISTIC STATE OF WOMEN IN “THAT LONG SILENCE” BY
SHASHI DESHPANDE AND “CUSTODY” BY MANJU KAPUR**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Master of Arts degree in English

by

RAGA PRISCILLA L
(Reg.No.39970006)



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

SATHYABAMA

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited with Grade “A” by NAAC

JEPPIAAR NAGAR, RAJIV GANDHI SALAI, CHENNAI - 600 119

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Jeppiaar Nagar, Rajiv Gandhi Salai, Chennai – 600 119

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this Project Report is the bonafide work of **RAGA PRISCILLA L (39970006)** who have done the Project work. She has carried out the project entitled "**Realistic State of Women in "That Long Silence" by Shashi Deshpande and "Custody" by Manju Kapur**" under my supervision from June 2020 to April 2021.

L.M. Sowmiya

[DR. SOWMIYA L M M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D]

Internal Guide

External Guide

Submitted for Viva voce Examination held on _____

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

DECLARATION

I **RAGAPRISCILLA L** hereby declare that the Project Report entitled **“REALISTIC STATE OF WOMEN IN “THAT LONG SILENCE” BY SHASHI DESHPANDE AND “CUSTODY” BY MANJU KAPUR”** done by me under the guidance of **Dr.SOWMIYA L.M**, is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts degree in Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology.

DATE:



PLACE: CHENNAI

SIGNATURE OF THE CANDIDATE

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ABSTRACT

God created men and women equally, but the women's rights were limited to small. Analysis of the works, author's experience and their works and real life characters. The feminist movement advocates equal rights and equal opportunities for women. Feminism was portrayed by many writers of English literature. This work examines the feminist perspective of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* (1988). And another one is Manju kapur's *Custody*. These novels deals with gender discrimination, freedom and struggles, social structure, portrayed gender roles that impose social norms, gender discriminations, self-identity and inequality prevalent in society.

Keywords: self-Identity, feminine, Searching for new space, independent, obligatory, Relationship.

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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Indian literature

After Indian Independence in 1947, Hindi was declared the first official language, and attempts were made to declare Hindi the sole national language of India. Due to protests from Tamil Nadu and other non-Hindi-speaking states, it was decided to temporarily retain English for official purposes until at least 1965. By the end of this period, however, opposition from non-Hindi states was still too strong to have Hindi declared the sole language. With this in mind, the English Language Amendment Bill declared English to be an associate language "until such time

As all non-Hindi States had agreed to its being dropped." This has never occurred, as English is now reckoned as all but indispensable. For instance, it is the only reliable means of day-to-day communication between the central government and the non-Hindi states.

After Indian Independence in 1947, Hindi was declared the first official language, and attempts were made to declare Hindi the sole national language of India. Due to protests from Tamil Nadu and other non-Hindi-speaking states, it was decided to temporarily retain English for official purposes until at least 1965. By the end of this period, however, opposition from non-Hindi states was still too strong to have Hindi declared the sole language. With this in mind, the English Language Amendment Bill declared English to be an associate language "until such time

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The spread of the English language in India has led it to become adapted to suit the local dialects. However, due to the large diversity in Indian languages and cultures, there can be instances where the same English word can mean different things to different people in different parts of India.

Literature up to the time of Mulk Raj Anand for bet the fact that Indian literatures are a product of a multilingual, multicultural and socio historical mélange cannot be overlooked. Today Indian literature reached at the apex of creation with the contribution of regional and national writers. Here, it is essential to mention the brief history of Indian writing in English and the contributors of it. Along with the list of the contributors in Indian writing in English, the rise of the new form of literature- novel in India is also necessary to focus. For that researcher would like to divide the history of Indian writing in English into three parts, first to understand the beginning and exploration of Indian writing in English by major contributors, second for the rise and development of new literary genre (novel) in Indo-Anglian literature and third to understand Anand as a novelist. These three parts are foundation of my research work. On the basis of the understanding of the Indo-Anglian literature and the rise and development of novel in Indo Anglian literature, the major novels of Mulk Raj Anand can be judged properly.

Indian English Literature refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian Diaspora. It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. As a category, this production comes under the broader realm of postcolonial literature- the production from previously colonized countries such as India. Indian English literature has a relatively recent history; it is only one and a half centuries old. The first book written by an Indian in English was by Sake Dean Mahomet, titled *Travels of Dean Mahomet*; Mahomet's travel narrative was published in 1793 in England. In its early stages it was influenced by the Western art form of the novel.

Early Indian writers used English unadulterated by Indian words to convey an experience which was essentially Indian. Indian writings in English are a product of the historical encounter between the two cultures, Indian and the western for about one hundred and ninety years. It isn't that Indian people didn't experience the impact of a foreign culture. It did during the reigns of various foreign rulers. But the difference with the British rule lies in the nature of the economic system that had come into being in Europe after the Renaissance, described by Marx as capitalist system.

Before the introduction of the British rule India had the feudal economic system, in accordance with which the vast population of the country, having various religious faiths and conforming to the caste system, tried to live their life, sometimes fatalistically and sometimes stoically. Above all, it was a closed society with a peculiar cultural racial intolerance. In fact, India had been awaiting a political and cultural change, which became necessary after the weakening and disintegration of the Mogul Empire. British rule in India, first of all, resulted in breaking the barrier of that closed society.

Then the greatest cultural impact came with the establishment of four universities and the introduction of western educational system. The English language provided the natives with a way to the western literature and to the western culture, of course. English education created a class of native bourgeoisie, the majority of which turned to their mother tongue while giving birth to a native literature, applying the western aesthetic norms. But a few among them thought it appropriate to give expressions to their feelings and experiences in English. Thus, the peculiar body of Indo-Anglian literature was created—while its contents were to be Indian, its medium of expression was English. If we take a backward glance at the beginnings of Indo Anglian literature, the stalwart figure of Raja Rammohan Roy appears first. The renaissance in modern Indian literature begins with Raja Rammohan Roy. He had earned good command over English language by working with British officials. He had tried to give new thoughts, removed old dogma and typical rituals through Bramhosamaj. The Bramhosamaj encourages establishing harmony between men's accepted faith and their practical observations.

Rammohan Roy worked for the betterment of women, freedom of press, English education, social justice and plight of Indian peasantry. He had good command over the English language and wrote prose and poetry in it. For his contribution in the pool of Indian writing in English, K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar writes; Rammohan Roy although he could be named as the first of the Indian masters of English prose, was great in so fields that he belong to Indian history more than to mere Indo-Anglian.

The mid nineteenth century is the renaissance in India as that was the time of great literary and social revolutions. At that time legendary thinkers like Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, Kesub Chunder Sen, Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj have contributed for social reform, educational reform and religious reform which has given scope for renaissance in India.

The first Indian English poet, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831) had nurtured English verse in India. He became a teacher of English literature at the Hindu College, Calcutta. A teacher as well as a poet, Derozio had expressed nature in his poetry like Keats. The flavor of Romanticism found in his poetry as he was highly influenced by Byron, Shelley, Keats, Scott and Moore. He died at the very early age due to cholera in 1831. This was the time when Hindu society in Bengal was undergoing considerable turmoil. In 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy established the Brahmo Samaj, which kept Hindu ideals but denied idolatry. This resulted in a backlash within orthodox Hindu society. It is in the perspective of these changes that Derozio was appointed at Hindu college, where he helped release the ideas for social change already in the air. His brilliant lectures presented closely-reasoned arguments based on his wide reading. He encouraged students to read Thomas Paine's Rights of Man and other free-thinking texts.

Although Derozio himself was an atheist and had renounced Christianity, he encouraged questioning the orthodox Hindu customs and conventions on the basis of Judeo-Christian rationalism. He infused in his students the spirit of free expression, the yearning for knowledge and a passion to live up to their identity, while questioning irrational religious and cultural practices. Derozio's

intense zeal for teaching and his interactions with students created a sensation at Hindu College. His students came to be known as Derozians. He organized debates where ideas and social norms were freely debated. In 1828, he motivated them to form a literary and debating club called the Academic Association. In 1830, this club brought out a magazine named Parthenon. Apart from articles criticizing Hindu practices, the students wrote on women's emancipation and criticized many aspects of British rule. He also encouraged students into journalism, to spread these ideas into a society eager for change.

His contribution in Indian English literature is as equal as Henry Derozio. His *The Shair and Other Poems* (1830), finds a place in literary history of India. Even he is considered as the first Indian to publish a regular volume of English verse. Ghose edited an English weekly *The Hindu Intelligence*. His poetry is counted a moralizing as good texture of originality and conventional descriptions. Michael Madhusudan Dutta (1824-1873), began writing while he was at Hindu College. He won several scholarships in college exams as well as a gold medal for an essay on women's education. While a student at Hindu College, his poems in Bengali and English were published in *Jnananvesan*, *Bengal Spectator*, *Literary Gleamer*, *Calcutta Library Gazette*, *Literary Blossom* and *Comet*. Lord Byron was Madhusudan's inspiration.

A *History of Civilization in Ancient India*, later *Hindu Civilization*, *India in the Victorian Age*, *The Economic History of British India* and *A brief History of Ancient and Modern Bengal*. Apart from this, his greatest achievement was the Bengali translation of *Rig Veda*. His translation in to English verse from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *RigVeda*, *The Upanishads*, *Buddhist literatures*, *Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava* and *Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya* – is most creditable contribution. Iyengar writes the turn from Toru Dutt to Romesh Chunder Dutt as; To turn from Aru and Taru Dutt to Romsh Chunder Dutt is like passing from the bud and the flower to the ripened fruit; from Erato and Melpomene to Clio and Calliope; from Ushas, rosy- fingered and short-lived, to the toiling Sun on the ascendant; from infinite promise to impressive achievement.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861- 1941) the versatile personality of Indian literary scholar is considered as – the Rishi, the Gurudev and the Maharshi. He was a poet, dramatist, actor, producer, musician, painter, an educationist, reformer, philosopher, prophet, novelist, story writer, and a critic of life and literature. Rabindranath Tagore wrote primarily in Bengali and translated many of his poems and plays into English. Before he was eighteen, he had written more than 7000 lines of verse. For *Gitanjali* (1912) he won the noble prize for literature and became poet of the world. After that his other works and *Gitanjali* were translated by literary scholars into major languages of world. To his credit, there is a long list of poems and plays, both in Bengali and English which had made his place among the world's greatest writers.

Indian English literature (IEL) refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian diaspora, such as V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Agha Shahid Ali, Rohinton Mistry and Salman Rushdie, who are of Indian descent.

It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. (Indo-Anglian is a specific term in the sole context of writing that should not be confused with the term Anglo-Indian). As a category, this production comes under the broader realm of postcolonial literature- the production from previously colonized countries such as India.

