

## The Concept of Emerging New Woman in Shashi Deshpande's Novel: *In The Country Of Deceit*.

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**Abstract:** *The male-dominated patriarchal system of society has its deep-rooted traditional background up to the very primitive Indian civilization under which the women of almost every region of Indian environment had to be humiliated, devalued, exploited, harassed, discriminated and to become mere the follower of the prevailing autocratic system of society. Such system of society profoundly being expected the female category to be highly obedient and same time to be subservient to convictions laid down by the traditional rituals particularly for the female creatures only. These outdated practices advocated to provide some considerable freedom to male category of the society, but women are meant to be play their roles for their respective households just like the puppets in the hands of their male-counterparts. Women are supposed to play their submissive roles for their respective household by living inside their households like; obeying traditional customary rituals, undertaking every kind of activity as per the aspirations of familial tradition and cultures, raising progeny for their pedigree and nurturing them as per the yearning of their in-laws' long-establish intellectualism. Consequently, the process of such dead habits is ongoing from generations to generations and every coming procreation is automatically becoming the part of prevailing outdated practices being employed by the conventional outlook of the cultural background. The profounder and the propagators of such solemnity are strongly in the favour of making every community of Indian civilization to be subservient to such contemplations. But among this craftsman of the society, there have been some awakened personalities like some social reformers and some feminists who want to have some desirable changes in the present conditions of the women category of the civilization. Some of the female characters are there who are highly cultured and aware about their situation under the circumstances of their extreme devaluation do not want to be humiliate anymore. These women want to establish their own norms to live their respective lives with freedom of their own and the norms to be established by their own standpoint. Shashi Deshpande, produces her female protagonist, Devayani Mudhol as such bold and independent character who has appeared as the torchbearer to pave the way of freedom and self-oriented attitude for her women companions and followers of the fellowship association.*

**Key Words:** *Conservative, Customary, Devaluation, Discrimination, Emergence, Exploitation, Humiliation,*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Shashi Deshpande is one of the great Indian feminist writers who has studied enormously about the women of the society torn between their familial duties and their responsibilities towards their households as per the presupposition of the conventional rituals of the society. A large number of women consider and follow the same to keep and raise the honour and standard of their familial households high enough within the communities they live in, without caring for their own respect and reputation to the great extent. But on the other hand, there are some handful of educated and awakened women also who do not want to be the subservient creature to the dead rituals of society. These women are trying their best to be free from the traditional bonds of the primitive civilisation. Among such women, there are the female protagonists of Shashi Deshpande, who although are living in the vulnerable conditions under male dominated patriarchal system of society but dare to show their courage against such old-dated rituals and finally succeed to establish their own independent identity by becoming the emerging women of new civilization. Devayani Mudhol is one such female protagonist of Shashi Deshpande, who succeeds to initiate her recognition as an emerging woman of the civilization through her liberal attitude of modernity as per the declaration by Simon de Beauvoir:

“She does not accept the destiny assigned to her by nature and by society and yet she does not repudiate it completely. Thus, she is divided against herself.” (Simon 330).

## 2. The Emergence of New Woman Through Devayani Mudholin the Novel: In The Country of Deceit:

The female protagonist of Shashi Deshpande, who has been taken for the present study is Devayani Mudhol. She is a straightforward, valiant, valorous and new-fashioned knowledgeable enlightened girl of contemporary world civilization. Although, she is the member of such community where traditional orthodox thinking prevails over the society, and where women are less valued than men of the society in every sphere of life such as; in their respective households, society, community participation, education, literature and in the political domain etc. But Devayani succeeds to cross such barriers of the customary rituals of society with her own realistic philosophy towards life to lead a life of self-respect, self-realisation and self-dependence, self-actualization and self-satisfaction or contentment etc. She is a law student who is well aware with the constitutional framework and legal rights which are reserved for the women category of the Indian civilization. While living in such orthodox society, her march towards her emergence has been like the remarks of Greene:

“The emergence of feminist ideas and feminist politics depends on the understandings that in all societies which divide the sexes into differing culture, economic or political spheres, women are less valued than men. Feminism also depends on the premise that women can consciously and collectively change their social place”. (Greene, 1991)

The traditional contemplation anticipates that the male members of the society are responsible to hold and to perform the outside home affairs and the women of the households are only meant to take the familial duties and other homely affairs while living inside of their respective domestic households. But Shashi Deshpande here wants to reveal the hard fact of the contemporary civilization that this contemplation has now been changed to the great extent. The female protagonist Devyani, portrayed by Shashi Deshpande is the real example of an emerging women, who does not only perform the familial duties inside the threshold but steps forward to undertake the duties of the outside affairs also. To take pride for her significant substantial achievement Devayani observes:

