

Streaks of Alter Ego in Shashi Deshpande's
That Long Silence and Small Remedies

SOWMYA M

(20PEN017)

Thesis submitted to
Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women,
Coimbatore - 641 043.

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

MAY 2022

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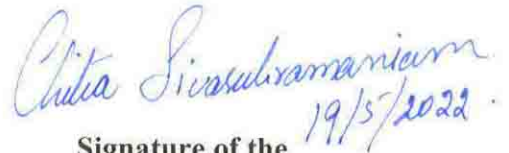
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Signature of the Guide



Signature of the

Head of the Department

DECLARATION

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I declare that the project entitled "**Streaks of Alter Ego in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence and Small Remedies***" submitted by me for the degree of Master of Arts (MA) in English is the record of work carried out by me during the period of December 2021 – May 2022 under the guidance of Dr. (Mrs.) S. Jayalakshmi, Assistant Professor (SS), Department of English, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women and has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or other titles in this university or any other similar Institution of Higher Learning.

M. Sowmya

Signature of the Candidate

CERTIFICATE

CERTIFICATE

I declare that the project entitled "**Streaks of Alter Ego in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence and Small Remedies***" submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (MA) in English by **SOWMYA. M (20PEN017)** is the record of work carried out by her during the period of December 2021 – May 2022 under my guidance and supervision. This work has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or other titles in this university or any other similar Institution of Higher Learning.



Signature of the Guide



Head of the Department

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

Introduction

Psychoanalysis is considered as one of the most influential and intellectual projects of practical psychology in modern times. Fortified by Sigmund Freud and other theorists towards the end of the nineteenth century, Psychoanalysis still serves as a major motivation to the professions of Counseling and Psychotherapy.

Psychoanalytic theories have helped to trace the existence of ideas that are in the mind but are not available for introspection. Freud has prompted the sense of being in the center of consciousness, from where the feelings and thoughts proceed.

Sigmund Freud says that the idea of 'id' is that the experience of feelings or thoughts within ourselves which makes strange and it gives enough potential to take over one's own desire to satisfy basic needs. The 'id' is full of history and repressed unconscious urge, which is part of us, upon which we have less control. The 'super ego' is an internal being that watches over us, which judges and censures us when the feeling of guilt arises. Freud has used the term 'ego' to refer to the conscious self. To him, ego is an active part of the self and mind, present from the dawn of life, which contains the energy of the ego preservative. Timofei Gerber in his article "Eros and Thanatos: Freud's two fundamental drives" (2019) mentions Freud's opinion on ego as, "the ego is the true and original reservoir of libido and . . . It, is only from that reservoir that libido is extended onto objects". B.R Hergenhahn in his work *An Introduction to theories of Personality* (1984) mentions the view of Jung about ego. He says, "according to Jung, the ego is everything of which we are conscious. It is concerned with thinking, feeling, remembering and perceiving. It is responsible for seeing that the functions of everyday life are carried out. It is also responsible for our sense of identity and our sense of identity and our sense of continuity in time" (45).

Paul Bishop in his work *Jung in contexts: A Reader* (1999) mentions German novelist Thomas Mann's opinion on ego, he notes that:

. . . it is just this confrontation of object and subject, their mingling and identification, the resultant insight into the mysterious unity of ego and actuality, destiny and character, doing and happening, and thus into the mystery of reality as an operation of the psyche – it is just this confrontation that is the alpha and omega of all psychoanalytical knowledge. (162)

David Boersema, teacher of philosophy describes that Philosophers Charles Peirce and Jean Paul Sartre had similar ideas and resemblance of thoughts about the nature of ego and consciousness. Charles Peirce and Jean Paul Sartre have dealt with the issues of consciousness and ego. Peirce have considered ego as intuition. He has argued and challenged that we have a view that the faculty of mind is intuition which operates from and with *a priori* independent knowledge of previous experiments. Of course Peirce did not prove that there is and there cannot be a faculty of intuition. But he has a basic argument of intuition as faculty. He has discussed several examples of cognitions like dreams, sensations and perceptions.

In *Philosophy Now*, the article named “Peirce and Sartre on consciousness and the Ego” (2003) gives the knowledge of self-consciousness, David Boersema have mentioned the opinion of Peirce. He says, “a knowledge of ourselves not a mere feeling of subjective conditions of consciousness, but of our personal selves. Pure apperception is the self-assertion of the ego; the self-consciousness here meant is the recognition of my private self. I know that I (not merely the I) exist”

Edmund Husserl, the German Philosopher argued that the consciousness is active and intentional, it is not perceived simply, but it is constituted different from

the study of nature. He has claimed to establish an epistemological starting point of self-consciousness. Sartre has focused on people and what is for them to be in the world; he began his claim by understanding the concept of being in the world as in Husserl's fashion. Sartre argued that there are two acts of consciousness, that is, perception and imagination. The act of imagination is related with the act of perception, it precludes. He says that if we take the act of imagination as it is given, we see that the act is not being itself, a thing out in the world. He concludes the act of consciousness by relating with ego, it is clear that the subject of consciousness is Ego. Sartre have given an example of there is no 'I' within consciousness and it acts of being in the world; Antony Hatzimoysis in his work *The Philosophy of Sartre* (2014) mentions the opinion of Sartre's view on consciousness in his work, Sartre says:

When I run after a streetcar, when I look at the time, when I am absorbed in contemplating a portrait, there is no I. There is consciousness of the streetcar having to be overtaken, etc. and non-positional consciousness of consciousness. In fact, I am then plunged into the world of object . . . (38)

Hatzimoysis has commented over the transcendent cohesion of all conscious acts mirrored on current consciousness and it is the abstract object that conventional philosophy misleadingly takes as the subject of conscious activity. He has mentioned the opinion of Sartre's view on consciousness. Sartre has portrayed ego as, "The ego, of which the I and the me are but two aspects, constitutes the ideal and indirect . . . unity of the infinite series of our reflected consciousness" (39). B.R Hergenhahn in his work *An Introduction to Theories of Personality* (1984) mentions the view of personal unconscious of human he says:

The personal unconscious consists of material that was once conscious but was repressed or forgotten or was not vivid enough to make a conscious impression at first. As in Freud's earlier concept of the preconscious, some material in the personal unconscious is readily available to the person, and there is a great deal of interaction between it and the ego. (45)

The emphasis on the self and inner life of characters can be seen as early as in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603), Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759). The characteristic works of Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Leo Tolstoy have a penetrating insight of unconscious motivations and psychological complexities.

The external events of individual consciousness have been recorded by Henry James. The associative memory stream of consciousness technique used by Marcel Proust and Virginia Woolf brings in the continuous flow of experience in their writing. In psychological novel, the plot is dealing with the delineation of characters. The events are not presented in chronological order but they occur in the character or author's memory, thought, reveries and dreams. For instance, in Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) the plot revolves around in Dublin in a 24 hour period, but the events of the day take the readers forth and back by the characters present and past lives. And in Franz Kafka the ambiguous works have shown the subjective world as external and the events which appear to be as the happening in reality are said by the subjective logic of dreams.

In her article, "Djuna Barnes interviews James Joyce in 1992: The Iconic Irishman's most Significant Interview" (2014) Maria Popova describes the interview of Djuna Barnes with James Joyce. Joyce said, "as for psychoanalysis, it's neither

more nor less than blackmail”. And Peter Brooks in his article “The idea of Psychoanalytic Literary criticism” (1987) observes that the classic psychoanalytic criticism as, “displaces the object of analysis from the text to some person, some other psychodynamic structure—a displacement I wish to avoid since, as I hope to make clear as I go along, I think psychoanalytic criticism can and should be textual and rhetorical”. People have different views on ego. But there is a special space for the ‘alter ego’, since it is the basic thing to support ambitious people when they are doing hard things. It has been constructed to help us to be more optimistic, resilient, creative and courageous. The alter ego is the power of secret identities that can transform one’s life.

Public speaker Todd Herman has described that how people can use an alter ego to create or build a life they want. According to him, life can give us a lot of challenges. Alter ego is a strong self, which is a key to unlocking our heroic self. Herman has strongly believed that an alter ego is very important because life can get hard with all different roles that await us to play. This kind of pressure creates a version of one that Herman calls “trapped self”. He says that the trapped self is the version to avoid pain and fears judgment from other people. However, by developing our “heroic self” we will be able to live our life in a state of flow that is highly preferred.

An alter ego is fixed in one’s mind it allows us to embody our heroic self whenever we need to perform at a higher level than normal. Alter ego helps us to go after our goals and dreams without being afraid of defeat or of others opinions. Todd Herman in his work *The Alter Ego Effect* (2019) talks about his own experience that he has built his science sports and peak performance around elite entrepreneurs, athletes and leaders. He also helped professional athletes to handle the pressure of

performing against the opponents in front of large number of fans. He has coached parents to use an alter ego in purpose to balance their pressure both in personal and professional life. An alter ego is a helpful tool for anyone who wants to achieve more in their life, in their field of endeavour. He adds that Alter ego can work for anyone.

Herman has described the roots and the concept of alter ego along with other personalities, to transform their power in life. Alter ego is there to act as a cushion, for both praise and criticism. Alter ego have provided as a perfect solution when it comes to getting elite audience to click into a higher gear. For instance if a public figure adopts his public image as his true self, he will never be confident or happy. His alter ego helps him to face the audience. Therefore, when fans criticize a personality in their field the personality will feel as if the criticism is directed at them personally. However if the personality have created an alter ego, any criticism by the fans goes to the alter ego and not personally. Therefore an alter ego lies strong and as a healthy distance which allows the entertainers to perform their best under the spotlight.