IEL has a relatively recent history; it is only one and a half centuries old. The first book written by an Indian in English was by Sake Dean Mahomet, titled *Travels of Dean Mahomet*; Mahomet's travel narrative was published in 1793 in England. In its early stages it was influenced by the Western art form of the novel. Early Indian writers used English unadulterated by Indian words to convey an experience which was essentially Indian. Raja Rao (1908–2006), Indian philosopher and writer authored *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope* which are Indian in terms of its storytelling qualities. Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) wrote in Bengali and English and was

responsible for the translations of his own work into English. Dhan Gopal Mukerji was the first Indian author to win a literary award in the United States. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a writer of non-fiction, is best known for his *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* where he relates his life experiences and influences. P. Lal, a poet, translator, publisher and essayist, founded a press in the 1950s for Indian English writing, Writers Workshop. Ram Nath Kak (1917–1933), a Kashmiri veterinarian wrote his autobiography *Autumn Leaves*, which is one of the most vivid portraits of life in 20th century Kashmir and has become a sort of a classic.

R.K. Narayan is a writer who contributed over many decades and who continued to write till his death recently. He was discovered by Graham Greene in the sense that the latter helped him find a publisher in England. Graham Greene and Narayan remained close friends till the end. Similar to Thomas Hardy's Wessex, Narayan created the fictitious town of Malgudi where he set his novels. Some criticise Narayan for the parochial, detached and closed world that he created in the face of the changing conditions in India at the times in which the stories are set. Others, such as Graham Greene, however, feel that through Malgudi they could vividly understand the Indian experience. Narayan's evocation of small town life and its experiences through the eyes of the endearing child protagonist Swaminathan in *Swami and Friends* is a good sample of his writing style. Simultaneous with Narayan's pastoral idylls, a very different writer, Mulk Raj Anand, was similarly gaining recognition for his writing set in rural India; but his stories were harsher, and engaged, sometimes brutally, with divisions of caste, class and religion.

Recent writers in India such as Arundhati Roy and David Davidar show a direction towards contextually and rootedness in their works. Arundhati Roy, a trained architect and the 1997 Booker prize winner for her *The God of Small Things*, calls herself a "home grown" writer. Her award winning book is set in the immensely physical landscape of Kerala. Davidar sets his *The House of Blue Mangoes* in Southern Tamil Nadu. In both the books, geography and politics are integral to the narrative. In his novel *Lament of Mohini* (2000),

Shreekumar Varma touches upon the unique matriarchal system and the sammandham system of marriage as he writes about the Namboodiris and the aristocrats of Kerala. Jahnvi Barua, a Bangalore based author from Assam has set her critically acclaimed collection of short stories Next Door on the social scenario in Assam with insurgency as the background. Another author Aruni Kashyap has also based his first novel The House with A Thousand Stories on the society and psyche of the people of Assam at the backdrop of insurgency.

Poetry

An overlooked category of Indian writing in English is poetry. Rabindranath Tagore wrote in Bengali and English and was responsible for the translations of his own work into English. Other early notable poets in English include Derozio, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, and her brother Harindranath Chattopadhyay.

Notable 20th Century authors of English poetry in India include Dilip Chitre, Kamala Das, Eunice De Souza, Nissim Ezekiel, Kersy Katrak, Arun Kolatkar, P. Lal, Jayanta Mahapatra, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, Dom Moraes, Gieve Patel, and A. K. Ramanujan, and among several others.

The younger generation of poets writing in English include Smita Agarwal, Makarand Paranjape, Nandini Sahu, Vattacharja Chandan, Arundhati Subramaniam, Ranjit Hoskote, Sudeep Sen, Hemant Mohapatra, Jeet Thayil, Mani Rao, Jerry Pinto, Abhay K, Meena Kandasamy, among others.

Modern expatriate Indian poets writing in English include Agha Shahid Ali, Sujata Bhatt, Richard Crasta, Yuyutsu Sharma and Vikram Seth.

Indian English

Indian English is the group of English dialects spoken primarily in the Indian subcontinent. As a result of colonial rule under the British Raj until Indian independence in 1947, English is an official language of India and is

widely used in both spoken and literary contexts. The rapid growth of India's economy towards the end of the 20th century led to large-scale population migration between regions of the Indian subcontinent and the establishment of English as a lingua franca between those speaking diverse mother tongues.

With the exception of the tiny Anglo-Indian community and some families of full Indian ethnicity where English is the primary language spoken in the home, speakers of English in the Indian subcontinent learn it as a first language in English medium schools and as a second language in regional language medium schools. In cities this is typically at English medium schools, but in smaller towns and villages instruction for most subjects is in the local language, with English language taught as a modular subject. Science and technical education is mostly undertaken in English and, as a result, most university graduates in these sectors are fairly proficient in English.

Idiomatic forms derived from Indian literary and vernacular language have become assimilated into Indian English in differing ways according to the native language of speakers. Nevertheless, there remains general homogeneity in phonetics, vocabulary, and phraseology between variants of the Indian English dialect.

Grammar

The role of English within the complex multilingual society of India is far from straight forward: it is used across the country, by speakers with various degrees of proficiency; the grammar and phraseology may mimic that of the speaker's first language. While Indian speakers of English use idioms peculiar to their homeland, often literal translations of words and phrases from their native languages, this is far less common in proficient speakers, and the grammar itself tends to be quite close to that of Standard British English.

Phonology

Indian accents vary greatly. Some Indians speak English with an accent very close to a Standard British accent (though not the same); others lean toward a more 'vernacular', native-tinted, accent for their English speech.

Vowels

In general, Indian English has fewer peculiarities in its vowel sounds than the consonants, especially as spoken by native speakers of languages like Hindi, the vowel phoneme system having some similarities with that of English.

A. K. Ramanujan

Attipate Krishnaswami Ramanujan (March 16.1929 – July 13, 1993) also known as A.K. Ramanujan was a scholar of Indian literature who wrote in both English and Kannada. Ramanujan was an Indian poet, scholar and author, a philologist, folklorist, translator, poet and playwright. His academic research ranged across five languages: Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Sanskrit, and English. He published works on both classical and modern variants of these literatures and also argued strongly for giving local, non-standard dialects their due.

Indian literature

One of the most ancient of literature has been exemplary for rest of the world. The term refers to the literary work that had been produced in various Indian languages, since ages. In ancient times, the literary work used to be imparted orally. The first ever ancient Indian literature was Sanskrit literature comprising of Rig Veda, the Ramayana and Mahabharata which were written in first millennium BCE. Then developed Kannada and Telugu Literature in the medieval era. They were followed by Marathi, Bengali and Urdu literature. Among the Indian literary personnel, the name of Bengali writer RabindraNath Tagore shines the brightest. He became the first Indian to receive Nobel Prize for his literary genius. There are two Indian awards for Literature – Jnanpith Award and Sahitya Fellow Academy Award.

During the twentieth century, due to the influence of British colonization, there developed a different form of English which is referred to as, Indian English. Based on British style of spelling and pronunciation of words, the language soon became a medium of creative expression for Indian writers like the great Bengali writer and poet Rabindranath Tagore. Other big names in Indian English Literature are Vikram Seth, R K Narayanan, Salman Rushdie, Ruskin Bond, Khushwant Singh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy and Shashi Tharoor.

Indian literature has played a tremendous role in giving the country a distinct identity of intellectualism. Though the face of it has been changing while travelling through innumerable phases, yet even today it holds an honourable position in the entire scenario of world literature.

Indian literature in English originated as a necessary product of the English education in India under colonialism. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Macaulay suggested English education as a language in India. The British-style of education also had the effect of linking Indian writers to literary traditions of the West, enabling Indian writers' writing in English to reach European audience as well as in India. In the 19th century, both progressive and orthodox reformers supported female education in India, believing that social evils could be minimize through education.

Christian missionaries and Britishers started girls' schools, especially in Bengal where the English had made their first inroads in the mid 19th century, and Indian women started to graduate from universities. However, the majority of girls did not go to school because the education for women was mainly confined to the larger towns and cities. So, before the rise of the novel, many Indian women composed poetry and short stories in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam. Women were the principal upholders of a rich oral tradition of story-telling, through myths, legends, songs and fables. The novel was not at first a common form, perhaps because the majority of women had less entrée to education than men.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, changes in style and content appeared in Indian literature. In addition to the verse form, generally used in

earlier times, prose began to be used widely in literary works. The language used in literary works became simpler than before. Indian literature refers to the literature produced on the Indian subcontinent until 1947 and in the Republic of India thereafter. The Republic of India has 22 officially recognized languages.

The earliest works of Indian literature were orally transmitted. Sanskrit literature begins with the oral literature of the RigVeda a collection of sacred hymns dating to the period 1500-1200 BCE. The Sanskrit epics Ramayana and Mahabharata appeared towards the end of the 2nd millennium BCE. Classical Sanskrit literature developed rapidly during the first few centuries of the first millennium BCE, as did the Tamil Sangam literature, and the Pali Canon. In the medieval period, literature in Kannada and Telugu appeared in the 9th and 11th centuries respectively. Later, literature in Marathi, Odia and Bengali appeared.

Thereafter literature in various dialects of Hindi, Persian and Urdu began to appear as well. Early in the 20th century, Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore became India's first Nobel laureate. In contemporary Indian literature, there are two major literary awards; these are the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship and the Jnanpith Award.

The Indian literature is thought to be the earliest literature of the world. The two most famous epics of Indian literature are the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. By using parts of the two original epics classical epics were made. The value of truth and the importance of self-sacrifice was the highlight of epics.

Though the first well known Indian English novelist was R K Narayan, there were many writers who experimented with English fiction and became moderately successful. The celebrated contemporary authors are Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, and Aravind Adiga who won The Booker Prize.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Shashi Deshpande is one of the eminent novelists of contemporary Indian literature in English. Deshpande was born in 1936, in Dharwad. She is the younger daughter of the Sanskrit scholar, novelist, actor and dramatist.

Education:

The University of Bombay, B.A. (honors) in economics 1956, diploma in journalism 1970, M.A. in English 1970; University of Mysore, Karnataka, B.L. 1959.

Awards:

Raugammal prize, 1984; Nanjangud Tirumalamba award, for *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, 1989; Sahitya Academy award, 1990.

Shashi Deshpande's first book was *The Legacy*, a collection of short stories, and since then she has published dozens of stories. The authentic recreation of India, the outstanding feature of her stories, is a distinct feature of her novels also. There is nothing sensational or exotic about her India—no Maharajahs or snake charmers. She does not write about the grinding poverty of the Indian masses; she describes another kind of deprivation—emotional. The woman deprived of love, understanding, and companionship is the center of her work. She shows how traditional Indian society is biased against woman, but she recognizes that it is very often women who oppress their sisters, though their values are the result of centuries of indoctrination.

Deshpande experienced childhood in a family that had a place with the upper working class, thus does her own family. She was given the regular instruction at a British community school, proceeded onward to Bombay University and examined financial matters and political theory, required a subsequent degree, in law, in Bangalore, had her first occupation with a legal advisor, at that point a law correspondent. At long last she was by then hitched, with two children, she added a degree in news-casting (1969-1970), and finished off that with a Master of Art.