Yes, I live alone. My sister and I had demolished our old home and build this one. (12)

The female protagonists of Shashi Deshpande are not only modernistic in their approach but they also possess prominent scholarly competence and potentialities over and above that. Devayani Mudhol is a highly literate woman among her community, where the women education is not much considered an important aspect to society. She successfully has procured a degree of law. Besides the Knowledge of constitutional provisions and legal expertise, she has a fervent engrossment for English literature and subsequently has a good command over English language. During the course of novel, she is engaged in one of her literary compositions. It is the work of her mother's teacher which has been given later to her (Devyani) for the purpose of translation from Kannada language to English language. She proudly takes advantage of her consummation by saying:

I'm translating a book, a history of Rajnur, from Kannada.” It was written by my mother's old teacher- he's dead now. When his son asked me to translate it, I couldn't say no. (14)

Thus, Shashi Deshpande categorises her female protagonists in the grade of those uprising women of the contemporary world civilization, who are going to be victorious in the competition being organised by themselves towards their betterment and upliftment. These women are working hard to substantiate their own self-supporting recognition. These women do not want to be tied with the bonds of traditional rituals anymore. Since the very primitive civilizations, the female category has been remained a subject of their humiliation and harassment. But now the feministic sensibility has been captured their cognitive domain of individuality and they are now setting up the new dimensions for their individual identity. In this connection, Simone de Beauvoir has rightly said:

“The women of today are in a fair way to dethrone the myth of femineity; they are beginning to affirm their independence in concrete ways; but they do not easily succeed in living completely the life of human being. Reared by women, within a feminine world, their normal destiny is marriage, which still means practically subordination to man; for masculine prestige is for from extinction, resting still upon solid, economic and social foundation”.

(Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*)

Devayani Mudhol is a young woman of about thirty years old, has been observed during the course of novel. She is still unmarried due to her responsibilities with regards to her family and to her parents after the marriage of her elder sister, Savitri. Her sister demands and persuades her to be married but she lives all alone in her parental home after the death of her mother. She is attracted by the towering personality of Ashok Chinappa, a police officer, a district S.P., who in response of her inclination towards him, takes much interest in Devayani. After a lot of persuasions by Ashok Chinappa, Devayani hand overs herself to her lover without being married which is an anti-social activity, but only through the spectacle of traditional attitude of the society. But Devayani Mudhol, being an extreme modernistic woman, does not care for any conventional rules and drives herself towards her desire of self-contentment through the romantic and sexual interconnection with her lover which is certainly seems the need of her age:

I lay in bed wide awake, conscious of my body in its nightdress, thinking, that's the point of marriage. Sex without guilt. Sex without any strings attached. Sex without fear. (77)

Devayani enjoys the happy and contented sex relationships with her lover Ashok. She is conscious with the fact that she is doing all such adultery against the norms of her conventional rituals of the society and even against the aspirations of her elder sister. But she continues to be in such life before her. She comes to know about Ashok's family background as he is a married man having his daughter of ten years old. But even knowing all this, she continues to be in such relationship with her lover as she is a new emerging woman of the modern world civilization. She herself commits all such in her contemplation to her satisfactory conjugal relationships with Ashok Chinappa:

I knew of course, that he had a wife, I had heard Rani refer to her. And children? Did he have any children? But why was I interested? What did it matter to me? I used to watch boys and girls indulge in it, amazed at the light-hearted banter, at the way they enjoyed the inane talk. But we are not boy and girl he is a man with family a wife and children. And I am a woman nearing thirty. No more conversations, not even monosyllabic answers. Even a 'yes' or a 'no' can give you away. Why, even silence can give you away! (78)

Devayani is not only an intellectually enlightened, strong and brave woman of the modern generation but is an extreme bold woman also, who does not care for those orthodox dogmas under which a woman has to suppress her desires and unsatisfactory physical needs of self-actualisation, as most of the women of Indian traditional patriarchal system do for the sake of their family reputation and welfare of their bloodline. The protagonist is such a liberal creature of civilization who is concerned only about her own well being and own physical needs rather than the needs and aspirations of the society and familial rituals. She does possess the belief, that such rituals and conventions only are the pretention to keep such unreasonable practices over the society and the women who follow them, are reluctantly following them, which is not logical in any sense. subsequently, she adventurously and fearlessly accepts and consider her physical needs and her conjugal relationships with her lover a result of one incident of both of their intimacy during a valorous sexual climax:

He carefully unpinned the sari and began unravelling it from my body...I let him go on...and now I was part of it too, my lips were seeking him, my hands began roving over his body, my body made room for him and finally painfully, joyfully, accepted him...' (132)

Every relation in this mortal human society is based upon some needs and motifs as well as on the basis of some selfishness drives behind it. Otherwise, it is such a fashionable time, where no one has to do anything with the life and future of others. Simultaneously, if one establishes any bond with anyone, it is for the sake of some future benefits to be taken and can be identify as a result-oriented relationship with someone. Devayani is an awakened woman and occupies considerable reputation in her surrounding for herself, does think of her sexual intimacy and conjugal relationship with her lover which certainly has no future, no further hope of union or well-being in such bond of love and even finally not any social recognition possible to be come out of such relationship. Because, Ashok Chinappa is already a married man, having his own familial life. The Indian communities and conventional norms of society do not confer validity to such connection and association. Therefore, such association is broadly identified as illicit love affair; an unforgiveable crime before an Indian idealistic society inspired by religious Indian philosophy and a great sin according to morality of Hindu mythology. But the protagonist is only aware with her emotional need and recognition first, and to maintain her life owing to her own terms and conditions. She plainly confesses her relationships with these sensational remarks:

Relationship? What relationship? Mistress? The other woman? The kept woman? (142)

While leading her life towards her self-sustaining individuality and herself-actualization Devayani is pressurised and threatened by her elder sister not to proceed forward with such meaningless relationships and advancement. She advises her younger sister to follow the conventional norms of civilisation about her further future life ahead to her rather than to live with such meaningless and futureless advancements. But Devayanni is only concerned about her own liberal attitude towards the modernity. Consequently, she ignores and rejects out rightly the idea of morality under the influence of her physical contact with Ashok and awful experience of newly established sexual life with Ashok Chinappa:

I did it because I wanted him, I wanted to be with him, I wanted to be in his company, I wanted to sleep with him, I wanted this relationship...(142)

Devayani Mudhol possesses a modern philosophical vent of mind with the effect of a contemporary realistic approach towards prospective progressing journey of her life. She herself is well aware and self-conscious with the possible consequences of her relationships with Ashok. When she is persuaded by her elder sister to end up with such unreasonable association between both of them, the protagonist directly come to the main point of discussion with her resolute determination in connection to her impulsive romantic life with her lover. She admits her love affair and is ready to face deliberately further possible consequences of such interconnection with Ashok by her statement to her sister with this remark:

He's not cheating me. I know we will never marry. And he hasn't deceived me. I knew he was married. In the car I told her that I was meeting Ashok in Bombay, that we were to spend two days together." (186)

The emergence of the protagonist of the novel does not seem only in her modernistic viewpoint towards the modernity but her fair thinking towards her individual freedom, her personal inclinations, her individualistic unconventional

recognition and her awareness also for her individual rights as provided to her with the practices availed in the Indian constitution for women category. Here Deshpande wants to show that it is the time of present dynamic scenario, where the awakened women of society have broken their silence and these women no longer want to be subservient to the traditional bonds of civilization. Now these women want to live a life according to their own terms and condition, and not by becoming the puppet in the hands of their male-counterparts or other members of family or community. When she perceives that her elder sister is making some most ardent efforts before her to keep her wide apart from her lover and love-making activities which are sufficient for her to satisfy her emotional needs of the time, she boldly rejects the direction of her sister Savitri whom she calls Savi in short and puts forth her ideology before her by saying: "I'm an adult; I can take my own decisions. You can't protect me, Savi, I'm not a child.'... I love him, Savi. It hurts me when you talk that way to him, about him. I love Ashok, can't you understand that?" (221)

### **3. SUMMARIZATION:**

Undoubtedly, some primitive habits and practices are still into the disposition and the blind followers of such practices are in favour of driving such dead dogmas over the upcoming generations too, like the unsighted devotees of such exercises. But there are some awakened individualities also, who do not want to live their precious independent life under such outdated eccentricity. These are some aware and awakened group of people who are well-educated and are vigilant towards their suppression under the tyrannical rules of traditional values. They also are cognizant with the idea that they themselves are responsible for their prevailed conditions and they have themselves have to work for their betterment and upliftment. Consequently, Devayani Mudhol, the female protagonist of the novel does not bother for the traditional bonds of the social norms and tries to lead her own independent life with her own term and conditions of life. She rises herself above the social constraints of the dead primitive rituals of the civilization and establishes her own unique identity as a liberal woman of the society. Hence, she paves the way to her predecessor women of the civilization towards their emergence and modernity as well.

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