There are many works which can be related with Alter ego. For instance, an author tries to represent their own alter ego in their writing. They may use a fictional character in their stories to express their secondary personality. Ernest Hemingway in his collection *The Nick Adams Stories* (1972) wrote about his personal life through his alter ego Nick Adams. J.K Rowling in her *Harry Potter* (1997- 2007) series she has used Hermione as a representation of herself. There is an alter ego of an author were they do not use their original name when they publish a work. They prefer a pen name to publish their work. The Bronte sisters has used an alter ego to publish their own works because of the government laws prohibiting women to publish works. George Eliot, a male alter ego, was developed by Mary Ann Evans because she has worried that the work of the women would not be considered. And Rowling in her other work

The Cuckoo's Calling (2013) developed a pseudonym Robert Galbraith, the publishers and readers were claimed that it was a former cop. She preferred something that is not associated with her former work.

An alter ego of a character in a fiction can be in different forms like a hidden identity, secret life being led in a normal life. The alter ego of a character has centered on with a normal people leading secret life or with supernatural abilities. Alter ego is in fact very popular in psychological thrillers, which utilize psychopathic characters fooling the people and world that they are normal. Famous characters with alter egos is Clark Kent as a superman, Bruce Wayne as a Batman, in Twilight series vampires as school students, psycho Norman Bates as his own mother Norma Bates, etc. In the novel *The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). Dr. Jekyll is portrayed as an evil Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll accidentally unveils the evil side of himself as Mr. Hyde. Dr. Jekyll says, "I chose the better part and was found wanting in the strength to keep to it. . . I had enjoyed in the disguise of Hyde. I made this choice perhaps with some unconscious reservation, for I neither gave up the house in Soho, nor destroyed the clothes of Edward Hyde, which still lay ready in my cabinet" (83).

The Indian English novel is a bud during the middle part of the nineteenth century. This phenomenon was related directly to the beginning of English education in India. The first Indian English novel was Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864). Mulk Raj Anand is known as the "Founding Father of Indian novel". The Indian English novel has been energetic and vibrant and has secured an expressive space in the 21st Century. It is evident that the slate of new authors like Sulman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Preeti Shenoy, Vikram Chandra and a host of others has emerged in this period. Themes of these writers are based on multiculturalism, Diasporic writings, social realism, gender inequality, feminism, culture and caste

conflict, and so on. Indian English women writers have tried to tell the obstacles faced by women and the disadvantages suffered by women in orthodox Hindu families. The writers have taken up several traditional themes as well, many of which are age old and have rewritten them to represent the present day context of these issues in the lives of women facing today.

Indian Women writes have expressed these issues in many ways with a great force from 1970 to 1975, a period which tells the political breakthrough of the women liberation movement and the rise of the feminist press. Indian women writing have its important place for more reasons. It projects the responses of humanity and reflects a gender based consciousness. The works of fiction in Indian English women writers has confronted both current issues concerning women and issues that have existed in society for a long time. Indian women author have been delving into feminine subjectivity and dealing with issues ranging from childhood to full womanhood. As the main theme of works dealt by Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, and Anita Desai has explored the problems and issues faced by women is based on male dominated world. All the writings of woman need not be based on some kind of feministic view. But it can be an interpretation which can emerge through negation and absence. The stereotyped views and visions of women writers are altered and the women characters in the works are depicted as strong, bold, active heroine and not like a passive side kick to the oppressor of male protagonist. If the writing of women is about themselves it should be read in an appropriate base to understand the discourse of the body of work.

Several women writers have made their mark in Indian English literature and their works laid a base for many women readers. Women have tied in the cases by the chains laid by the needs of the society, child rearing and child bearing. But this new

era has many changes, and there is a process of self discovery and recovery of female tradition. Women writing in Indian English literature has a special place in the works of Kamala Das, Anita Nair, and Susan Viswanathan. Novelists such as Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai have encapsulated the spirit of Indian culture and traditional values. And slowly India became a dominant literary nation during the 1990s, when a number of female authors made their debut.

A multi-talented, soft spoken personality, Shashi Deshpande was born on 19th August 1938 in Dharwad. She is considered as one of the most eminent novelists of contemporary Indian English Literature. Her work centers on women life in the modern society, she also addresses the Indian readers and not the international marketplace. Shashi Deshpande is the younger daughter of the Sanskrit novelist, scholar, dramatist and actor R.V. Jagirdar. He himself published many works under the name Adya Rangacharya and Shriranga. He also published a huge number of literary oeuvre which includes the translations of Sanskrit plays and his works were the part of Indian National heritage. Deshpande has grown up in the upper middle class family. She did her schooling in a British convent and moved to Bombay University for her higher education. She has completed her studies in Economics and her second degree political science and law. She has also completed a Masters Degree in journalism and ranked as a topper.

In 1972, after returning to India from England, Shashi Deshpande has wrote her first short story *The Legacy* this laid as a strong base for her career and to make her a name in India. Her father taught her Sanskrit and also made her proficient in Kannada and Marathi. She is well educated in the huge realm of Indian mythology, she considers her as “against the grain” from her view. Her reading and writing in English took her through the better part of English literary history. She has added the subtexts

of her own in her text. Her main work and text portrays the Indian women day to day life which is impregnated by religious, political and social traditions, mainly the gender domination. She has written 11 novels, 2 long stories, children books and many other short stories, which reside on the complexities of tradition and modernity. The base of tradition does not go unquestioned in her work. Ujawal Rathore & Mamta Ekka in their article “Novels of Shashi Deshpande and The Trauma of Disturbed Adolescence” (2016) mentions the Deshpande’s interview with the *BBC World Service*. Deshpande describes that her writing career starts as:

I never decided that I was going to become a writer, it was never a conscious decision. I got married, I had no definite career. I had two children. I was restless with being just a housewife and mother. I was looking for a job. Then we were in England for a year. My husband was a doctor. I was very isolated there because he was at work all day and I had these 2 children and no friends so then we returned and he said ‘Why don’t you write about our year there?’ Then I joined a journalism Course. I loved writing, I felt at home with it. So I think in one way I stumbled into it. But I really think of it this way as writing was something which was waiting for me along the line and then I reached that point, and then I knew what my life was going to be about.

Deshpande’s works has created a huge impact among the readers through the social strata of urban and rural society. Her interest of writing centers on the women of the middle and upper middle class; about well educated women who fight for their own identity in the social and cultural setting. Her first novel *The Dark Holds no Terrors* (1986) is the message about the painful topic of marital rape which is faced by many women in the society. One of her early stories, *The Intrusion and other*

stories (1993), *The Binding Vine* (2002), *Shadow play* (2013) deals with the basic theme of female sufferings and quest for identity. Deshpande says, *That Long Silence* (1988) is her most autobiographical one, where in silence the society and family is dealt with. The main figure in the story is silence, the silence should be speak out to achieve anything in life. The novel has published out in Britain and English, it was also translated into Marathi, Kannada and Hindi. It shows the impact of linguistic diversity and also the status she achieved among the readers.

The novel *That Long Silence* has many good reviews. The *New Society* mentions the novel as, “a finely drawn, diaphanous portrayal of the endemic imbalance in a marriage”. *The Literary Supplement* says, “the novel’s strength lies in its compassion, its tolerance and understanding of human relationships”. Swagatia Kar published an article in *Medium* titled “*That Long Silence*’ by Shashi Deshpande- Book review”. She says, “you can see a strong modern lady who never wanted to let go of her identity because of social barriers. The old building behind her represents the struggle and difficulties she faces in her everyday life. You can also see an old clock on the cover, it signifies the travel of her thoughts beyond time to discover the true reason behind her ‘*That Long Silence*’”.

The *BBC World Service* published an article on Deshpande’s biography in “The next chapter”. Deshpande believes her work is having an impact on women lives, she says:

I think over the years it is certainly making a difference. And I think my books have been very empowering for women, because I have more and more women coming and telling me about how they felt kind of liberated after reading because they felt that 'this is how I feel, this is what I think', and I think they say it does give them courage. And I also

had a man who wrote me a long letter saying that I never knew what women thought of until I read your books. Hopefully it has opened up certain areas.

The themes and setting of her novel are largely based on the cultural contexts, which reflect her own family and cultural setting. Indian myths, traditional Indian music, medicine or a close relationship to her father or other family members have seen in her writing. These have weaved the fabric of *Small Remedies* (2000), *A Matter of Time* (1999), *Moving On* (2004) and most directly in *Strangers to Ourselves* (2015). Her novel is family-centered and are largely based on generational unfolding and their ramifications.

The complexities of Deshpande's groundwork are based on complexities of family and those of memory. Over the period of time Deshpande's work embraces, they have to stand out for self-empowered, self-assured to articulate personalities. She has made a profound psychological journey among the minds of women. Her women characters are invariably trapped in a conflict between tradition and modernity. Her novel *Small Remedies* (2000) explores the lives of three women. *The Hindustan Times* says, "Small Remedies is a book that should be bought, read and savoured . . . (it is) as much of a page-turner as a tautly-written thriller". In *The Hindu* Meenakshi Mukherjee has given her review on *Small Remedies*. She says, "With total control over her unwieldy material, (Shashi Deshpande) weaves a fabric of intricate design in this novel".

Deshpande has clearly brought out the gap between the traditional prejudice and the women who prefer their personal opinion and empowerment. The female characters in the novel are systematically structured in a social set up of male. The characters are sandwiched between illusion and reality, the mask and the face, but

they also lead a life of restlessness and the character's move forward by progressing by delimiting restrictions, discovery, analysis and protest which can be related to alter ego. They need their self to be exposed, and they want to be in their true self. The novels, *The Binding Vine* (2002), *That Long Silence* (1989), *Small Remedies* (2000), *A Matter of Time* (1996) and the others are focused mainly on the mental, physical and psychological suffering of women.