Composing didn't come to Deshpande as a cognizant choice. She had two kids, no vocation; she got fretful with being only a housewife and mother. In England she felt separated, without any companions, and her better half away throughout the day. On their re-visitation of India her significant other urged her to expound on this experience. 1972 saw her first short story, "The Legacy", a lot more were to follow. Her dad exhorted distribution, in any case the narratives would get lost.

Deshpande creates figures that take her readers through the social strata of urban society, but her interest comes to center more and more on women of the middle and upper middle classes; well-educated women who fight for their own space, for their place in the family and in their social and their cultural setting. This setting is the backdrop to her stories, action rape, in one of her early stories, "The Intrusion", later follows it up in *The Binding Vine* (1992) and in *Shadow Play* (2013).

Manju Kapur (born Amritsar, India) is an Indian novelist. Her first novel, *Difficult Daughters*, won the 1999 Commonwealth Writers' Prize, best first book, Europe and South Asia. She teaches English at Delhi University under the name Manjul Kapur Dalmia. She studied and received an M.A. in 1972 from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, and an M. Phil from Delhi University. She is married to Gun Nidhi Dalmia; they have three children and three grandchildren, and live in New Delhi.

Manju Kapur is well known name in Indian English Literature. She is regarded as modern feminist who has written five novels till yet. Her first novel *Difficult Daughters* is set against the historical backdrop of partition is based on the life of protagonist Virmati. Her second novel *A Married Woman* is about the life of a protagonist Astha. The plight of Astha can be felt by any married woman in an upper middle class Indian society. Her third novel *Home* is the mirror of traditional Indian society in which a girl feels herself shackled on the name of rituals, superstitions and family honour etc. Fourth novel *The Immigrant* is the story of Nina who feels herself alienated in a foreign country after her marriage.

Her fifth novel *Custody* was published in 2011 and proved to be a great success for the author. The chief distinguishing element of *Custody* is that while the other our novels are centered to the life of one protagonist (*Difficult Daughters*-Virmati, *A Married Woman*-Astha, *Home*-Nisha, *The Immigrant*-Nina), *Custody* has two protagonists, Shagun and Ishita. Though there is no similarity in their feminine nature but they both play the equally important role in this novel. In fact it also should be said in this regard that *Custody* is not only a feministic novel, rather in this novel the author has touched all those aspects of

married and family life in Indian society which are equally painful as well as soothing for everyone.

This novel is not confined only to man-woman relationship or the suppression of feminine, rather it has dealt with the life of children of a broken family, may be toddler or adolescent. The hollowness of modern matrimony is described in this novel in a very pathetic way. The impact of family dispute on children is shown with heart-rending intensity

AWARDS AND HONOURS

DSC Prize for South Asian Literature, short-list, The Immigrant 2011
Commonwealth Writers' Prize, best first book, Europe and South Asia, Difficult Daughters 1999

Manju Kapur is one of the most renowned women writers of the contemporary era in India. She not only portrays the vulnerable condition of women in the Indian society but also delineates how they are being kept ignorant about education and emancipation. In her novels she gives vent to the gender discrimination still overtly prevalent in the field of education. A study of few feminist theorists has also been included to expose how patriarchy creates havoc in the lives of women by denying proper education. With the British invasion, Indian men became aware of women education but the enthusiasm died out half way. So even after 65 years of Indian Independence, the condition of women has barely changed. Manju Kapur's novels circumscribe the condition of women education since Independence till the present era.

WRITING STYLE

Shashi Deshpande has used a combination of first person and third person narrative with flashback tools to bestow reliability and believability to the novels. She has expressed her views and her narrative techniques in a chronological way.

Shashi Deshpande's Style

Shashi Deshpande utters her feministic views in an excellent way with her distinguished literary style. Her unique literary style can be seen in her works like "That Long Silence", "Small Remedies", "A Matter of Time", "The Dark Holds No Terror", "Roots and Shadows" and so on. Her simple style can be noticed in her words which recounts the influences in her life.

She says: "There are three things in my early life that have shaped me as a writer. These are that my father was a writer that I was educated exclusively in English and I was born a female."

Selected Perennial Themes

Deshpande's novels deal with certain perennial themes such as quest for self-identity, man-woman relationship, and experience of educated and rural family woman and the image of woman. Her narrative structure is embodied in several strands, using memory, experience and so on. Her stories are about women's struggle in their day-to-day life.

Jaya in That Long Silence Jaya, in "That Long Silence", undertakes an unavailing search for her 'self'. The real picture, the real 'you' never emerges. "Looking for it is as bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different faces." (That long silence)

These words show her use of metaphors and similes in her fictions and each character plays significant role in different aspects. Jaya, who is the protagonist of this novel, offers us a glimpse into the lives of apparently content housewives who are nevertheless suppressed under the weight of male dominance. Her major concern as a woman writer is about women's struggle to find and preserve their identity as wife, mother and apart from that as human being in the contemporary Indian society. Deshpande has expressed all these views in simple and colloquial way.

Simple and Realistic Way

Deshpande is accomplished with a remarkable literary mind. She has exclusively matured exposures in life and readings. She has experienced her thought by expressing her views on writing in a simple and realistic way as follows: "I realize that I write what I write because I have to, because it is within me. It's one point of view, a world from within the woman, and that I think is my contribution to Indian writing."

Style and Development of Character

Development of character is a prominent one among the elements in literary style. Shashi Deshpande, a leading women writer in English, has tried to bring out a naturalistic picture of the middle-class educated women who are financially independent and represent a large part of the contemporary Indian society. Her novels deal with the problems of the adjustments and conflicts in the mind of female protagonists, who belong to the traditional rules. The characters in her novels are free from their fear and guilt. In addition, they feel free from the restrictions imposed on them by their society, culture and nature. Deshpande's first full-length novel "Roots and Shadows" highlights the agony and suffocation experienced by the protagonist Hindu, a middle-class young girl brought up in an Orthodox Brahmin family, in a male-dominated society. Saru in "The Dark Holds No Terrors" has childhood scars. Denied of parental love and a victim of her husband's frustration, Saru undergoes a rigorous journey into her and liberates herself from guilt, shame and frustration to get full control over her life. Jaya in "That Long Silence" represents the modern young women educated and they are unable to break free from the strange hold of tradition.

"Small Remedies" revolves around the four women characters, Madhu, Savitribai, Leela and Hasina, who learn to know themselves and in the company of female folks, they achieve their social as well as spiritual identities. This novel is about the 'making' of writer, singer and a social worker.

Shashi Deshpande's heroines decline rituals that are traces of the past. All her women characters revolve around the same concept of search for their self-identity. They, in order to achieve their freedom, seek marriage as an alternative to the bondage created by the parental family.

Deshpande brings out the struggle of these women to give shape and content to their individual survival in a sexist society which ends in compromise. All the characters, finally, accept that there is selfhood in being a wife, a sister, a mother and a career woman. Consequently, one can be true to oneself.

Stereotypes

Deshpande's characters are stereotypes. They aim to induce the readers into leading a peaceful life for themselves in a sophisticated manner. They motivate the younger generation to have a self-identity for their own in the society in which they are living. Deshpande's main motive is to make women realize their position and responsibilities as a wife, a daughter, a sister and a mother.

Use of Tone

Tone is another important element in the literary style in which the author's attitude and the mood of the story are known. Shashi Deshpande's main perspective is to achieve the self-discovery of women of different generations (traditions). The author seems wistful throughout her novels. The women characters in her novels are longing for the self-identity in the male-dominated society showing their quest for space and selfhood.

Deshpande's novels are not only wishful but also it gives hope for the women who are suppressed by the male domination in their family. Though they are lovable towards their family and family members, situation leads them to a mournful atmosphere.

Inner Conflict and Style, Impact of Native Education on Style

Deshpande's is totally different from the other Indian Writers because she has not been educated abroad and strongly believes in the Indian culture. She is fully aware of the problems that Indian writers in English face and is of the

opinion that they should evolve a language of their own. She has always aimed at the Indian readers and not the western. She is quite famous for her creative use of language.

Narrative Technique and Style

Every author uses different methods of story-telling, but the narrative technique used by an author is of great importance. Shashi Deshpande has used a combination of first person and third person narrative with flashback tools to bestow reliability and believability to the novels. She has expressed her views and her narrative techniques in a chronological way. She has explained every incident in a coherent way and it consists of logical ordering of things happened.

Style of Paragraphs and Chapters

Structure of chapters and paragraphs are considered to be an uncomplicated thing. The paragraphs are conventionally framed; hence it would be easy for the readers to get her concept comprehensively. She has divided her novels into simple units which helps the reader not to feel weary by reading a long or lengthy unit. Deshpande pays much attention to her own way of narrative process. Her thoughts reach the mind of the reader because of her simple and realistic way of expression. Her style of narration, role and her thoughts are mentioned explicitly in all her novels. Thus, the meta-fictional techniques serve as the base for the elements of literary style which makes her work effective.

Manju Kapur's writing style

Manju Kapur writing reflects the experience of woman in real world. She writes about personal experiences problems spaces and identity crises. She writes what today's woman can relate easily and see her novels as of their own life. She deals with the traditional and modernist ethos, women trying to find their identity.

Deshpande's novel *That Long Silence* (1988) of which she says that it is her most autobiographical one, makes silencing, by the family and by society, its main topic. It is, as she has said, a loud shriek of despair. The main figure, however, manages to break the silence and to speak out, achieving agency. The novel had come out in English, in Britain, but was translated into Hindi, Marathi and Kannada Which shows, not only the impact of the linguistic diversity of the subcontinent, but also the status Deshpande has by then achieved. The themes and topics, the cultural contexts of her novels seem to reflect Deshpande's own family and its cultural setting.

There is literature, Indian myths, traditional Indian music, medicine, an intimate or at least a close relationship to her father, all of this being part of the fabric of *A Matter of Time* (1999), *Small Remedies* (2000), *Moving On* (2004) and, most directly, of *Strangers to Ourselves* (2015). Deshpande's novels are family novels. Family, in their generational enfolding, in their ramifications, is the groundwork of the novels. Its intricacies, by the way, are more easily understood if readers – in particular Western readers - take to paper and pencil and draw a family tree. The complexities of this groundwork are not just family complexities, they are also the complexities of memory, and it is this that women shape as it has shaped them, that they experience and that they leave behind, through divorce or through separation.

Women, in Deshpande's texts, are not simply victims, of circumstance, of family, of society. Over the decades that Deshpande's work embraces, they have come to stand out as self-assured, self-empowered, articulate personalities. They leave behind limits and limitations; hurt themselves against and cross barriers and conventional norms. The female figure in *In the Country of Deceit* (2008) enters into a relationship with a married man. There are men who rape women, who are despots, but also remarkable men – lovers, husbands, and fathers

Narrative Technique and Style

Shashi Deshpande has used a combination of first person and third person narrative with flashback tools to bestow reliability and believability to the novels. She has expressed her views and her narrative techniques in a chronological way.

