



GLOBAL SHORTCOMINGS IN INDIAN SOCIETY DESCRIBED IN 'THAT LONG SILENCE'.

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ABSTRACT

The portraiture of women the entire world over have been all-too-myriad in their complexion, as they have been all-too-rich in their composition and all-too-variegated in their character. Picked up from the different times and diverse climes, even a random sample of these images soon reveals the wide spectrum of richness of their code, content and treatments their colures and contours.

Key word: literary sensitivity, Frustration, Feminism perspective, Self –discovery, Narrative Technique.

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When the novel "that long silence " was published it was described by the times literary supplement as a story of compassion, tolerance and understanding of human relationship in which through the conjugal bond between Jaya and Mohan ,tempered with indifference , suffering ,frustration and depression ,Deshpande strongly concludes that the basic reason of female sufferings is the silence ,which is either culturally imposed or circumstantially produced or psycho-spiritually that come in the life of Kusam ,the mother of Mohan Ali and sisters die pre-mature death. Central thrust of the novel is growth and transformation of a bootless, docile and callous Jaya of the beginning into the assertive, independent, individual who has learnt by passing through emotional upheavals and dramatic experience that one must have the courage to confront with the difficulties and realities of life as Jaya herself has said that "To plug the hole in the heart ". So the novel that "that long silence" is a psycho- emotional study of Deshpande's experience replete with reflection, introspection and retrospection.

Jaya a father supported child and ambitious girl, tries to find the true meaning and identity of her life. She starts her journey with her father's favorite name Jaya and passes through different phase of life with other identifications as Suhasini and Sita. She finds her role and life fit, only and only in Jaya. "Jaya the winner as papa wanted to make her". She had been brought up in a family, in which modernity of thoughts dominated traditions and drilled social taboos. Her papa has made her different, indifferent to social taboos and family rituals as he often said ' You are not like others Jaya, 'Appa had said to me , pulling me out the safe circle in which the other girl had stoop ---- "You are going to be different from others appa had assured me " (Deshpande 136).

As a matter of fact, Shashi Deshpande portrays the image of new woman in Jaya who silence accepts everything in the bearing and then break off silence. As a woman of maturity she redefines her identity and relationship with her husband "her inner turmoil's are so better that she is unable to speak them out and remain silent in order to not to be frustrated and disappointed after

the disapproval of her actions by the society .Jaya hears sounds of beating and kicking a woman near their residence one night. The man may be her husband, talk;

Where did you go today? Tell me .open your mouth, why don't you open your mouth. You bloody whore. Open the mouth. And speak the trust.[57].

Being influenced by western feminist writers, the post-independence, Indian women writers, have engaged themselves in devising verbal strategies for rejecting 'Male Cold' literary conventions historically accepted as standards is one of the prominent contemporary women writers in Indian writing in English Jaya, the protagonist in that long silence is exactly the opposite of the enlightened creature with discretion she is torn between love and hate, liking and disliking for her own husband and life situation.

As the title of the novel indicates, Jaya for very long in her past life tried to play the role of traditional woman, the embodiment, of tolerance, suffering and courage. The gendered subjects in the novel are traced through their class and gender matrix, and within the narrative universe of the novel, the construction of the gendered subjects in the class environs represents a collective identity whose voice is discursively silenced. Thus the novel suggests the intertwining of tradition and modernity as perpetuating, instituting and reconfiguring the apparatuses that effectuate the subordination of women.

The insistence of Deshpande's indictment of women's lines lies in the way she is able to universalize their silence, chiefly by drawing similarities among Jaya and a variety of other female figures including characters from history and myth and three generations of women in her family [Jaya, her mother and her grandmother]. Finally Shashi Deshpande's "that long silence" is an expression of the silence of the modern Indian wife which has turned her into a non-entity. Shashi says about that long silence and then I wrote that long silence a lost entirely a women's novel nevertheless, a book about the other half of the humanity "Prasad [2005-58]. Jaya remains in silent for many days together but finally she discovers the moral lapses on her part

as a wife as a mother and as an individual that leads to her search into the soul where she acknowledges her sins and as a consequence imposes penance, as she says, I will have to speak to listen to ease that long silence between us, In this way Jaya attempts to break that long silence leads to self-discovery happiness and harmony, and on Mohan's part he also realizes that an escape from life was a foolish adventure. This independence views and love for freedom is neither something suddenly acquired nor something imposed from outside rather it is the natural extension and outgrowth of an inquisitive and witty mind that Jaya has inherited from her childhood as her grandmother used to complain about Jaya –"For everything a question, for everything a retort, how husband can be comfortable with".

The novel also interrogates the nature of the relationship between the narrator and her husband and the disposition of married life. Their relationship is affected adversely by their incapability to understand each other. Due to lack of communication the growing 'silences' between them, their marital life grows unsteady and dismal. For the first time, Jaya feels anger at the unjustified accusation by Mohan that he has taken bribe for her and her children, the idea of "being a partner in the crime and ally". When she has no role to play in the whole affair is revolving. Jaya on her part considered this act of Mohan as immoral and unbecoming as it has exposed the family to all the dangers and sorrows of the world, however Mohan tried to justify his act of bribery by saying, "I did it for you, for you, children" and he.

The novelist tries to establish that it is not only the patriarchal setup which is responsible for women's condition in the Indian society. The responsibility also lies within the victim to refuse to raise a voice and to achieve a goal. Shashi said in an interview:- That long silence is a hysterical novel in that sense that inside of me I was kind of screaming but when it came out-as you said, one steps back from that screaming self and one says, look Jaya is very analytical. So, Shashi Deshpande says in that long silence a life time of introspection went in to this novel, the one closest to me personally; the thinking ideas in this are closest to my own material

comforts is vividly Represented. "The glassware that had to sparkle, the furniture and curious that had to be kept spotless and dust free".

The "that long silence " which won her sahitya academy award tells the story of an Indian housewife who maintained silence throughout her life in the face of hardships and gives a minute analysis of the unwholesome situation in which she is caught between two powerful currents traditional patriarchal and modernity of terror and suppressions. As critic Y. S. Sunita Reddy observes "The narrative with its slow unknitting of memories and unraveling of the soul is like an interior monologue quite similar to the stream of consciousness technique employed by Virginia Woof".

Reference

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