Shashi Deshpande is the one who made consistent exposure of inner life, especially with the Indian women, who has an acute sense of helplessness in the fate of an unfeeling world tied with patriarchy and the resultant moral agony. Deshpande has weaved a psychological analysis of the imagery, characters, symbolism and language and there is mainly an explosion of protest in the own voice of the character. Liselotte Glage in his article *femDio* quotes from Deshpande's writing. Deshpande says:

There was . . . the feeling that after becoming a wife and mother, my intellectual self, which had been so important a part of me until then, was being suppressed, that it was being discounted, not valued and this dormant self was becoming restive, it wanted a release may be it was out of the conflict between this 'female self' and that self-expression began.

The character has left behind with the own limitations which hurt them more and to cross barriers. The female character in *The Country of Deceit* (2008) got into a relationship with a married man. There is a despotic man who betrayed women, but there is also a remarkable men like father and husband. Deshpande is very much interested in politics, which can be witnessed in her essays, interviews, articles and in her book *Writing from the Margin* (2003). Deshpande has stepped down from the

Sahitya Akademi Council in 2015, after the murder of a Professor in Kannada protesting over the Akademi's silence growing over intolerance among the country. She has honoured as the member of the council but she fought for the justice and in one of her interviews she boldly talks about the soul destroying criticism and explains how young writers will cope with it. The first Indian female director Prema Karanth has directed Deshpande's novel *The Dark Holds no Terror* into a film and in 2017, The novel *Strangers to Ourselves* was directed by Hasal Mehta into a film. Ravi Rani in her article "Thematic Study in Shashi Deshpande's Novels" (2020) says, "Shashi Deshpande's novels also show how carefully she expresses the frustration and disappointment of women which they experience in their marital relationship. It suggests concerted efforts by men and women towards creating a mature and balanced relationship".

Anita Desai is a contemporary writer. She has considered as the mother of Indian psychological novel. Through her writing she displaces the sensitive psychological probing and a social critique, the emotional lives of people who is struggling to find stability and meaning within the base of social transition. Anita Desai is considered as a secret writer. She says, "the world I entered on marriage was completely uncomprehending of a life of literature. I continued to write but almost secret, without anyone observing me at work at my desk so as not to create an open conflict". Her character is basically driven to extremity of despair like in the novel *City* (1965) she evokes her sight towards an environmental psychology. Desai has evolved from the inner lives of chronicling through the characters which links between individual psychology and the cultural and social environment and the other Indian women psychological authors include Sudha Murthy, Arundhati Roy, Preeti Shenoy their novels has deeply rooted with the aspects of women suffering.

In *The Hindu* Deshpande's work *Listen to Me* (2018) is reviewed as, "a fascinating peek into the mind of a writer and the wide-ranging influences from the Upanishads to Jane Austen". In India, the culture and tradition is considered to be the oldest and people who belong to this country worship many gods and goddesses, saints and poets. However, women backwardness in social issues and restrictions against women is the major issues in the Indian society. Most probably women from lower and middle class families suffer more than that of higher class family women. Shaline and Puram Singh in their article "Review on Image of Women in Shashi Deshpande's Selected works" (2019) mentions the review of Deshpande's work *That Long Silence*, Ramesh Kumar Gupta a researcher says:

Deshpande's books are stressed over ladies' adventure for self, an examination concerning the human personality and a cognizance of the conundrums of life and her place in it. Being a lady herself, in a gathering, Deshpande feels for lady: 'if others see something ladies' dissident in my organizations, I should express that it isn't purposely done. It is in light of the fact that the universe of lady is that way and I am mirroring the world.

R. Kumaraswamy in his article, "Conflict between Tradition and Modernity in Shashi Deshpande's Novels" (2015) says, "Deshpande seems to believe the sentiments of de Beauvoir who she admits has influenced her and according to whom it is women who have to define, measure and explore their special domain". In *The Indian Express* Urvashi Butalia gives her review on "*Small Remedies*" as, "Three generations of women, and the gentle feminism with which they face the randomness of life". Dr. Pandia Rajammal in her article "The Study of Self- Identity in Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies* and Paulo Coelho's *The Witch of Portobello*" (2021),

She mentions the view of women characters in the novel as, “they appear as more confident and positive even in their struggles in life. In times of crisis, women not only fight with men for the injustice but with society as well”.

Deshpande’s awards and accolades include: Rangammal prize in 1984, Nanjangud Tirumalamba award for the novel *The Dark Holds no Terrors*, Sahitya Academy award in 1990 for the novel *That Long Silence*, Padma Shri award in 2009, *Shadow play* her novel was shortlisted for the Hindu Literary Prize in 2014.

The main objectives of this dissertation are as follows:

- To explore the representations of alter ego in the women characters of the select novels of Shashi Deshpande.
- To study the relationship that the women characters share with the author.
- To study the status of the Indian women in their marital relationship.
- To study the transformation of identity that the characters achieve through their alter ego.

This dissertation aims to study the streaks of alter ego in Shashi Deshpande’s *That Long Silence* and *Small Remedies*. Chapter One introduces the concept of alter ego and its representations in literature. It also gives a brief overview of Indian writings in English, focusing on Shashi Deshpande and her writings. Chapter Two elaborates on the efforts taken by the characters to articulate their inner self through alter egos, in the novel *That Long Silence*. Chapter Three traces the various attempts taken by the characters of the novel *Small Remedies* to break the age old silence. Chapter Four is the conclusion and summing up of the findings.

Chapter 2

Articulation of the Inner self in *That Long Silence*

Shashi Deshpande has depicted her novel *That Long Silence* (1988) as an asseveration of silence among the Indian housewife in modern society. She tries to represent the real life experience of women, which she faces in her life, it brings her a huge success by depicting the real life incidents of people around her. Many writers has tried to endeavor and have brought out the sufferings of women in their writing, but their works created an unreal sentimental romance which would end in the way of surrender to their family and society. Deshpande has tried to figure out her inner self, her own quest for identity and she have portrayed the conflicts realistically through Jaya. Dr. Rachana Yadav in his work *Emergence of New Women in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai* (2018) quotes from Deshpande's interview. She says that she wrote *That Long Silence* as, "and then I wrote *That Long Silence* almost entirely a women's novel nevertheless, a book about the silencing of one-half of humanity. A lifetime of introspection went into this novel, the one closest to me personally; the thinking and ideas in this are closest to my own" (130).

Deshpande has taken up Jaya as her inner voice and it is considered as her alter ego. Through Jaya's statements, Deshpande tries to figure out her life as a writer and as a wife and mother. Deshpande is very realistic in her writing and she strongly believes that marriages are totally based on convenience. Jaya's character is conceived as a woman very content in her role of a caring wife and mother. Moorthi Sukumar in his article "Theme of Identity and Freedom in Select Novel of Shashi Deshpande" (2006) figures out that Jaya plays the role of Gandhari as in Mahabharata where Jaya says:

If Gandhari, who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too. I bandaged my eyes tightly. I didn't want to know anything. It was enough for me that we moved to Bombay; that we could send Rahul and Rati to good Schools, that I could have the things we needed. Decent clothes, a fridge, a gas connection, travelling 1st class. (61-62)

Deshpande has woven the tales of Jaya's acquaintances and relations through the novel. Deshpande may not conform to the concept of feminism, but she definitely has her own ideas on feminism. Mohit K. Ray and Rama Kundu in their work *Studies in Women Writers in English* (2007) have mentioned the interview of Deshpande in *The Times of India*. Deshpande says about the characteristics of women in her novels which is published in the article "The Message is Incidental" (1989). Deshpande says:

The women in my books are people who come to realize what it is to be a woman in the process of their own lives and the situations they face not through books and theories. I think feminism is an entirely personalized perception. It is when you start questioning preconceived notion about your roles. I don't think there is anything 'inherent' in a woman apart from the fact that she can conceive. All other things are equally important for them as they are for men. (232)

The novel *That Long Silence* is severed as Deshpande's expression of inner self and has a strong autobiographical tone. She tries to throw light on women role in their married life and states that silence is the weapon taken by many women to figure out their self in the society. The growth of the woman in Indian society is measured by her attitude towards her family and the duties she performs. Woman is forced to believe that family duties alone will make a woman identity. Woman identity is rather

based on the balance between revolt and submission, as to how they balance wisely in their life.

In *That Long Silence* Deshpande has clearly portrayed the complex paths of human psyche, where in Jaya faces the traumatic experiences as a housewife. Deshpande has presented herself as Jaya who is a very busy and satisfied house wife working for her husband and two children. In Indian society, to fit in the role as a married woman Jaya has to suppress her personality. Jaya aims to be a good writer, and she expects her career to be continued after her marriage but unfortunately she has to give up her career for her children and husband.

T.M.J. Indra Mohan in her work *Shashi Deshpande: A Critical Spectrum* (2004) talks about the state of female child. She says, “The burden of the female child is more irksome than that of the male child because aspects of her body, the function of her femaleness intrude upon the growth of her personality . . . but also the society as a whole is influenced by physical appearance of the girl child” (43). The following assertion have clearly depicted that how a girl child is treated in their life, by facing many obstacles in the society it leads to limit themselves, and to stay in a particular border provided by their family. In the novel *That Long Silence* Deshpande has tried to bring this issue where Mohan says to Jaya, “I’m glad, Jaya, you haven’t put on any weight. Most women get shapeless at your age. You’re still the way you were when we got married.” (85). It is a dreadful truth and criticism imposed on woman and they are totally judged by their physical appearance, it also brings them a sense of guilt to limit themselves by the statements.

The Indian women novelists have always presented their writing in a new way. They has influenced the change in attitude through their writing and brought out their emerging voices through their characters. Deshpande has depicted the modern Indian

woman. She also portrays herself with the plight of the Indian women trying to find her inner self and to preserve her own identity through Jaya. She has unveiled the tragic process of oppression in the family where Vanitamami advised Jaya as, “a husband is like a sheltering tree” (32). Deshpande manifests how a woman is nurtured by a patriarchal belief and that it is a bitter truth that they were prepared with lots of stereotyped beliefs for their married life in society. We can trace Deshpande’s novel *That Long Silence* is a quest for inner self of the woman, though Jaya is educated in the modern society. She could not quite shake off the beliefs and background which were imposed on her from the toddlerhood.