Contemporary Writers

Anita Desai known as Mother of the Indian Psychological novel genre .she uses her personal experience and does not have any particular style. In her works Inner feelings of female character is portrayed. Mostly her works compared with T.S.Eliot , Virginia Woolf. In Most of her works she applied Feminist theory on her works.

Nayantara Sahgal - was born in one of India's most prominent political families. With her mother Vijayalakshmi Pandit as India's first ambassador to the U.N., her uncle Jawaharlal Nehru as India's first Prime Minister, and her first cousin, Indira Gandhi as India's third Prime Minister, it is not surprising that politics and history inspire and underlie much of her writing. Beginning with her memoir Prison and Chocolate Cake, which was published in 1954, Sahgal authored other political writings - The Freedom Movement in India and Indira Gandhi, Her Road to Power - along with a collection of essays, Point of view: a personal response to life, literature and politics.

Kamala Das - the Mother of Modern Indian English poetry. Most of her works was known for its open discussion of women's sexual life. Her famous work "The old Play House". She follows Post-Colonial Theory and Feminist Theory;

Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy - She main focuses on cast annihilation, feminism and linguistic identity. She adopts anti-caste and feminist theory. Her famous work "Touch" Deals with women's struggles and sufferings.

Anita Nair - Emerging Novelist. She uses eco-feminist theory. Her style of writing is Modern. Her famous works *Mistress-A Novel*, *The ladies coupe*.

Arunthathi Roy- Indian Novelist and Political Activist. One of the best known representatives of the Contemporary generation of Indian writers who writing in English. He won Man Booker prize "*The God small Things*".

Meenakshi Reddy Madhavan - she uses semi-autobiographical techniques. Daughter of N.S.Madavan , indian writer of Malayalam literature. Her famous book "*You are here*".

Maha Swetha Devi - her writings are peculiarly devoid of sentimentality. Her fiction allows the reader to look at cultural practices, social institution, identity formation, sexual roles and how they operate in spaces with different power dynamics. She is the critics of trickle-down theory.

Chithra Banerjee Divakaruni - Teacher of writings. she writes poem in wide range of themes. Her themes include the Indian experience, contemporary America, women, immigration, history, myth and the joy and challenges of living in a multicultural world. Her famous work "*Mistress of Spices*".

Kiran Desai- she is the daughter of Anita Desai. She use the technique of magic realism and socio-cultural realism in her works. She uses irony and humor. Her famous work "*The inheritance of Loss*".

Uniqueness of shashi deshpane in her literary works

There are no writers more enduring than shashi deshpane. She remains unimpressed by other's glamour work and she does not care about literary hierarchies. Her prose is simple, often dialectical. She uses dialogues often. Deshpande's protagonist are always battling against social norms rather than Psychological equations. She has also made an attempt to explore female psychology and female sexuality.

She deals with present problems. Her works highlight the importance of existence and survival of women in the middle class society of India. In her whole works female characters are dominating. Manju kapur displays the inequality between men and women through her women characters. The author's female characters reveal the voice of protest for their emergence. In her novel mother patriarchy is more responsible than that of father.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

In that Long Silence, shashi deshpane delineates the delicate swings of mood, the see-saw moments of joy and despair, the fragments of feelings perceived and suppressed, the life of protagonist Jaya , a house wife and a failed writer. The novel despites the life of jaya at the level of the silent and the unconscious. A sensitive and realistic dramatization of the married life of life jaya and her husband mohan, it portrays an inquisitive critical appraisal to which the institute of marriage has been subjected to in recent years. It centers round the inner perception of the protagonist, a woman who is subtly drown from inside, a woman who “ Finds her normal routine so disrupted that for the first time she can look at her life and attempt to decide who she really is”

S.P. Swain

A Critical Spectrum, 2004

Sounds of the silenced:

“Words are often no more than silence, and silence has its voices.” SILENCE, In shashi deshpane's novel, is a key metaphor to an understanding of the text. It is an significant work in the sense that with this novel Deshpande breaks her own silence. She finds an affinity with jaya its protagonist.in a first person account, she confess, ‘a lifetime of introspection went into this novel, the most autobiographical of all my writing, not in the personal details but in the thinking and ideas It was with the articulation of all the years that come to feminism to a consciousness of myself as a feminist.

That long silence reverberates with many silences some imposed on the characters by jaya the urbanized middle class housewife undergoes is set on by the personal disaster that befalls the family. Mohan, her husband ,commits an act of dishonesty

Arthi Biswal

Critical response to Indian fiction in English,92,2001

Social Marginality

The problems of contemporary middle class women are the main subject matter of shashi deshpane's writings. This paper aims to study the impact of culture in her novel That Long Silence. Through this novel the author echoes the voices of the urban educated-middle class woman who are trapped between tradition and modernity of the cultural of indian society. Her sensitive heroines are fully conscious that they are victims of uncultured gender discrimination which prevails in a conservative male dominant society.

A cultural specific approach has been adopted by deshpane to unravel the modern indian woman's long suffering existence. In this novel she does not present men as entirely bad and woman as completely good. She is realistic in the sense that her stories are very close to life. The protagonist jaya's struggle throughout is to attain wholeness, completeness and an authentic selfhood. She bids goodbye to her silence, anger and resentment. She realizes her self-worth and decided to give up the pre fixed norms of the society.

Thus in this novel the protagonist has raised her voice against the role models of wife and other, and rebels against the suppression of the age-old patriarchal set up the novel expose the patriarchal practices in the Indian society which are at length tactfully handled by the protagonist.

S Anuratha

Conference editorial board,2015

Different shades of Feminism in 'custody' by Manju Kapur. He is known as modern feminist who has developed the characters of her female protagonist in her novels in such a way that they can represent all the shades of feminism in themselves. Her 'custody' is an exemplary novel which provides an insight in her wide and deep perspective of women's psyche. In this novel, she has raised the issues of globalization, liberalization and drastically changing mode of society along with the desire of liberty in women, infertility in women and hollowness of modern marriage. In this she explored the effect of divorce on children also, may they are toddlers or adolescents.

Pooja Malik, Parul Yadav

Manju Kapur's fifth novel custody is highly considered about thriving, upper-middle people in delhi. It also deals with the changes in people's life style due to the Foreign investment in India and as a result of the influence, Manju Kapur finely presents the nuances of family relationship. Custody deals with the life of decent young couple Raman, and his wife Shahun. In course of the time their relationship started to scatter because of Shahun illegal relationship. Manju Kapur presents the emotional fight and imbalance in the minds of the couple and their two children. when the couple desided to travel on their own wish, kapur beautifully presents the children's fear of loneliness, deprivation, dejection o the two children. children were taken to various places like commodities from one place to other. When parents got divorce, separation took place even physically and mentally with the brother and sister. At the very young age the children have to take decision of their own life.

A Sankara Priya

Manju Kapur presents two contradictory aspects of female embodiment, infidelity and infertility in her latest novel 'custody'. Infidelity empowersva women but infertility disempowers her. Infidelity reflects and defends women's right to desiring and the pursuit of the fulfillment of female sexual desire is a metaphor for women's equality politics .autonomously decided infidelity permits women to experience their reproductive potential and it challenges the male domination and patriarchal mechanisms of surveillance and control over women bodies . infertilityvis culturally and socially constructed in such a way

that even though it affects a couple it is the women who bears the burden. Womens social status direction IN LIFE economic achievement wellbeing and the very meaning of marital life hinges around their ability to give birth and rear children

Asha Saharan

The journal of English language and literary studies

Theories:

- Feminist Theory – Jean Baker Miller,1990
- Eco-feminism –Francoise d'Eaubonne,1974
- Psychoanalytic Theory- Sigmund Freud,1890
- Stream-of-Consciousness Theory- William James, 1890

Main Themes:

- Feminine
- Self-identity
- Independent
- Freedom

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF NOVELS

A woman can never be angry; she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated.”
“I have often watched in fascination the leaps and bounds of her mind as, starting from the banks of uncomfortable facts, she reaches the safety of easier-to live-with invention.”

Before marriage Jaya has optimistic views on life as her father always encourages her by saying “I named you Jaya’ he said, ‘Jaya means victory’ “. But after the death of her father, ‘Ai’ her mother does not support her. This makes Jaya feeble and more vulnerable. Her mother always prefers her son and she even gifts their ancestral property i.e. the Dadar flat to her son rather than her daughter Jaya.

“Things can never be as they were. It’s astonishing how we comment on change, as if change is something remarkable. On the contrary, not to change is unnatural, against nature”. [That long silence]

And after marriage, Jaya lives in the family life thinking about her family and her husband Mohan. On their wedding, Mohan renamed his wife Jaya as “Suhasini” as he wanted her to be ‘Soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman’ (16). Her period of marriage life comprises of confrontation between two phases of her personality where the later had to be triumphant to appease her husband’s ego and to save her marriage. And in the end, she comes out to be a decided and determined woman who now knows how to strike a balance between her family and her identity in the family.

“It’s not just that life is cruel, but that in every process of our birth we submit to life’s cruelty”

Deshpande beautifully described Jaya’s married life as, “A pair of bullock yoked together. It is more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different directions would be painful and what animals would voluntarily choose pain?”

The narrator believes that with money and a room she could have been a writer as living condition always affects one's creativity. Jaya also wishes to keep on writing. She breaks her silence of seventeen years in her writings, with which she expressed the thrust of craving identity of herself. She writes the responsibilities and social bondage in her view has been a failed writer and the universal voice is not heard in her works.

For her writing pieces, she is unanswerable to Mohan, which means that she does not have freedom and liberty both in her personal and her professional life. The creative and artistic zeal free her from her dubbed domestic roles. When she realizes this, she makes her mind to be silent no more, she has the right to reveal her genuine feelings and emotions. So, she resolves to break her silence by putting down on paper that entire she has suppressed in her seventeen-year silence. Finally, she expounds:

“The panic has gone. I am Mohan's wife I had thought, and cut off the bits of me that had refused to be Mohan's wife. Now I know that kind of fragmentation is not possible. The child hands in pocket, has been with me through the years.”

Shashi Deshpande effectively expounds the aim of individual happiness in marriage. From the beginning Jaya developed fear of speech for fear of reticulate from males Appa, her father, who always prevents her from doing any task of her taste. Her father and brother criticized whenever she got opportunities to rebuke. Due to all these she jumps into silence which becomes easier to her. Later she maintains the silence with Mohan also and the reason behind this was liberty and freedom shown in threads. The inability to find words loads Jaya to embark upon a long silent journey. Finally she holds silence, the utter silence “But the words remained unsaid. I know his mood was best met with silence”.

“It was so much easier for women in those days to accept, not to struggle, because they believed, they know, there was nothing else for them. And they called that fate.”[The dark holds No Terror]

Deshpande depicts the complexities of Indian women of the modern age. Marriage plays a pivotal role in the life of Indian women and it changes their entire life. The husbands rejoice in their life carrying no sign of being married. Jaya meditates why women plunge into the marital life and keeps burning silently. The reason that she finds to her is, "We're all frightened of the dark, frightened of being alone" (102). For women in the Indian society, it is both a personal weakness as well as a social fate.

"And Then, as we grow into young women, we realize it was not love, but marriage that was the destiny waiting for us"

That Long Silence is one of the unique works of Shashi Deshpande which signifies the pathetic condition of Indian woman. It is a reflection of sufferings of an Indian woman in the dogmatic social milieu i.e., family. It also reflects how woman suffers deeply and ends up life silently baring molestations of male. The sacrifice made by women counterpart is hardly noticed by the male dominated society. The writer wants such women who suffer to break their silence in the wake of feminist movement. The novel illustrates the image of women in the middle-class family and the way she is sandwiched between the tradition and modernity.

"A Wife should always be few feet behind her husband". If he is an MA you should be a BA. If he is earning five hundred rupees you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety nine rupees. That's the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage...no partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care it is unequal in favour of the husband".

The title of the novel depicts the intention of the novelist in order to reveal the female psyche during the quest of Jaya, the protagonist, for self. She is the protagonist of *That Long Silence* who is an intelligent woman with graduation in English, a writer and a columnist had a bright career. Unfortunately, none of these attributes would provide her a respectable position in the eyes of her husband Mohan, who had socialization in a typical traditional environment. He perceived his wife on par with Seeta, Savitri and Draupadi. His mother and sister Vimala were very much submissive to father. The decisions relating to

familial and financial matters were taken by the male members of the family. So he wanted his wife to be submissive like them as a homemaker.

“Marriage is a very stranger thing. It’s a very public institution, it meant to tell the world the two people are going to live together, to declare that their children will be legal, that these children can inherit their property. It meant for social living, to ensure that some rules are observed; so that men and women don’t cross the lines drawn from them. At the same time, marriage is an intensely private affair; no outsider will know the state of someone else’s marriage. It’s a closed room, a locked room...”

In a male-dominated society, a woman has no space to be independent. She is dependent on men either on father, husband or son. They are hardly given freedom and independence. Slavery to man makes them suffer from dual roles of child bearing and domestic chores. She has no freedom regarding the selection of her life partner and marriage. Marriage becomes their destiny as Jaya thinks;

*....As we grew into young women, we realized it was not
Love, but marriage that was the destiny waiting for us.
And so, with young man, there was the excitement of
Thinking will this man be my husband?It had been
Our parents who had taken vague desires of ours and
Translated them into hard facts. It was like the game we
Had played as children on our buttons tinker, tailor,
Soldier, sailor....*

(That Long Silence: 19)

Jaya’s parents and Vanita Mami go on hammering onto her that ‘husband is like a sheltering tree’. Women should be dependent on the male member of the family in order to be safe and protected. In other words, a woman is undermined ignoring the fact that she is equal to men in all the spheres of life. Her abilities and strengths are undermined. However, she is inferior to men in patriarchal society. This is rightly pointed out by Deshpande as;

*...A sheltering tree. Without the tree you're dangerously
Unprotected and vulnerable. This... followed logically;
and so you have keep the tree alive and flourishing
even if you have to water it with deceit and lies*

(That Long Silence: 32)

The author clearly depicts the image of marriage institution and familial relations in India. Husband and wife hardly speak openly about their sexual life. It is treated as sinful and immoral. Jaya had dreamt about her marital life that she would love her husband first and then sex. A mechanical relationship and artificial love were the consequence of her marriage. It was a total failure. She had lost interest and tired of with the acts of sex. Unfortunately, with Mohan she had only sex but not love either before or after marriage. In other words, she hardly enjoyed marital relationship with her husband. She had no freedom to express or share her desires with Mohan. Her feelings of love and sex are suppressed as she says;

*In any case, whatever my feelings had been then, I had
never spoken of them to him. In fact, we had never
spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was
erased each time after it happened, it never existed in
words. The only words between us had been his question,
'Did I hurt you?' and my answer, 'No'*

(That Long Silence: 95)

Jaya was introduced to her neighbour Kamal who motivate her to think and act independently about her writing by appreciating and admiring. He inspires and cheers her to get serious, to be real and true to herself. This made her regain her self-confidence which had been lost. He further makes her to speak frankly about sex. What she could not speak with Mohan, was able to speak to Kamat. It makes her realize her 'self'. In this way, Kamat enables her to break 'long silence'. Jaya now resolves to assert her individuality by breaking 'that

long silence', putting down on paper that in her entire seventeen years of silence she had suppressed her desires.

.... people a man and woman could talk this way. With this man I had not been a woman. I had been just myself—
Jaya. There had been ease in our relationship, I had never known in any other. There had been nothing I could not say to him.

(That Long Silence: 153)

The companionship of Kamal made Jaya get her identity. However, she was not strong enough to challenge the traditional value system of the society. Though she had lost faith in her husband, she wanted to adjust with her present setup. She was of the opinion that no change comes suddenly, it takes a long time. Human happiness consists in harmonizing the opposites of life. The husband-wife relationship needs to be built on the values of democracy and socialism. In other words, rebelliousness is not the solution to the problems of life.

At the end of a novel Jaya's husband loses his confidence, his position as an engineer. In the urban and global society, her husband becomes the victim of corruption. During the 17 years of their marriage Mohan never asks her opinion on any matter but when an inquiry has been set up against him, he holds Jaya's hand and asks her to support the family through her career as a writer. But Jaya remains silent without knowing what to say. This is a kind of protest against her long silence, which makes her strong at the end of the novel.

Feminist movement has a great deal in this regard. The feminist writings of Indian literature probe into the pathetic situation of women in the male-dominated society in general and in the institution of family in particular. In order to establish social harmony, the harmony in the family needs to be established. There has to be an end to the discriminations on women based on

the gender. No gender is superior in this world. Gender equity, justice and equality have a bearing on attaining gender development in order to have peace, harmony and love in the family relationships.

“There was no aphrodisiac more powerful than talking, no seduction more effective than curiosity.”

In ‘Custody’ Manju Kapur has tried to explore the finer nuances of a divorce – both pre and post. Not only are we taken through the journey of what leads up to one, but also the repercussions of this as well. The story takes us through the life of Raman, who works for ‘The Brand’, a leading soft drinks manufacturing company. He has this respectable job, gets paid handsomely, and leads a decently content life with his gorgeous wife Shagun, his smart teenager son Arjun and his adorable three year old daughter, Roohi.

Parellely, we are introduced to Ishita, who although not strikingly beautiful, is wise, kind and generous. Ishita gets married and leads a happy life, adapting to her new family, being everybody’s favourite.

Raman, like a dedicated employee, gets completely absorbed in his work and starts spending even less time with his family. Shagun, after leading a happily married life so far, decides that she is bored of being just a house-wife and now wants to start working. The twist begins with the entry of Raman’s bold and dashing boss – Ashok.

For Ashok, it is love-at-first-sight. He manages to somehow convince Shagun that an affair without the knowledge of her husband wouldn’t harm anybody. But slowly the relationship begins to get serious and Shagun is forced to choose.

Ishita on the other hand is diagnosed as infertile. The happiness in her married life slowly starts fading away. Her family’s behaviour changes instantly and she ends up being a divorcee. She then begins to channel her energies into social work and leads a comfortable enough life until... she meets Raman.

Shagun moves abroad, Raman refuses to divorce her and the case is dragged to court, with each party trying to defame the other. As the title ‘Custody’

suggests – here begins a crude battle for the guardianship of their children; a lethal game where the innocent children get trapped and are torn between their two sets of parents who later re-marry (Shagun-Ashok and Raman-Ishita).

Each character has a mindset, unique in its own way, reflecting the modern virtues that we have been adapting. The author manages to create a sublime atmosphere that reveals the various tragedies that a family can go through. The future of the children is at stake. There is screaming, yelling, and all the possible melodrama.

Manju Kapur delves deeper to give us an insight in to the mindsets of the children. How a teenager boy misses his father while he applies for admission in a new school, a school where his new step-father has been a legend. How a shy and clingy girl of three is coerced into believing that her birth mother loves her no more. How a brother is turned against his sister.

Manju Kapur's novel reveals and explores the uncertain side of the married life, family and individual sense of satisfaction. "As immigrants fly across oceans they shed their old clothing because clothes maketh the man and new ones help ease the transition."

"Custody" revolves around the story of Raman, a successful marketing executive at a global drinks company and Shagun, Raman's beautiful better half. Raman and Shagun have two children. The couple has an eight year old son, Arjun, who looks like Shagun, and two year old daughter, Roohi who looks like Raman. By the virtue of Raman working in a reputed company, his family enjoys the monetary benefits and lifestyle. The company he works for largely invests in the manufacture of soft drinks.

Raman's boss' entry catalyzes the climax. The couple enjoys all the bliss of marriage, but one day when Shagun meets Ashok, Raman's boss at the brand and everything changes. Dynamic Ashok and beautiful Shagun, begin a passionate love affair. The affair grows larger to an extent that Shagun starts feeling uncomfortable and disturbed to playing the role as a wife, lover and mother. The battle between the happy couple begins. The lovebirds once upon

a time, become enemies. Then, the ugly war takes over to the phase where she demand for a divorce, further moving onto the issues of custody of the children. Raman is shattered with all this as his happy married life becomes scattered. He feels angry on all this and pities himself.

Caught in this concentrated fight is the childless Ishita, who is possessed by the idea of motherhood. Ishita is a young divorcee who leads an independent life in the other part of the city. She feels satisfied in the social work that she is doing. Eventually, she gets attracted towards Raman, who is also a divorcee by then. She tempted about making a family and having a sense of completeness that she is yet to explore, and the idea of motherhood already appeals her. Among this story of broken hearts, relations and divorce, children become the silent observer. Entire second half of the novel is engrossed in seeing the devastating side-effects of the fight for the custody and its consequent resultants and trauma.

She is unparalleled in her depiction of the struggling female characters of the middleclass, particularly after getting divorce, in the patriarchal society. She focuses on two significant things in her novel, Custody– infidelity and infertility. Shagun's infidelity and Ishita's infertility lead to the collapse of their marriages. They are destined to lead hopeless life. They get divorce to start a new beginning with their new life partners. They are married, divorced and re-married to reclaim their happy space; however, they could not get what they desired for themselves. Marriage is a legally and socially acknowledged bonding between a man and a woman to live together as members of the society.

Marriage joins two souls in Indian culture and it colorfully lasts, in most of the cases, until the last hour of life; but in reality it is often declined by separation or divorce in the contemporary society. Every wedding brings problems and disputes, but it does not mean a man or woman should discontinue his or her life as a conscientious member of the society. A man or woman can easily get divorce in today's time and resettle himself or herself in the society on his/her own conditions. It is often seen that after divorce, a

woman faces more challenges than a man and suffers continuously. Therefore, Manju Kapur gives hopes and aspirations to the readers through her characters— Shagun and Ishita, who also experience the pains of divorce and anyhow survive on remarrying the men of their choices. It reveals their healthy outlook on life along with strength, liveliness and optimism for redefining their new space in the second part of their journey.