Jaya is rechristened as Suhasini by her husband it confuses her and leads to hunt her identity where Jaya says, “and I was Jaya. But I had been Suhasini as well. I can see her now, the Suhasini who was distinct from Jaya, a soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman. A woman who lovingly nurtured her family. A woman who coped. When I think of her in this way, I know who it is that Suhasini reminds me of. She’s like the sparrow in the story of the crow” (15-16). She has considered the sparrow as self centered, dutiful to the family and not worried about other people. Jaya rejects her marital name Suhasini and it lays on the manifestation of protest against all the customs in the married life. Deshpande has illustrated her thoughts through Jaya and it leads Jaya by getting the future guidance by reliving the past in herself to evoke her as a writer.

In the journal *femDio*, “Shashi Deshpande” (2022), Liselotte Glage says, “It is her most autobiographical one, makes silencing, by the family and by society”. This statement has clearly portrayed that Deshpande created her other self “Jaya” to be considered as her alter ego. She has delineated all the pains and sufferings of the modern woman who are jailed in the name of marriage. Through this novel she has

tried to break the silence in her marriage life and it occurs due to the shriek of despair. In the journal *femDio*, “Shashi Deshpande” (2022). Liselotte Glage mentions the quote of Deshpande. She says:

There was [. . .] the feeling that after becoming a wife and mother, my intellectual self, which had been so important a part of me until then, was being suppressed, that it was being discounted, not valued. And this dormant self was becoming restive, it wanted a release. May be it was out of the conflict between this ‘female self’ and the intellectual self that self- expression began.

In this novel one can witness that Jaya is retaining her sense of individuality by interpreting her. At first she has attempted to hide herself from her real self by stifling her ideas through the long silence, but after her father’s encouragement she started her writing and she has a courage to figure out her individuality, this is also related to Deshpande’s life where she has been encouraged by her father to start her writing career and he was the one who also encouraged her to publish her first short story *The Legacy and other stories* (1978).

Jaya is an excellent short story writer with a modest success. Mohan takes pride of being a writer husband but he is not satisfied with her themes, because it strongly considered as an autobiographical overtones. Jaya asks Mohan, that she has given up her writing because of him. He says, “you know it was I who spoke to the editor of the Sunday paper about that weekly column. I don’t want to take any credit I don’t deserve, but it did make a difference- my speaking to the editor about you” (119). Kamat is a good advertiser to Jaya and he exists as a shadowy figure in the novel. Jaya learns the best things from him and she looks him like her father and his ideals as his concern. Jaya is expecting Mohan to provide her with the basic concern and

reassurance but Kamat guides Jaya when she is wrong. By adding to this statement Kamat says to Jaya, “I’m warning you beware of this ‘women are the victims’ theory of yours. It’ll drag you down into a soft, squishy bog of self-pity. Take yourself seriously, woman. Don’t skulk behind a false name” (148). Kamat encourages her to write, what she wants to deliver to the reader. Kamat says “your name is like your face” (152). Deshpande has published *That Long Silence* in her name, she uses Jaya as her narrator and the novel brings in the autobiographical context through Deshpande’s portrayal of Jaya.

The prejudiced tranquility of the ego’s jurisdiction over the functioning of Jaya’s psyche, has given her the different perspective of changes in the world including the human liaison. The main important thing is Mohan serves the place for super ego, which is more disastrous as it cannot be managed by the ego. After going through a lot of trauma including the malpractice of Mohan, Jaya is more concerned with moral life and she has realized that she does not follow up in years in her married life. In T.M.J. Indra Mohan’s work *Shashi Deshpande: A Critical Spectrum* (2004), Rajeshwar Mittapalli mentions the view of Freud that:

Ill- luck- that is, external frustration. So greatly enhances the power of the conscience in the super- ego. As long as things go well with a man, his conscience is lenient and lets the ego do all sorts of things; but when misfortune befalls him, he searches his soul, acknowledges his sinfulness, heightens the demands of his conscience, imposes abstinences on himself and punishes himself with penances. (74)

Jaya is very bold who makes an attempt to search her identity by herself, accompanying by the leisure of enforcement and with a couple of neurotic spells, apart from the unexpected startup of the punitive components which relates her past

and it gives a huge variety of throbbing reactions in her life to bring out her decision by analyzing her soul. Rumination on the disquieting event, dreams, restlessness, and recurrent epiphanies leads to the psychic apparatus and it is imposed in Jaya's life. Jaya is facing many difficult situations in her life, yet she takes strenuous efforts to overcome the situation, and she tries to handle the structured conditions around her life. Though she has tried hard to change the situations around her, she finally returns to the traumatic event in her marital life. Jaya says, "we don't change overnight. It's possible that we can always hope. Without that, life would be impossible. And if there is anything I know now it is this: life has always to be made possible" (193).

Shashi Deshpande makes use of dreams as her literary device, equivalent to that of Graham Greene in their delicacy and crispness; it allows Deshpande to describe the life incidents more symbolic and in artistic terms through her heroines. Jaya has tried to explain her to her inner self. She has been encountered many incidents in her dream but in real she faces many nightmares which question her role in life, it also pushes her into a state of helplessness.

Jaya's first nightmare brought her a big turning point with lot of neurotic composure; it also reveals the barrier within her. In the dream Jaya finds Mohan, and they are walking together but she is left alone suddenly. She finds no one for her help, though she can see many girls inside the house. She fears that Mohan will not return, she also feels very ill, helpless and lies down. Then Mohan appears and asks her to call the waiting taxi. She realizes that they cannot get the taxi and says to Mohan, "that it is too late anyway, we will never be able to make it, we will never be able to get away, it is all my fault, all my fault [. . .]" (86). Showing how Jaya is completely dependent on Mohan, Deshpande tries to figure out the common situation of many

women and tries to give a moral for them through Jaya by retaining role in their married life.

The dream of Jaya is symbolically referred to the condensation of a marital experience, the existing predicament, unintentional wishes of Deshpande's thought. The house in her dream which she passes through is considered as the marital edifice, and she strongly believes that every woman is forced into it by the society and family by imposing certain rules in their life. She has given a bold statement that once women are entered in the house no one can help them. The main responsibility of the women is considered to make her home. Jaya has been married to Mohan for years, but she is unable to understand him as a whole. When Mohan felt tired of waiting for his meal, Jaya thinks:

But for women the waiting game starts early in childhood. Wait until you get married. Wait until your husband comes. Wait until you go to your in-law's home. Wait until you have kids. Yes, ever since I got married, I had done nothing but wait. Waiting for Mohan to come home, waiting for the children to be born, for them to start school, waiting for them to come home, waiting for the milk, the servant, the lunch- carrier man [. . .]. (30)

Deshpande has illustrated all these marriage issues with lots of patriarchal beliefs, it also wears an image that wife should always ask her husband help all the time. Jaya has strongly believed in Mohan's ability of deliverance but she is not strong enough to fit herself into his care blissfully. She also thinks that it is too late to escape from this situation in her marital life and she accuses her fault and finds that, as a traditional housewife, she cannot help Mohan by satisfying him. Jaya says, "I had to admit the truth to myself- that I had often found family life unendurable" (4).

Jaya's first dream has served as a kind of crave fulfillment but her second dream is revealing about her utter exasperation, which brings her additional conflict in her psych to evoke her soul. Deshpande has portrayed the feelings of disinterest from the self through Jaya, who is not satisfied with the life in the circle of marriage. She has experienced the split persona by revolving her role as a house wife it gives her the sense of unclarity. Deshpande has tried to voice out her real self, to focus and indulge in her career by retaining her role along with the responsibility of mother and wife.

Shashi Deshpande in her interview with Amrita Dutta in *The Indian Express* titled "Against All Silence: Shashi Deshpande on encounters with male entitlement" (2019). She talks about her book launch of *That Long Silence*. She says, "I was never a very confident person, personally or professionally- except when I sit at my table and write. Then I have full confidence. So, that experience was a crucial point in my career". This statement shows that Deshpande is portraying the different emotions and situations of real life through her writing. *That Long Silence* brings her back a lot of charged memories. In *Indian Express* Deshpande says in her interview titled, "Against All Silence: Shashi Deshpande on encounters with male entitlement" (2019) says:

There was a lot of anger in me when I wrote it. It was not directed against my family. My conscience told me it was an equally important part of my life, if not more. I was angry at my position- that I had no time for myself or to write. I remember writing in a notebook: 'I can't go on' over and over, I would write that sentence.

Deshpande believes that her works would create a great impact in the society. In her interview with Amrita Dutta in *The Indian Express*, "Against All Silence: Shashi Deshpande on encounters with male entitlement" (2019). She says:

We are dismissed because we write about the domestic space. But when Jonathan Frazen writes about family life, he is given extra marks [...] But I find women far more interesting than men. I think they are complicated, interesting people and especially considering the lives we have had to live, how much we have had to suppress ourselves.

Deshpande has addressed that women writers are facing lot of struggles, so she has created a bold character Jaya to express all her emotions and emptiness in life which would be a great eye opener for the readers. Jaya's absorption into the menage fold breaks her inner self, though she was a modern woman she faces lot of struggle in her mind, the flood of responsive emotions ensues out the rivulet of thoughts and feelings through silence which remains in her life. She feels silence is the best way to survive in her married life, she yields and relinquish to Mohan without rebelling. Silently she accepts all his wills and decisions. She undergoes everything, and tries to condone all kinds of laddish oppression in a silent way. Jaya says, "[. . .] almost the stereotype of a woman: nervous, incompetent, needing male help and support. But what puzzles rue is this . . . I'm sure I wasn't always like this" (76). Their situation has lied between an oppressing husband and a troubled wife. Jaya have not reacted immediately to the circumstances which affect her, this is the basic fault where women remain silent without stating any objection from their side.