“When one was reinventing oneself, anywhere could be home.”

The novel begins with the sad notes buzzing in the lives of Raman and Shagun, who have dramatically lost happiness in their married life. They quarrel and blame for nothing. They are in a fix. They do not know how to settle their matters and continue their life as husband and wife. Their “marriage had been arranged along standard lines; she the beauty, he the one with the brilliant prospects” (Custody 14).

But, the beauty and the brain fail to harmonize and adjust in a time in spite of all material comforts in the capital of India. The problem is that Raman is stupid rather practical in dealing with his disgruntled wife. He does not have time for his wife, for his children and even for himself. He spends his whole time for the growth of a flourishing soft drinks company. His job addiction appears to have spoiled his family life making Shagun realize that there is nothing left joyful in her married life.

Amidst all these conflicts, Shagun falls in love with stylish Ashok Khanna, the boss of Raman. The love affair creates a big chasm between the husband and wife leading to separation, divorce, re-marriage and a custody battle for their children—Arjun and Roohi. Raman, who is egoist and stoic by nature, wants to treat his wife like a doormat; whereas Shagun, who is somewhat bold and also submissive, wants to enjoy her life filled with romance. Being dissatisfied with her married life, she wants a big change and, therefore, does not bow down before the circumstances. The novelist remarks:

“The dissatisfaction that occurs in most marriages was not allowed dissipation; instead, she clung to reasons to justify her unfaithfulness”.

Even at this stage Raman fails to understand his wife and finds aloofness in her behavior. “May be it was the baby she hadn’t really wanted, may be it was all the travelling he had to do, had always had to do”

Shagun takes her life in her own ways. She does not want to waste her life in child bearing and child rearing and other typical household activities. She wants liberty and social justice.

Once she frankly told all this to her husband: “I’ll be thirty, Arjun is just becoming independent, and I don’t want to start all over again. Always tied to a child”. She wants to do something else—something romantic, something lively in her life. She feels lonely all the times. She communicates it to Raman: “I want something else in my life, can’t you understand that? We always meet the same people, talk about the same things over and over. It’s boring”. Shagun becomes introvert. She does not even give proper response to her husband and his parents. Raman loses his patience on finding his wife not showing respect to his parents. The mutual bond between the husband and the wife seems to be broken at this stage. Raman is furious. He does not know what to do. Shagun does not care for anything. She does not want to continue her marriage with Raman. She wants Ashok’s company and perhaps it is her destiny to re-marry with him.

Shagun gets this rebellious temperament from the very beginning of her life. She had dreams for her life and career before marriage, but she was never allowed to do what she wanted to do in her life. Her desires and dreams were shattered in the patriarchal society. She had a strong desire to become a successful model, but her mother did not allow her lovely daughter. Her mother advised her to fulfill her dreams after marriage, but just after the marriage she conceived a child and was engulfed by the household works. Raman fails to understand the dreams and desires of his wife. He fails to give her proper space to grow and flourish. He fails to identify and acknowledge the significance of his wife, not only in his life, but also in the public.

Even he does not have faith in his wife: “Raman didn’t trust the world when it came to his wife”. He finds out the infidelity of his wife with the help of a spy,

consequently becomes infuriated and eventually wants to take revenge at any cost. He feels defeated at this moment.

He contemplates:

“No protest, however strong, could get back the security he had lost. He remained bent over his desk simulating work, as the office slowly emptied”.

He feels dejected and rejected on knowing of betrayal from the two most significant persons from home and his office. Shagun is shocked to know that her husband used a spy to track her relation with Ashok. This sudden revelation creates a feeling of hatred in her towards her husband. She feels as if she is challenged by the male-dominated society. She is advised by her mother to be faithful to her husband. Therefore, she plans to change her mind; But when she observes the face of her husband, she loses her patience: she “made a thousand resolutions; be wife-like, be good, docile, compliant, but the mere sight of him sent these decisions out of the window”.

Meanwhile, her lover Ashok also molds her mind and wittingly removes her fear of the traditional value-system of Indian society. He consoles her thus– “That’s why you are afraid. But it will be all fine, Trust me, darling”

Shagun listens to the voice of her heart, desires for divorce from Raman and gets on a new life with her lover. Now the battle for custody starts flamingly. Shagun begins the battle first. She muses:

“You know I hated all this hole-in-corner stuff. If you have to get a divorce, fight for the custody, let’s start now”.

It casts a bad impact on Raman. Raman suffers with a severe heart attack. But, this incident could not unite the husband and wife. Raman becomes enraged and does not want to give divorce to her. He uses his children to win the battle. On the contrary, Shagun herself is not willing to sacrifice her joys. She wants to be successful, to be independent and to be satisfied. She wants to create her own space in the patriarchal society.

Raman is distressed to find the changed attitude of Shagun. Being panic, he sobs for the whole night. He blames his wife for creating problems in his life. He

even curses his fate for all this. His broken bonds with Shagun become nightmarish for him. He wants to get relief from this bereavement. He decides to make distance from her so that he can safeguard his honor as a man in the society. Now his divorce is inevitable; but he has the strong desire to take custody of his children.

Suddenly, a new thread adds to his painful story—one evening Shagun takes away the children sneakily. He is bewildered; whereas the children, suffering at the hands of their own parents, do not know what is good and what is bad. They become the play cards of the game going on between the husband and the wife.

Though they start legal fight to take the custody of the children, they do not know that, “the law was a cut-and-dried business, once you got swamped in outrage, indignation, grief and anger, you are nowhere”

Shagun had a dream to become a model and wanted to lead a happy life after divorce. But, her lover Ashok fails to give her proper space in his life and proves himself the worst caretaker of her children. His academic qualification could not make him socially sensitive and cultured. His business experience could not effectively connect him with his beloved and her children. It spoils the simple joys of the innocent minds. Roohi, the daughter of Shagun, experiences a slight nerve disorder. So is the case with Arjun, the son, who could not properly perform in his studies. The son lives with his mother, who frequently alters and controls his mind. As a result, he could not connect himself with his father. Moreover, Raman does not get the opportunity to love and counsel his children. Raman is left on his toes when his son is admitted in a boarding school. The judiciary system also could not do justice to Raman who is given the only right to visit his son on every weekend. Last but not least, Raman and Shagun are divorced, and Raman comes out from his fascination for Shagun. He hums, “It would be prudent to forget her existence as quickly as possible. From now he would devote himself to his children”.

“When Shagun leaves Raman for another man, a bitter legal battle ensues. The custody of their two young children is thrown into question and Shagun must decide what price she will pay for freedom...”

Raman gets a new path in his life when an ill-fated divorcee Ishita joins him on the advice and consent of his parents. Ishita is infertile and wants to restart her life on declining of her first marriage. Her marriage is broken for the reason that she could not produce children of her own. She remarries Raman for setting her life in the contemporary society.

Knowing the expectations of her in-laws, Ishita makes all possible efforts to continue her marriage. She even gets a number of agonizing and mind-numbing medical treatments for her infertility. At this, she wretchedly feels: "Smaller than the ants on the ground, smaller than the motes of the dust in the sunlit air, smaller than drops of dew caught between blades of grass in the morning" (Custody65).

One day she finds the truth in the gynecologist's office that she cannot conceive; whereas her husband SK decides not to love her anymore. Her mother-in-law has a rigid and outdated point of view when she ironically remarks: "For us money is not as important as family. But beta, it is essential that Suryakanta have a child. As the only son, he has to make sure that the bloodline of his forefathers continues. And now I need to talk to your mother".

Ishita is too much upset on hearing all this from her mother-in-law. She is helpless. Suddenly, she gets a new space as a social worker in Mrs. Hingorani's NGO. To engage herself she works there. She even thinks of adoption of a child, but she could not gather courage to take this step for changing her life. She thinks of her parents, in-laws, husband, society and their honor and this mere thought makes her feel dejected and gloomy: "If only she could tear out her whole reproductive system and throw it on the road. She hated her body, hated it. Everybody in the building must know why she had come back. Return to sender". She suffers because of her husband's cowardice and imprudent expectations.

The novelist presents her women as weak and strong, dependent and independent, non-educated and educated, unemployed and employed and rejected and accepted in the socio-psychological scenario of the country. Shagun tries to explore new grounds for herself; whereas Ishita makes efforts to find solutions to her problems through social work. However, Ishita

renounces her social services on meeting with the divorced Raman. She willingly joins Ratan and his household activities and tries to find delight as a stepmother to Roohi, the daughter of Raman. Perhaps this is the only solution to her troubles. Ishita is happy to become the stepmother to Roohi, but Shagun is upset to see all this. Shagun continues her fight with Raman for the guardianship of Arjun and Ruhi; whereas Raman is adamant not to leave his children. Raman struggles and suffers a lot in the process of custody. The pain of separation from his children also pinches him.

In reality, both Raman and Shagun face the problems and are denied custody of their lovely issues. Even their divorce could not bring joy and peace in their fragmented lives. Raman has his daughter, which Shagun misses badly; whereas Shagun has hold over her son, who could not perceive the love of his father. In this embarrassing situation, Ishita is in the great loss as she has neither Raman as a whole nor she could build space in the heart of Arjun. No doubt, Ishita remains very serious to become a replica mother to the daughter of Raman, but she feels insecure for the reason that Ruhi might be snatched away one day by her mother. She expresses her fear thus: "I think my heart will break. I cannot bear this half-here-half-there. I have given her everything—not because of you, but because of her— I feel this constant tension in my head with the fear of losing her".

This is the outcome of modernization in the 21st century. Both in rural and urban social systems the quest for the economic and social modernization has triggered cultural forces, which also foster disvalues like fanaticism, acquisitiveness, opportunistic utilitarianism, revivalism, communalism, casteism and regionalism. This has resulted from social modernization in Indian society during the past years after Independence. (Chauhan26)

Manju Kapur is sophisticated and sharp in the depiction of her characters, particularly the female ones. She provides significant space to Raman, Ashok, Shagun and Ishita in her fictional world.

In fact, the new space provided to Ashok and Shagun could not bring satisfaction and enduring peace in their lives. So is the case with Raman and Ishita, who are tormented with fears and frustrations in their lives. The child characters—Arjun and Ruhi are destined to become the bones of contentions and hopelessly survive in the novel. SK and his mother are typical Indians who do not know how to balance life in the fast changing social-structure of India. Thus, in Manju Kapur's *Custody*, the search of all these characters for new space fails to lead to a life of delight and fulfillment. In spite of that, something is always left—faith, hope and love in the human journey.

"I don't want to start all over again. Always tied to a child".