The flashback technique used by Deshpande has brought the insinuated concept to the readers, especially the psychic life of the women characters. When Jaya is alone in her room, her mind starts scuffling between the present and the past, and it covers all the incidents which comprises the entire span of her life and questions her role in life. Deshpande is making her characters real, authentic and enactment by bringing in the technique of stream of consciousness.

In Jaya's life the familial pressure suffocates her resourcefulness and holds back all the creative activities in subservience as a house wife which affects a major part of her married life. Jaya states her circumstances, She says, "Like a disease, a disability I had to hide from everyone" (97). Jaya is very silent in her married life; she says, "it was so much simpler to say nothing. So much less complicated" (99). The allegory of silence makes Jaya to pull back all the situations around her, and it serves as a defense mechanism which assists her to communicate herself more artistically. The first person narration gives the agonized reminiscences of Jaya which is considered as Deshpande's own voice were Jaya says,

Why am I thinking of these things now? Is it because I find myself struggling for words? Strange – I've always found writing easy. Words came to me with a facility that pleased me; sometimes shamed me too it seemed too easy but now, for some reason, I am reminded of the process of childbirth. The only memory of it that remains with me is that of fear- a fear that I was losing control over my own body and so I resisted. (1)

Jaya is renamed Suhasini by her husband; this does not lead to identity crisis but it can be viewed as the two faces of the same coin. These two names symbolically has depicted as Deshpande's illustration of socio familial drift. The premarital name Jaya indicates "victory" the post marital name Suhasini means, "a soft smiling, placid motherly woman. A woman who lovingly nurtured her family. A woman who coped" (15). Deshpande has portrayed Jaya as a person who tries to balance and accommodates her in certain limitations by getting stuck in the circle of family life. Jaya thinks to herself when Mohan was caught for his malpractice. She questions herself as, "No what I have to do with these mythical women? I can't fool myself. The

truth is simpler. Two bullocks yoked together [. . .] it is more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different directions would be painful and what animal would voluntarily choose pain?" (11-12).

Jaya has illustrated her position by demystifying her gesture and gives the imagery of her life where Jaya says, "two bullocks yoked together" (11). Jaya feels that she is not safe when she is being yoked by her husband, the marital pressure affects her more deeply. She also flounders to get away from the yoke to retain her role through her passion. She came again with certain statements in her mind and spoke to her own self, "Stay at home, look after your babies, keep out the rest of the world, you are safe. That poor idiotic woman Suhasini believed in this. I know better, now I know that safety is always unattainable. You are never safe" (17).

The memories in her brought the enlightenment of both past and present, the myths, the recurring marital images and the sparrow story, all these incidents lead Jaya to the tragic predicament of universal touch within her. Deshpande has tried to illustrate the reckless, the isolated pile up of thoughts, her ephemeral mood of encapsulate through the splinter and the fragmentary thought with stream of consciousness. It leads to question her own self and bring out certain answers which would satisfy her mind. Jaya says, "it was not he who had relinquished his authority, it was I who no longer conceded any authority to him" (9). She have reminded about the words of Vanitamami. She says, "A husband is like a sheltering tree [...] take your pain between your teeth, bite on it, don't let it escape [...]" (32). Deshpande has depicted Jaya by questioning her standpoint through her split in narrative. Jaya is reminded of the word "sheltering tree" and broods over it. "a sheltering tree. Without the tree, you are dangerously unprotected [. . .] equally logically and so you have to

keep the tree alive and flourishing, even if you have to water it with deceit and lies.

This too followed, equally logically (32).

Deshpande's grapple with her integrity and quest to retain her dream, tries to bring out her thoughts through Jaya. She has illustrated Jaya desperately by grasping the needs to shield herself from the intemperate and deteriorate world around her.

Jaya's frenzied laugh when Mohan left her alone demonstrates the ridiculousness of marriage and it also echoes the psychotic women laughter left with lots of impaired emotions. This situation implies to the minor character, Jaya's cousin Kusum.

Through this Jaya is trying to analyze Kusum's psychotic state, it left Jaya to delineate herself negatively by experiencing Kusum's struggle in her marital life.

Rosemarie Tong in her work, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* (2016) mentions the view of Simone de Beauvoir, he mentions the difficult situations of women. He says, "it is not without some regret that she shuts behind her the doors of her new home; when she was a girl; the whole countryside was her homeland; the forests were hers. Now she is confined to a restricted space . . ." (184). This statement has clearly illustrated the difficult situations of women life.

Deshpande has described her emotions and thoughts realistically through Jaya.

Jaya's development restricts circumscribes around her in the role of wife and mother.

Manmohan Krishna Bhatnagar in his work *Feminist English Literature* (2002)

mentions the opinion of Rosemarie Tong about the place of women in Indian society.

She says, "sometimes women play their roles not so much because they want to, as because they have to, in order to survive economically and/or psychologically.

Virtually all women engage in the feminine role playing" (71). It is clear that the

barrier is all against the encrypted and pre destined position of a woman, Jaya have

tried to revolt against it by breaking her silence. She thinks, "In this life itself there are

so many cross-roads, so many choices” (192). But for a married woman there is no other way, but following her husband’s word and practically there is no choice left for Jaya to involve against her husband’s desires and testament to find her role in life, it is comprehensible that Jaya’s life is full of instincts and hankering.

Jaya has found her own way unlike other women who are tagged to tradition in their married life, she has tried to trace her role, by bring out her artistic self. Deshpande portrays Jaya as a person who tries to unburden and unfurl herself. T.M.J. Indra Mohan in her work *Shashi Deshpande: A Critical Spectrum* (2004) quotes Kamini Dinesh’s view on Jaya. She says, “the act of unburdening herself through self-expression” and further she adds on to the statement, “becomes for her a creative process. It is not merely a reliving of particular moments of the past but a coming to terms with herself [. . .]” (95). Deshpande brought in the reminiscing of the past through Jaya were she triumphs in decimating *That Long Silence* and by manufacturing the future life feasible. Jaya in her conventional muted voice, tries to teeter between the present and the past through the flow of thoughts which divulges her mind. She says, “ten different faces emerging from ten different mirrors” (1).

Jaya’s thought has related with the prerequisite grade of consciousness and the variability of the stream which is not confined to a stiffed clock progression. Deshpande has revealed the psyche of Jaya through flashbacks and grudging responses in her life. She unrelieved stress on Jaya, it also expunged her from the story as a narrator and laid her other self to unveil her inner self to document the vision of life buy using her strong mind.

Deshpande’s delineation of thoughts through Jaya’s denial of the patriarchal belief creates a new identity and inner self were readers can observe from Jaya. Jaya says, “but what was that ‘myself’? trying to find oneself what a cliché that has

become. As if such a thing is possible. As if there is such a thing as oneself, intact and whole, waiting to be discovered". On the contrary, there are many inner-self which are attached like Siamese twin where Jaya says, "neither able to exist without the other" (69). An individual self of a person cannot exist in isolation, but it can be possible if it occurs and coexists with the combination of inner self. Jaya's thought is linked with many characters of Indian women but she disowns none at her initial stage in marriage. She has been laid as the veritable symbol of ubiquitous mother.

The main hint Deshpande has revealed in the novel is the metaphor of silence, it portrays the inner dynamics of a women suffering with lots of human communication. Jaya's communication with Mohan is absent and she reminds silent in her surroundings. Silent demonstrates Jaya's grievances which are firmly connected with her personal life. Jaya tries to resolve all her barriers, and to break the long silence by placing down her emotions on writing. She has been suppressed in her married life for seventeen years with lots of silence and it reduced her inner self to broken fragments. Jaya says, "I am not afraid any more. 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. She is with me still" (91). The confessional affirmation distinctly shows that the novel sounds like a feminist discourse disguised from Deshpande. She has depicted herself through the illustration of a woman sneaking into a hole. She also delineates the sorely plight of Jaya by describing her in the place of unshelled and unsecured. Jaya thinks her position and says, "Distance from real life. Scared of writing. Scared of failing. On God, I had thought, I cannot take any more. Even a worm has hole it can crawl into. I had mine - as Mohan's wife, as Rahul's and Rati's mother" (148). Jaya has systematically quashed her free will and

thinks, “the importance and necessity of stable marriage and family. Family as security, as a source of emotional strength” (5). The same situation has denied her to achieve standard role in life. Jaya started to ponder over her relation with her husband. She starts to recognize herself and felt that she is suppressed in her married life due to her silence battle. She describes her state as:

I thought of living without him had twisted my insides, his death had seemed to me the final catastrophe. The very idea of his dying had made me feel so bereft that tears had flowed effortlessly down my cheeks. If he had been a little late coming home, I had been sure he was dead. By the time he returned, I had, in my imagination shaped my life to a desolate widowhood. (96-97)

Jaya feels very hurt when she realizes that Mohan is taken her for granted, She understands that Mohan did not recognize her feelings and emotions. Siddhartha Sharma in his work *Shashi Deshpande's Novels: A Feminist study* (2005) mentions the view of Indira Bhatt about Mohan. She says Mohan as, “use his wife as buffer, an opiate to soften the impact of the forces he has set into motion against himself” (42).

Deshpande has reached a great pedestal and mirrors the real life in the miserable plight to create an impact among the contemporary readers. She has showed the women protagonists as a real person who plays numerous roles in their life. The characters in her novel revolt rather than compromising for retention of the domestic harmony revolving around her. Deshpande has depicted Jaya as a woman who cracked the barrier around her and seeks to come out to find herself. The Indian women accept their position in their married life because it is inherited in them from the roots of their childhood. There are several women who is undergoing several

depression in their life, they face many patriarchal believes imposed on their marital life.

Irony is the ruler used by Deshpande in her novel to demystify the questions and emotions through her characters, Jaya does not ask Mohan about his job or questions him. Jaya avers, “If Gandhari who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband, could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too. I bandaged my eyes tightly. I did not want to know anything” (61-62). Jaya is married to Mohan with good comforts but she finds something missing in her life, she feels the emptiness of life surrounded with lots of unanswered questions. Jaya says, “. . . it was that moment that the first real emotion had entered into me. Anger. Until then I had listened to him with a faint sense of bewilderment. I suppose it hadn’t really penetrated, the thing he had been trying to tell me” (9).

Jaya has chosen to be silent after her first outburst with Mohan after hearing his commands over women. He has considered woman who are getting angry are unwomanly. Jaya is so much frustrated when Mohan teaches Jaya about his opinion. Mohan says to Jaya:

. . . no woman can be angry. Have you ever heard of an angry young woman? . . . A woman can never be angry, she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated. There’s no room for anger in my life, no room for despair, either. There’s only order and routine today, I have to change the sheets, tomorrow scrub the bathrooms, the day after, clean the fridge [. . .]. (147-48)

Deshpande has replied through Jaya and it reveals the blankness of many women’s life. Jaya starts to be a silent segregated woman instead of raising her voice toward her life. She has attempted to evacuate her role under the armour of silence, by

keeping the grouses to her inner self. Deshpande has depicted Mohan as one who wants the woman to be silent in all the situations; he says to Jaya, “my mother never raised her voice against my father, however badly he behaved to her” (83). He wants Jaya also to follow this suit which he considers as womanliness. Mohan eulogizes his mother as the virtuous lady, but Jaya finds her mother-in-law’s formidable silence as a bitter struggle and she finds it was the only haven for the suffering women. Jaya painfully reveals, “Silence and surrender, I am a woman and I can understand her better, he’s a man and he cannot” (36-37).

Deshpande has depicted all the incidents that she came across in her life. She also tries to voice out some patriarchal beliefs. Jaya has realized the truth of a woman existence when her aunt Vanitamami says, “if your husband has a mistress or two, ignore it, take up hobby instead...cats, may be or your sister’s children” (31). She is reminded of her own marriage; when she was a bride her aunt said, “you learn a lot of tricks to get by in a relationship, silence is one of them: you never find a woman criticizing her husband even playfully, in case it damages the relationship” (76).

Deshpande has effectively unveiled the live portrait of the Indian marriage institution. She also gives a bold talk about the sexual life, while she describes Jaya’s relationship with Mohan. Jaya says, “we had never come together, only our bodies had done that. I had begun to cry then . . . silently, scared that I would wake Mohan up, trying desperately to calm myself” (98). She has forced to relinquish serenely to Mohan’s demand, if she stipulated something against his will, it would maim his ego. She is feeling that her soul is left alone for the quest of achieving dream and the familial bond in life, she is forced to accept all the things in her life. Deshpande’s particular character Jaya created an impact among the readers because it seems like her own autobiography, the struggle faced between the writer and housewife. Amar

Nath Prasad and Rajiv K. Malik in their work *Indian English Poetry and Fiction: Critical Elucidations* (2007) mentions the view of Vimala Rama Rao review in her article. She says, “Jaya is one of the rare narrative voices in Indian English fiction who poses and displays a literary sensibility commensurate with her fictional role as a writer telling her own story, one whose college education and reading habits are in evidence in speaking voice. This indeed is an achievement” (178).

For Indian women only motherhood and marriage is considered as their happiness and fulfillment for a long time. Jaya is shown as the ambassador of the women who are shown discrimination in our society trying to achieve her ambition in life. Amar Nath Prasad and Rajiv k Mallik in their work *Indian English Poetry and Fiction: Critical Elucidations* (2007) mentions the view of Tapan Basu. Tapan Basu says, “... Jaya who has input, a life time in surrender of her will to social mores and customs that had relegated women to a second class status” (184).

Jaya is portrayed as the inward probing and introspective as Deshpande’s alter ego. She has clearly portrayed how Indian parents want their daughter to be in the hand of impulsive desire, to be liberated but on the other side they have expected women to be in the hands of instinctive desire bounded with conservative and tradition of the society. S. Prasanna Sree in her work *Woman in the novels of Shashi Deshpande: A study* (2003) quotes Sakuntala Bharvani’s comments over this instinctive desire. She says, “the woman of today, therefore, speaking in the language of Psychology, has a near schizophrenic personality; one side steadily ‘accepts’ while the other craves to speak, to think and express the life of the mind” (79).

The finest structured ornamentation of Indian society is evident in the position assigned to woman by the man and the society, to be a good follower without questioning them. Deshpande says, “Sita following her husband into exile. Savithri

digging death to reclaim her husband. Draupadi stoically sharing her husband's travails . . ." (11). Jaya is used to be silent in all the situations and follow her husband, whenever she gets hurt by Mohan she used to be dumb. She also thinks, "I was full of a sense of angry confusion. What was he charging me with? And, oh God, why couldn't I speak? Why couldn't I say something? I felt foolishly inadequate, having nothing to offer him in exchange for all the charges he was pouring on to me" (119). Deshpande has presented the human life in subliminal impressions through her narrative in the digressions way. Mohit Kumar Roy and Rama Kundu in their work *Studies in Women Writers in English* (2007) says, "Shashi Deshpande's works have an autobiographical strain as like most writers she makes creative use of her experiences and memories" (198). Deshpande has illustrated the silent battle among the women in Indian society, they faces lots of suppression in their lives. Through Jaya, Deshpande has depicted all the real passing incidents in her life in the role of modern housewife. T. M. J. Indra Mohan in her work *Shashi Deshpande: A Critical Spectrum* (2004) mentions Veena Sheshadri's interview in *Literature Alive*. She comments the novel as:

Why the author has chosen a heroine who only succeeds in evoking waves of irritation in the reader? Perhaps it is because a competent writer like her is never satisfied unless she is tackling new challenges. Also, she believes in presenting life as it is and not as it should be; and there must be thousands of self- centered women like Jaya, perennially gripping about their fate, but unwilling to do anything that could result in their being tossed out of their comfortable ruts and into the big, bad world of reality, to fend for themselves. (89)

Deshpande has tried to canvas the bustling incidents through the women persona, as the victims of gender inequality. Mohan's sister Vimla and his mother are also included in such victims. Mohan's father would drink and beat his mother, She would cook for wedding feasts to run the family. Mohan has illustrated a poignant incident to Jaya when his father came back home late in the night, he founds that he was not served with chutney. He threw his plate away and walked out. Mohan says, "God, she was tough, women in those days were tough" (36). But Jaya sees it in a different perspective she gives her view as, "I saw a despair so great that it would not voice itself. I saw a struggle so bitter that silence was the only weapon. Silence and surrender" (36). Jaya is shocked to know about Vimla's death where she bleeds due to the ovarian tumor and dead with her silence. She did not utter a word to anyone, as she knows that it would result in different problem in her life.

Jaya's cousin Kusum, is a deserted wife. Jaya takes care of Kusum despite the objections from her family members. After Kusum has recovered half in her health, she is taken away by her brother. Unfortunately Kusum commits suicide in the well a day before return to her husband home. Jaya's help maid Jeeja, her story also lies on oppression. Her husband would drink and beat, he also remarries a woman because Jeeja did not bear a child to him. She has accepted the situation and she brought up the child of her mistress after her death. He also like his father when he is grown up he started beating up his wife. But Jeeja would always admonishes her son's wife whenever she curses him, "stop that, don't forget, he keeps the kumkum on your forehead. What is a woman without that" (53). Jaya's grandmother Ajji, after her husband's death, has forced herself to be in a particular room.

Jaya is worried about her writing career, she could not bring out her story because of Mohan. She says, "I had known then that it hadn't mattered to Mohan that

I had written a good story, a story about a couple, a man who could not reach out to his wife except through her body. For Mohan it had mattered that people might think the couple was us, that the man him. To Mohan, I had been no writer, only as exhibitionist". She is also not ready to take risk because it would break her marital life. She ironically says, "perhaps, if Mohan had been angry, if he had shouted and raged at me, if he had forbidden me to write, perhaps I would have fought him and gone on. But he had only shown me his hurt. And I had not been able to counter that. . ." (144).

Deshpande has woven the realistic lives of women through Jaya, the novel inevitably sounds like her autobiographical work. In her novel the protagonist has raised her inner voice against the straitjacketed heroines of mother and wife who are going through lot of sufferings in their life. They would rebel against the oppression in the patriarchal setup to find their peace and role in life. The feminist critique Toril Moi says, "It seeks to expose, not perpetuate patriarchal practices".

Deshpande's usage of the technique evoked Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* (1915) which also lies on autobiographical under tones and the assertion of authorial voice, *That Long Silence* is also related with the authorial voice. Anita Myles in her work, *Feminism and the Post-Modern Indian Woman Novelists in English* (2006) mentions Deshpande's opinion on her characters. Deshpande says:

Most of my writing comes out of my intense and long suppressed feelings about what it is to be a woman in our society; it comes out of the experience of the difficulty of playing the different roles conjoined upon me by society, out of the knowledge that I am something more and something different from the sum total of these roles. My writing

comes out of my consciousness of the conflict between my idea of myself as a human being and the idea that society has of me as woman. (65)

Anita Myles quotes Deshpande's view in her work *Feminism and the Post-Modern Indian Woman novelists in English* (2006). Deshpande says that she feels "limited and humiliated" when someone criticizes her as feminist. She says, "creative writing can never have the author barging in. I let my characters speak for themselves. I don't write about other classes of women because I write about people I see around me. My thoughts come from people and my ideal reader is one who can understand every nuance of my writing" (65).