DISCUSSION

So, after having a complete glance of *Custody*, we find that Manju Kapur has given the immense shades of feminism in this novel. She has given so many aspects of feminism in this novel that they cannot be explored by one character. That is why she has developed the characters of two protagonists, Shagun and Ishita. Though as a human being, Shagun also has right to live her life as per her own wish but before moving forward on her way, she should have considered about her family also where she has a loving husband and two innocent children. On the other hand Ishita who has received rejection in her first marriage due to her infertility, embraces the love of Roohi and Raman in the depths of her heart and becomes possessive also for Roohi. She is afraid of losing Roohi. Ishita and Shagun are completely different from each other. As Jasbir Jain says in her article *Gender and Narrative Strategy*, "This is not merely a story; it is a battlefield of sorts that tears your heart and soul apart because of its masterful narrative and honesty. Read it but be ready to cry."

Feminism in the Novel "THAT LONG SILENCE" In this novel, Deshpande deals with the burning issues regarding women's position in the family and the society. ... She can be intercepted as a present time women of indecision who waves between family and self-assertion.

Perhaps Deshpande's best work is her fifth novel, *That Long Silence*. The narrator Jaya, an upper-middle-class housewife with two teenage children, is forced to take stock of her life when her husband is suspected of fraud. They move into a small flat in a poorer locality of Bombay, giving up their luxurious house. The novel reveals the hollowness of modern Indian life, where success is seen as a convenient arranged marriage to an upwardly mobile husband with the children studying in "good" schools. The repetitiveness and sheer drabness of the life of a woman with material comforts is vividly represented, "the glassware that had to sparkle, the furniture and curios that had to be kept spotless and dust-free, and those clothes, God, all those never-ending piles of clothes that had to be washed and ironed, so that they could be worn and washed and ironed once again." Though she is a writer, Jaya has not achieved true self-expression. There is something almost suffocating about the narrowness of the narrator's life.

The novel contains nothing outside the narrator's narrow ambit. India's tradition and philosophy (which occupy an important place in the work of novelists like Raja Rao) have no place here. We get a glimpse of Hinduism in the numerous fasts observed by women for the wellbeing of husbands, sons or brothers. Jaya's irritation at such sexist rituals is palpable—it is clear that she feels strongly about the ill-treatment of the girl-child in India. The only reference to India's "glorious" past is in Jaya's comment that in Sanskrit drama, the women did not speak Sanskrit—they were confined to Prakrit, a less polished language, imposing a kind of silence on them.

In spite of her English education, Jaya is like the other women in the novel, such as the half-crazed Kusum, a distant relative, or Jeeja, their poor maid-servant. They are all trapped in their own self-created silence, and are incapable of breaking away from the supportive yet stifling extended family. The narrow focus of the novel results in an intensity which is almost painful. All the characters, including Mohan, Jaya's husband, are fully realized, though none of them, including the narrator Jaya, are likable.

Deshpande usually has the heroine as the narrator, and employs a kind of stream-of-consciousness technique. The narrative goes back and forth in time,

so the narrator can describe events with the benefit of hindsight. It would not be correct to term her a feminist, because there is nothing doctrinaire about her fiction; she simply portrays, in depth, the meaning of being a woman in modern India. Exemplary of her worldview is *A Matter of Time*, her first novel published in the United States: it is the tale of a woman abandoned by a man. The woman is Sumi, who has three daughters; the man is her husband, a professor named Gopal; and her abandonment forces her to return to the family's home in Bangalore. The issues Sumi faces are not Indian problems; they are universal ones—not just the difficulties in her marriage, but the conflicts within her family as well.

Shashi Deshpande seems to have fostered a dislike for the institution of marriage as it obtains in the context of Indian Society. Marriage, she probably believes, is a contrivance to subjugate women. She does not appear to endorse the view that marriages are made in heaven and that the post - marital life showers heavenly pleasure and bliss upon women. Rather marriage legitimizes all kinds of injustices and violence perpetrated on women. Man loses interest in wife in course of time.

Distinguishing between wife and lover, Osho observes that a person is afraid of his beloved because beloved carries a sense of insecurity in relationship, she may elope, and she may be forced out of relationship by some external pressure. But there is no such sense of threat when the beloved marries the person and becomes his wife. A wife is an object. She is like a killed enemy. She becomes an object and behaves like that. Like an object she is at the command of the person she married. She is bound to act as the husband wants her to. She may be compared to an electric switch of a fan which moves the fan the moment it is put in on-position. So by marrying a woman, particularly in India women are turned into objects. In *That Long Silence*, Shashi Deshpande puts forward her view on marriage through Vanitai. Vanitamami tells Jaya about the imbalanced relationship of husband and wife after marriage.

These words keep on echoing in the ears of Jaya and she realizes that since a husband is like a sheltering tree, he must be nourished and nurtured adequately even if the wife has to suffer to give it nourishment Marriage, which

in India is considered to be the most important relationship. I'm never going to get married. Her reading of Erica Jong has made her perceive new dimensions of betrayal and cruelty in the woman-man relationship.

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* also Saru finds her marital condition unbearable and feels the desperation of a trapped animal. Her grandmother, deserted by her husband Had never complained and had accepted her plight as her 'luck'; believing that It was written on my forehead. And Saru's mother did not have a room of her own and silence had become a habit between her and her husband. Only the movies can elevate marriage, maintains the latest novel, *A Matter of Time*, to a pedestal, making in the culminating event of a lifetime, of several life times. It is not that marriage and married life have lost their original sanctity and glory and are reduced to the level of a fade of shame. But the institution of marriage, ever since its creation, is successfully serving the purposes of man- made society the purpose of domination of men and subordination of women.

Marriages have compartmentalized men and women. Women have been assigned an inferior place and the institution of marriage has been aimed at keeping this arrangement intact and undisturbed. Now, the futility and meaninglessness of marriage are beginning to be understood by the womenfolk. They have begun to realize the worthlessness of husbands. To cite a concrete case from *The Binding Vine* Sakutai, who had often wished to have her mangalsutra made of gold, finally realizes the futility of the endeavour.

The man himself is so worthless, why should I bother to have this thing made in precious gold. According to the novelist a woman is only meant to be married and procreate children.

We are reminded in *The Binding Vine* If a girl's honour is lost, what is left? The girl doesn't have to do anything wrong; people will always point a finger at her. The role of wife in the present times is nothing less than walking on the razors edge.

Realizing this fact, Saru was obliged to give the following ironical imaginary advice to future wives in Nalu's college. A wife must always be a few feet

behind her husband. That's the only rule to follow if you want to happy marriage. Don't ever try to reverse the doctor, Nurse, executive secretary, principal. Teacher role Women's magazines will tell you that a marriage should be equal partnership. That's nonsense rubbish. No partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it's unequal-in favor of your husband.

What makes matter worse for Indian women is that there are no choices before them. Like marriage, their decisions are made in the heaven of their husband's mind. As it is written in *Roots and Shadows*: Millions of girls have asked this question millions of times in this country what choice do I have? Surely it is this fact that I can choose, that differentiates me from the animals. But years of blindfolding can obscure your vision so you no more see the choices. Years of shackling can hamper your movement so that you can no more moves out or your cage of no choices. But marriage, we are reminded in *A Matter of Time* is not for everyone. The demand it makes a life time of commitment is not possible for all of us. It is no longer a sacrament; it is a convenient arrangement always to the disadvantage of woman.

The central character in *Roots and Shadows* observes. What was marriage after all, but two people brought together after a cold-blooded bargaining to meet, make and reproduce so that generations might continue. In *That Long Silence* also, a married couple is compared to a pair of bullocks yoked together.

Matrimony is often regarded in India. In many cases, however, it serves as a woman in hands of patriarchy to coerce and silence Manju in *If I Die Today* summarizes the common predicament sufficiently: A marriage you start off expecting so many things. And bit-by-bit, like dead leaves, the expectations fall off. But two people who have shut themselves off in two separate glass jars. Who can see each other but can't communicate. Is this a marriage? Shashi Deshpande is, at her heart, a realist. She presents India of the eighties. As Veena Shashadri remarks, she believes in presenting life as it is and not as it is should be, and like Jaya of *That Long Silence* many Indian wives keep on perennially groping about their fate, but unwilling to do anything that could result in their being tossed out of their comfortable ruts and also into the big,

bad world of reality, to fend for themselves. (VeenaShashadri,1988:)The narrator in *If I Die Today* declares that these are not characters by Agantha Christie but Real people (166) The publication of *That Long Silence* by the Virago press made its own contribution to this belief. Deshpande herself regards the novel as more meaningful than any other of the novels, for it deals with a much longer issue the long silence of women.

Shashi Deshpande seems to have been referring to the point that the physiological features of women have always proved detrimental to their claims of equality in the society. The physical functions of women such as menstruation, pregnancy and procreation have continued to keep them tethered to subordination. She has remarked the following on this issue. I have a very strong feeling that until recently women in our society has been looked upon just as breeding animals: They had no other role in life. I have a strong objection of treating any human being in that manner. The whole chronology of their life centers on child birth. The stress laid upon the feminine functions, at the cost of all your potentials as an individual, enraged me may be too much of thinking has made me express a sort of dislike for the purely physical aspects of feminine life, making it seems as if I am totally against all feminine functions, which is not the truth at all. She depicts the Indian society of the eighties. She neither idealizes nor paints her characters with emotionalism and sentimentalism. As Veena Sheshadri remarks, she believes in presenting life as it is not as it should be. Deshpande is a realist. She draws a real picture of contemporary women's world in her novels. The novelist desires that married women should live on equal footing, Man and woman are like two pillars of the society on which rests the entire structure of the society. An imbalance among the pillars may prove quite disastrous for the whole structure of the society.

Marriage is considered to be a traditional symbol and pious relation which exists between two people's life. People fall in love and at times fall out of love too in the later part of their life when they realise that their survival in such a competitive world is quite difficult to maintain. As the world advances the women too become aware of their rights, their unfulfilled dreams and desires which were once subjugated after her married life. Today she is craving to

establish her own identity in this competitive world because of the advent of modernity. This year of her sister both for her own self and for her family members as her suppressed desire ruins the whole family. This is because she wants to be free and gain equal status in all spheres. As the Indians are adopting the western cultures and tradition of modern outlook they are rejecting their own values and morals.

(Women in Vedic Age,) In the fiction *Custody*, one gets an overview of how Shagun's urge, to gain liberation destroys the life of her two children. Shagun is the main protagonists of this fiction, married to Raman Kaushik, a sales manager in one of the reputed companies. His hard struggle and true devotion towards his duties provided him great luxury with emptiness. On the other hand, Shagun spends her each day in the service of her family with the hope that she will lead a good life with her husband someday but it never happens. This paves way for her to get attracted towards Ashok Khanna, Raman's boss. It was Mr. Khanna, who gave wings to her dreams so that she can soar high in the sky. This caring love that she received from him compelled Shagun to divorce her husband. Shagun's life got distorted with many orifices in it. I want something else in my life, can't you understand that? We always meet the same people, talk about the same old things over and over. It's boring. Shagun's mother forbade her daughter to stop being engaged with an outside man since she is married and a mother of two children. But love is blind and she continued with her extra- marital relationship with Mr. Khanna. This resulted in divorce and destruction of the whole life of their children.