Jaya's experience in her life turns to be traumatic when Mohan was caught for his malpractice, he accuses his wife and son. He says, "It was for you and the children that I did this. I wanted you to have a good life, I wanted the children to have all those things I never had" (9). The insecurity caused by Mohan by losing his job and her son's disappearance, when he went to a vacationing with her family friends brings Jaya a terrifying prospect in life. Her emotions towards the family is cracked and it is cruelly exposed inside her were Jaya says, "It was like a house collapse during the monsoon. There was something desolating about the ease with which that had seemed so substantial fell away, almost contemptuously leaving behind an embarrassing nakedness" (174).

Jaya is forced to compromise with the reality of life around her. She gathers with lots of moral courage to break the silence and it also requires her resourcefulness purposeful life. Jaya has the courage to make life possible, her psyche is well equipped to meet all the barriers in life. As a result of psychological moment her emotions are flooded with the gates of anxiety, qualified to respond for every situation

in her life. To return normalcy to the state of Jaya musters up her inner strength, to recover her relation with the world. It also brings her the ideal occasion of growing introspective, to find discoveries within herself. She believes that it would bring them a new beginning. She says, “two bullocks yoked together . . . Now I reject that image. It’s wrong. If I think of us in that way, I condemn myself to a lifetime of disbelief in ourselves. I’ve always thought – there’s only one life, no change of a reprieve, no second chances. But in this life itself there are so many crossroads, so many choices” (191-92).

Deshpande, is a modern Indian writer tends to illustrate the oppression of women with a sense of outrage, involvement of deeper sense with self consciousness. The writers in the earlier period had given the suffering of the eulogized women but the writers in the post-independent period have unpalliatively depicted their oppression with realism. Manmohan Krishna Bhatnagar in his work *Feminist English Literature* (2002) mentions the view of notable critic William Walsh. Walsh observes the Indian fiction as, “the combination of the analytical and detached” and he also observes that, “a turmoil of feeling is conveyed in cool, idiomatic and sensitive prose. It is served by a memory which is so rich and minutely specific and able to produce not just bright discrete images but rather a flow of naturally related scenes that it is a creative faculty making past life live again in the present” (74).

The formation of colloquial and formal attitude towards life, brings in the recollection of memories to Jaya, it stimulates her deeper with the memories of disastrous sense of dissipate time, transient moments, distinctive losses. She came out with halcyon voice characterized by seriousness, it sticks to the natural gesticulation of experiencing her mind. *That Long Silence* is considered as a typical novel, which reveals the prevailing circumstances in the structure of Indian society. When Jaya’s

children went for a holiday and Mohan also leaves her, she felt very lonely in that time but it gives her the space for interrogation. Jaya says, “and now I found myself looking at the picture of a girl, a child, wearing a dress with pockets for the first time, thrusting her hands in them, feeling heady with the excitement of finding unexpected resources within herself . . . with this discovery came another thought. I will begin with her, with this child” (187).

Jaya is haunted with the memories of the past, she finds some valuable time to think about her marital life and early life. The disappointments and desperations of her marital existence and her failures came before her thoughts. All these begin to torment and it spooked her. Like Jane Austen’s female protagonist, Jaya is stalking in her knowledge. “self- revelation” is a savage process, the real self, the real picture raised before her. She realizes the statement, “Ten different mirrors show you, ten different faces” (1). Jaya understands that she has contributed to victimization and she wants to fight against it in her battle to regain her role in life, Deshpande clearly pictures her thoughts through Jaya.

The novelist tries to create a maneuver of tension by bestowing the clash between Jaya and Suhasini, the sanguine woman who scrutinize wifhood as a great happiness of life and later resembling the disillusioned wife, matured Jaya. The earlier self of Jaya is dead, and the later one is squirming under pain, “Suhasini was dead, yes, that was it, and she was the one Mohan was mourning . . . we had killed her between us . . . I had finally to bear it myself, the burden of wifhood” (121). Jaya is able to prolong the psychological balance, to evade the situation of split personality.

Mohan sends a telegram notifying Jaya, that he is returning back soon. Jaya now reexamines her circumstances as a wife and as a woman in the society, she started to relate all the situation’s in her marriage with a imagery as, “two bullocks yoked

together” and it was no longer tolerated by her. Amar Nath Prasad and Rajiv K Mallik in their work *Indian English Poetry and Fiction: Critical Elucidations* (2007) mentions Indira Bhatt’s view on Jaya’s new beginning, Bhatt says, “a reorientation of her relationship and also Mohan’s new awareness of his relationship to her” (189). The silence in Jaya’s life befallen her into several broken pieces and her new possibilities are explored by readers. In the turmoil of life Jaya starts to learn the sapience by analyzing her and tries to resolve all contend around her individuality by penning down on her paper, all the suppression that she have faced, particularly the silence in seventeen years. Jaya has asserted that there is a room of space for compromise and discussion in her marital life. S. Prasanna Sree in her work *Woman in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande: A Study* (2003) mentions the view of P. Ramamoorthy, who affirms, “. . . it is possible for a woman to live in the world where men also live” (86).

Jaya’s part in making adjustment is different from other women because she does not try to servile anyone but she tries to live her life with Mohan’s support. Jaya by giving up her newspaper column, tries to create her own space to write and she decides what she wants to portray in her work. She believes that she does not want to look up at Mohan’s face for the approval of her work. This leads the way to discover her voyage, by breaking the stereotype of traditional house wife.

When a magazine asked Jaya for a bio data she comes up with few lines but she omits what she thought in her mind. She thinks, “finally when I had sifted out what I had thought were irrelevant facts, only these had remained: I was born. My father died when I was fifteen. I got married to Mohan. I have two children and I did not let a third live” (2). Jaya gets a chance to know herself by analyzing Kusum’s life, “Thank god, Kusum, you’re nuts I had thought; because you’re that, I know I’m balanced,

normal and sane . . . as long as Kusum was there, I had known clearly who I was . . . I was not Kusum” (24). Kusum’s fragility has created an impact in Jaya’s life and it makes her to take a decision to create a space and role in her life. It also makes to analyze her role in the structured system of duties.

Deshpande has illustrated Jaya’s substandard position and the private life by ensuring degradation. In the beginning of the novel Jaya feels:

But finally it came to me after all, my own special disaster; it came like a prize packet, neatly tied with coloured ribbons, a gift to me from my husband. And I was at a loss. I did not know what I was to do with such a gift. It seemed to me impossible. Mohan had to be wrong. Life would go on for us as before, punctuated by dreary quarrels, the children’s successes and failures, their estrangement from each other, from us, our resentment and bitterness, old age for us, perhaps widowhood for me- this was our future. Nothing else was possible for people like us. (4-5)

By identifying her own self, Jaya quotes the advice of Krishna to Arjun which appears in the end of “Bhagavad Gita”, Jaya quotes, “I have given you knowledge. Now you make the choice. The choice is yours. Do as you desire” (192). Deshpande has illustrated self realization is the fundamental element for long silence and it would be the best remedy for women to retain their role in the society. Deshpande’s women characters has been tried to bring out certain moral in the society by remoulding her thoughts of real life incidents through her writing. The tradition pull back draws the identity of women though they are educated and successful in their career by imposing certain patriarchal believes on them, Indian women are different while they are compared to other women in the world. The switching psychology of women is

breaking all the old age barriers in India. A women life is totally depends on a male centered both in childhood and adulthood, but Deshpande tries to step out from these thoughts to retain her role as a writer.

When Mohan leaves home without any word to Jaya, she uncontrollably starts to laugh at Mohan. Jaya's hysterical laughter upsets Mohan deeply and he leaves home. Mohan's absence disturbed Jaya, She also thinks that she would fall apart without him. Jaya begins to vegetate, she thinks that she has no face to manifest herself to the world in the absence of Mohan. Jaya thinks that he is the one who provides her the comforts and the meaning to life. Jaya, further longs for Mohan because she feels more secure in the care of Mohan. She feels rudderless and there is no substitute in the place of Mohan. Mohan left her alone because he feels more disappointed and frustrated in her emotion, Jaya goes out of the house in search of Mohan. She walks aimlessly in the roads and streets because she is incapable and goes on with the squashing burden of her marriage shoved on her. She tries to retain her dream along with Mohan.

Jaya has recognized Mohan's agony and she is worried to see him in a different state. Jaya observes Mohan's emotions and says, "Mohan's eyes, as he spoke of her, were agonized, the eyes of a man who'd lost a dear one. Suhasini was dead, yes, that was it, she was the one Mohan was mourning, she'd walked into the sea at last. No, the fact was that I'd finally done it - I'd killed her. No, that was not right, either, we had killed her between us, Mohan and I" (121).

From Kamala Markandaya's female protagonist, always resolution comes from the reconciliation of the society. Anita Desai's protagonist, brings in a submission of malignant fate more or less by her writing. But in Shashi Deshpande's protagonist, we can witness that she brings in the triumph after the long silence in a positive way by

retaining their role in marital life. She brings her autobiographical content through Jaya to add on the essence for the readers. Jaya rebels openly in the initial stage and she later reconciles to the circumstances around her. She also tries to revolt, but she is unable to voice out and remains silent at first, her turmoil and inner conflict become so bitter and she becomes disappointed and frustrated in the society after the disapproval of her action. Deshpande says, “Painfully, she realizes that she has tried to make Mohan the scapegoat or her failure as a writer and blames her parents too like glowering teenager” (153). She has tries to underrate her responsibility, she blamed herself for not achieving her dream so far.