In *The Second Sex* Beauvoir clearly states for woman who are identity-oriented and want to become independent: Once she ceases to be a parasite, the system based on her dependence crumbles; between her and the universe there is no longer any need for a masculine mediator. (*The Second Sex*, 412)

The tussle between Raman, Shagun and Ishita makes both Arjun and Roohi suffer both mentally and physically because of the hypocrisy played by the adults. In one of the book reviews Manju Kapur has herself realized. The relationship of a child with his/her parents is perhaps the most beautiful one this earth. It defines that a child makes him what they are when they grow up.

Basking in the love of both the parents is a blessing but having to choose from either of them is a very traumatic experience. On hearing the news of their parents' divorce the children got tensed with the feeling of insecurity.

They realized that the cosines they had been experiencing is no more going to be with them. They have the fear that now their parents will get replaced by 'new ones'. They became too stressful as they do not want their parents to get separated.

The children moved towards isolation and depression because of the financial problems that they may face in future. They seem to develop anger and become disobedience, paying no heed to their parents 'sayings. They believed that if their parents do not care for them why should they be bothered. The innocence and care freeness of childhood was lost forever for them. These fears and trauma left a scar on the mind of Arjun and Roohi which could be erased easily.

Divorce is a life-transforming experience. After divorce, childhood is different. Adolescence is different. Adulthood with the decision to marry or not and have children or not-is different. Whether the outcome is good or bad, the whole trajectory of an individual's life is profoundly altered by the divorce experience. (Dr. Judith S.Wallerstein, noted divorce researcher) Arjun and later on Roohi went through number of psychological and behavioral changes .

A sense of rejection and insecurity embraced them from all sides. They felt helpless because they were torn between their parents love and hatred. They gradually lost trust on other people near them and were not ready to accept their new parents. When a child's parents divorce, the experience always leaving a relationship. It is opined by many psychologists that children go through many adverse effects after their parents' divorce. 'Divorce introduces a massive change into the life of a boy or girl no matter what the age.

Witnessing loss of love between parents, having parents break their marriage commitment, adjusting to going back and forth between two different households, and the daily absence of one parent while living with the other all create a challenging new family circumstance in which to live. Parental divorce

is a watershed event. Life that follows is completely changed from how life was before. The novel depicts the pain and suffering of children in a heartrenching manner that strikes a chord of sympathy for the two of them.

The writer is successful in exposing the ugliness of divorce in a very sensitive manner. The consequence of divorce is that it shatters the life of the children into million pieces that can never be arranged together anymore.

Thus, my paper concludes, Custody is about the lives, loves and losses of wealthy, urban, middle-class Indians and she excels at excavating unsettling secrets and exploring dysfunctional relationships.

THEORIES

Feminist theory

An extension of feminism's critique of male power and ideology, feminist theory combines elements of other theoretical models such as psychoanalysis, Marxism, post structuralism, and deconstruction to interrogate the role of gender in the writing, interpretation, and dissemination of literary texts. Originally concerned with the politics of women's authorship and representations of women in literature, feminist theory has recently begun to examine ideas of gender and sexuality across a wide range of disciplines including film studies, geography, and even economics.

Feminist theory emerged from the struggle for women's rights, beginning in the 18th century with Mary Wollstonecraft's publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Important feminist theorists of the 20th century include Betty Friedan, Julia Kristeva, Judith Butler, Elaine Showalter, Carol Gilligan, and Adrienne Rich.

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism also called ecological feminism, branch of feminism that examines the connections between women and nature. Its name was coined by French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974. Ecofeminism uses the basic feminist tenets of equality between genders, a revaluing of non-patriarchal or nonlinear structures, and a view of the world that respects organic processes, holistic connections, and the merits of intuition and collaboration. To these notions ecofeminism adds both a commitment to the environment and an awareness of the associations made between women and nature. Specifically, this philosophy emphasizes the ways both nature and women are treated by patriarchal (or male-centered) society.

Eco feminists examine the effect of gender categories in order to demonstrate the ways in which social norms exert unjust dominance over women and nature. The philosophy also contends that those norms lead to an incomplete view of the world, and its practitioners advocate an alternative worldview that values the earth as sacred, recognizes humanity's dependency on the natural world, and embraces all life as valuable.

Thus, contemporary ecofeminism must be developed to acknowledge the very real effects of race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality on a woman's social position. Women involved in environmental justice issues and women representing minority cultures have worked to establish their own sense of ecofeminism to include local cultures and spirituality, a celebration of their roles as mothers and caretakers, and recognition of the ways in which Western colonization compromised those beliefs.

Psychoanalytic Theory

By encouraging the patient to express any random thoughts that came associatively to mind, the technique aimed at uncovering hitherto unarticulated material from the realm of the psyche that Freud, following a long tradition, called the unconscious.

Because of its incompatibility with conscious thoughts or conflicts with other unconscious ones, this material was normally hidden, forgotten, or unavailable to conscious reflection. Difficulty in freely associating sudden silences, stuttering, or the like suggested to Freud the importance of the material struggling to be expressed, as well as the power of what he called the patient's defenses against that expression.

Stream of consciousness

The term was first used by the psychologist William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). As the psychological novel developed in the 20th century, some writers attempted to capture the total flow of their characters' consciousness, rather than limit themselves to rational thoughts. To represent the full richness, speed, and subtlety of the mind at work, the writer incorporates snatches of incoherent thought, ungrammatical constructions, and free association of ideas, images, and words at the pre-speech level.

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION:

The paper explores the place of a woman in today's society through the novel. The paper also studies the psyche of males. Man still thinks that woman is a piece of furniture kept in the house. They still want them to follow their steps without raising any question. Males psyche needs a major transformation. They must respect the females' desires and choices. Dr.Sapna Tiwari writes that it is also the females also who are responsible for their sufferings. They must raise their voice and fight back for their rights and place in the society. Dr Sapna Tiwari says that through the character Jaya, writer expresses that a woman can rebel and fight if anything is going wrong. She has all the rights to protest. A woman can only change woman's life. She has to take her steps and decisions to mark her identity.

The role of a traditional woman must change. Feminism is the theory which asserts that women have the equal rights and role to play in social and political scenario. A country can make all round progress only if the woman has the equal rights and opportunity to progress.

The portrayal of Jaya as an awakened woman, thus, soon fades into that of a middle-class romantic heroine whose courage fails at the first encounter with reality. All her revolutionary ideas sag by the time the challenge presents itself. Her realization that her own children are distanced from her besides her husband's accusation of having let him down is sufficient to shake her dreams of glory for her. Jaya, thus, signifies the weakness of the servile mind of the service classes. If the conclusion Jaya arrives at is taken as the authorial sanction, then Indian womanhood has no hopes of salvaging her image even with the westernized education. Thus, Deshpande offers appalling spectra of the modern woman heaving a sigh of relief after realizing, "There was nothing he needed, so there was nothing for me to do, nothing I had to do."

Another important aspect of the narrative of *That Long Silence* is that Jaya is heroic in her ideas and perceptions only so long as she stays on the subjective

grounds of Church gate. All her heroism sags when she shifts to the upper-floor flat at Dadar. Now, she reflects upon the ground-realities from some height. She is not involved in them because life has come to a stand still for her. The upper-floor existence signifies the, objective state as against the subjective mode at the Church gate. No hopes are offered: if Mohan is reinstated, life will start flowing again for Jaya; if not, then she shows no sign of recovery from the shock of realization. There is no vision offered: Jaya can be happy only as a devoted but complacent wife.

Twentieth century marks the emergence of many women writers on the Indian literary scene. The stories presented are also presented through this has been written from the women's point of view and though the long silence is broken and women express their anguish, the picture is still grim. Although the women wish to take a bold step, because of certain values instilled in them right from childhood, they feel a sense of guilt if they break the established norms. For instance, Malini in *Starry Nights* who, in preference to her husband, children and family, gives up her career as a gazal singer. Maya in *Second Thoughts*, compiles with the traditional norms.

Naturally very limited freedom is granted to such women. Sooner or later they learn to adjust, as there is no other alternative, if they need to live a respectful life. Maya, too accepts to remain enveloped in the loneliness and sadness of her life. On second thoughts, she learns to survive the sultriness of not only Mumbai, but also of her marriage. This clearly shows that the reality hidden behind the glamorous and glittering life of the modern women is extremely bitter because after the temporary glamour vanishes, they have to learn to live with the stark realities of life. Deshpande's novel *That Long Silence* captures the leitmotifs running through all her short stories. Jaya's life falls apart when her husband is suspended from work after allegations of malpractice against him. Her ordinary existence is disrupted; the future of the family is in jeopardy. Jaya is an unsuccessful writer, haunted by memories. Differences with her husband, frustrations in their seventeen-year marriage, disappointment in her two teenage children and the claustrophobia of her childhood all begin to surface. She says: "surely there comes a moment in every human life when he or she

says, like the Sibyl – I wish to die.” In her small, suburban Bombay flat, Jaya grapples with these and other truths, among them her failure at writing and her fear of anger. Deshpande portrays a woman trying to erase a ‘long silence’ begun in childhood: ‘I had learnt it at last, no questions, no retorts, only silence.’

For Deshpande, female autonomy and selfhood relate to sexuality and identity; she explores the body as a site of subjugation and social control. In ‘The Intrusion’, couples are on their honeymoon at a seaside village. The groom makes advances towards his bride who is lost in reflections of her past life and their arranged marriage.

The female characters of Manju Kapur want to go beyond the boundaries their societies and cultures make for them. They try to create a space beyond the accepted norms. To step on to the new path, women need to have the freedom to make a choice and to experience the present. But the social codes of conduct and the roles they enforce prevent women from experiencing the strength in them. The subordination of women by other women works as a chain. Kasturi was subordinated by her mother and Virmati by Kasturi and Ida by Virmati. This kind of subordination moves from one generation to another. Though all these mothers endured suffering from their mothers, they also imposed suffering on the next generation in turn. Women let their oppressors subordinate them by readily internalizing patriarchal values. Such internalizing allows the system to control them through their own beliefs.

Self-discovery is the recognition of general situation of domination by the oppressed. One cannot achieve power unless one knows that one is powerless. Kapur shows that women from childhood are not trained how to attain power and maintain it. They are always asked to behave according to the ethics of the home, as Astha was trained. The female body is always at a disadvantage. The woman is either defiant about her sexuality as in *Difficult Daughters* or rebel as in *A Married Woman*. For a woman, sexuality is a domain of restriction, danger and repression. It can also be argued that sexuality becomes a reason of woman's oppression.

One of the things that become clear through the analysis of the novels is that women do have the strength in themselves but the problem is that they get caught in the web of patriarchy and forget their strength. They need to move towards self-realization but the process each one goes through is different from the other.

The present research work chiefly discusses the theme of marriage. Other themes such as family and gender relationships, mother-daughter relationship, husband-wife relationship, separation, extramarital relationship etc

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