She has tried to sort out the problem with in her, but soon this feeling of hopelessness goes on. She questions her as, “what have I achieved by this writing? The thought occurs to me again as I look at the neat pile of papers. Well, I’ve achieved this I’m not afraid any more. The panic has gone. I’m 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 a fragmentation is not possible” (191). Jaya prompts to realize her and says:

While studying Sanskrit drama, I’d learnt with a sense of outrage that its rigid rules did not permit women characters to speak Sanskrit. They had to use Prakrit- language that had sounded to my ears like a baby’s lisp. The anger I’d felt then comes back to me when I realize what I’ve been doing all these years. I have been speaking Prakrit myself. (192-193)

Through this unique personality, at different phases in her life, she does not wish to fit in the particular category. Mohan’s departure stuns her and wakes her up to show the real place in life. She has arrived to a stage that one cannot remain dumb

throughout the life. The change in Jaya is discernible, a change in the right time to analyze herself, with the information of “All well” from Mohan’s telegram. She thinks that she is slipping into the married life, but she thinks that she would retain her role again.

Mohan will be back ‘All well’ his telegram says. Does he mean by this that we will go back to being ‘as we were?’ does it mean that, now that Mohan has sorted out his problem and no longer fears prosecution, joblessness and disgrace, we can go back to our original positions? Does it mean that he will come back and give me a carefully edited version of what has happened as he has done so often till now and then ask me, what do you say Jaya?. (192)

In the state of “toy-boat in a bath existence” Jaya has tried to emerge from the tension between two worlds. She is ready to face all situations and to accept all the responsibilities in her life. The freedom of woman is to survive as a whole Jaya ultimately tries to feel it. Deshpande has tried to make a powerful statement through Jaya, she considers it is totally a prejudiced system of certain patriarchal believes which is prevailing in our culture and it is a subjugation imposed on woman. But she says to break all barriers around them to retain their role and also taking responsibility as a good mother and wife. Women need not fall as a victim. Jaya says, “. . . in this life itself there are so many cross roads, so many choices” (192).

Moorthi Sukumar in his article “Theme of Identity and Freedom in Select Novels of Shashi Deshpande” (2016) mentions the view of Sarala Parker, She remarks that, “The important insight that Shashi Deshpande imparts to us through Jaya is that women should accept their own responsibility for what they are, see how much they have contributed to their victimization instead of putting the blame on

everybody except themselves". Jaya feels the necessity to articulate her predicament, to establish her identity and to break her long silence, Jaya decides to live without sacrificing her identity.

Deshpande wants her novel not to end in a note of incorporeal way she likes to give a chance for Mohan, which is the woman nature towards the people. Even after Jaya's search in her real self, she tries to adjust again with the present setup. She keeps hope in her life and says that everything will change in a while. Deshpande has suggested that rebelliousness is not a way of solution to all the problems in life. The end towards the novel brings a significant meaning which hints a new beginning for both Jaya and Mohan not in the way of Silence but in a new light towards "hope and optimism" by breaking the long silence in their life. Deshpande has a note to the heroines of real life, to choose reconciliation by security. This novel has served as a representative of attitude towards Indian culture.

Deshpande has given the insight of women sufferings through Jaya, her autobiographical voice, as she states before she brings in all her thoughts and the people across her. But it is not her life totally she tries to figure out all the incidents that she came across in her life. Deshpande's alter ego "Jaya" plays a major role in her novel and it is a good portrait that expresses her emotions. She says, "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". She takes silence is the best weapon and it should be broken in some point of life to focus on our inner self.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3

Breaking the Age old Silence in *Small Remedies*

Shashi Deshpande has excelled by portraying the realistic images of educated middle class women caught between tradition and modernity. She is unlike any of her contemporary female writers. Although critics label her as a feminist, she is not a feminist in the way that certain female writers are likely to be labeled. Deshpande is a descendant of eminent Indian women writers including Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy and Anita Nair. They have explored the various facets of womanhood and depicted the collective struggle of women in a patriarchal society.

Deshpande has claimed that she is not a feminist. In the article *Times of India* "I'm not a feminist: Shashi Deshpande" (2001). Deshpande says, "I am not a feminist . . . I am human being and I write about other human beings who happen to be women". All of her writings advocate women's equality. The majority of her works, ranging from *The Dark Holds No Terror* (1980) to *Small Remedies* (2000) has a strong base on women life. Deshpande's female protagonists, Madhu Saptarishi in *Small Remedies*, Jaya in *That Long Silence*, and Saritha in *The Dark Holds No Terror*, is not particularly strong women, but they have a struggle to find their place and space in a patriarchal society. Deshpande has brought out her characters' real self through their alter ego.

Small Remedies is an impactful novel that depicts three different women feminine sensibilities and identities. With an overarching theme of self-discovery, it also addresses women oppression and subjugation in a traditional Indian social order. Women are the victims by norms and conditions in a male-dominated world, regardless of their hierarchical religious or financial status. Tara Bai Shinde, a 19th-Century feminist activist, expresses her rage against the disparity in freedom for men

and women in her notable work. In an article in *Merittajoy* “A Feminist Reading of Shashi Deshpande’s ‘*Small Remedies*’” (2016). The author mentions the view of Tara Bai Shinde. She has commented over the women struggle, “you shut women up endlessly in the prison of the home, while you go about building up your own importance, becoming Mr. Sir”.

Small Remedies has emphasised on women frailty in terms of status, power, rights, privileges, and obligations. All of her novels major female characters have faced gender discrimination, but Savitribai Indorekar is the only character who chooses an independent and challenging life. Bai, who is born into a wealthy Brahmin family, marries a Muslim tabla player in order to become a great classical singer. Her inappropriate behaviour has even made her daughter look down on her. Bai has chosen her life by creating an alter ego as a musician by leaving her Brahmin identity and family. Nonetheless, Bai did not give up on her dreams. Madhu comments over Bai’s life as, “I can make Bai the rebel who rejected the conventions of her times. The feminist who lived her life at her terms . . . The woman who gave up everything — a comfortable home, a husband and a family — for love” (166).

Madhu and Leela, on the other hand, has been defied their assigned roles silently and obtain solicitude through their occupations. They did not question or complain to anyone, but they have managed to carve out a space in a male dominated system by expressing their self. Madhu has inspired on Leela’s life and comments, “In her work, too, though she was sidelined after years of working for the party, though she never reached the top of the hierarchy, while men who'd worked under her got there, she never complained” (83).

Literature is commonly thought to be a reflection of society. Women writers have a serious responsibility to reflect the situations of women role in which they

suffer in society. The loss of their role in society becomes agony. This is what Shashi Deshpande has achieved with her novel *Small Remedies*, which depicts three real women struggle. They have tried to achieve their role by expressing their identity through alter ego. Woman is treated as second class citizens, According to Deshpande She considers it is because of male dominance, women are seen as second class citizens. Deshpande is conscious of their inner struggle and problem; her characters are shown in different conflict. It is demonstrated that individuals has not yet emotionally recovered from patriarchal constraints. The next intriguing aspect is that women are usually presented with both their mental and physical voice. She tries to demonstrate that women are not born feminine, but are created to be so with certain beliefs. As a result, they try to bring something new into their lives and, in doing so, they must bear society's contradictory attitude.

Deshpande's protagonist has fought against society in order to create a new world for themselves. Her novels present women with a new consciousness, new values, and a new way of thinking. Shashi Deshpande's depiction of the reality of an urban middle class woman is insightful. Generations, big cities, and small cities are all demonstrated in such a way that their complexities are revealed. Deshpande adheres to liberal feminism ideals, emphasising women ability to achieve gender equity through their actions and choices.

Small Remedies has explored the theme of resistance on both domestic and psychological levels. Jaya of *That Long Silence* and Indu of *Roots and Shadows* have been portrayed as writers in the same way that Madhu in *Small Remedies*. Both Jaya and Indu use writing as a form of resistance to convention, whereas Madhu has used her writing as a form of escapism to forget Adit's haunting memories. Through her writing Madhu creates an alter ego and explores her role in life. Deshpande has used a

meta fiction to highlight Madhu's emotional resistance to accepting her son's death, as well as Som's indifference towards her. Madhu, Savitribai's biographer, is not in a hurry to write in her book. Her writing progresses in tandem with her coming to terms with her own personal trauma. Madhu compares her writing as, “like a raga, beginning with aalap, continuing with vistaar, gradually gaining momentum in a quickening spiral of suspense eventually to achieve a cathartic calm” (119). She mentions Bai’s life as, “Everyone likes to read about real people. And Savitribai’s life has been so controversial, it can’t not attract attention. And controversy. Her life is almost like a novel, from what I hear. A exciting novel” (19).

Writing about Savitribai, on the other hand, takes Madhu into an emotional and personal realm. Madhu asserts her state as, “the power of the writer is the power of the creator” (166). Madhu has gone through all stages of the writing process and tries to get a proper view at her character, Savitri Bai. *Small Remedies* female characters are dealing with marital strife. The characters in the novel have been fighting against the domestic sphere to be liberated from the clutches of men and become self-sufficient.

Marriage entails mutual responsibilities and it entails a plethora of duties and responsibilities for the partners. Difficult situations are not invariably observed in all marriages and households. Leela, Madhu, Savitribai is married and they has revolved around different situations in life. Only few characters has portrayed as an ideal wife, while the others are seen straying from the archetypal roles in one way or another. In the prejudiced eyes, Leela's second marriage to Joe, Savitribai's elopement with Ghulam Sahib, and Madhu's untimely confession to Som about her sexual abuse is considered as evil and shameless actions.

In *Small Remedies* Deshpande has emphasised the strict framework within which women should live their lives. Madhu has questioned about the equalities for man and woman and says, “Rules could be modified for the daughters, but daughters-in-law carry the weight of the honour of family, its reputation, its izzat” (220). Indian society has always been structured in a hierarchical manner. As of ancient times, the binary opposites, male and female, have assigned superior and inferior status in India. The majority of female writers have portrayed female experiences by portraying male characters in a darker light. In contrast to them, Deshpande's novel has depicted the mutual and strong bonding between man and woman.

The central part of the novel is dealing with the relationship between a man and a woman, whether it is between a father and a daughter, a husband and a wife. Friendships between men and women have played an essential part in the plot of *Small Remedies*. The friendship between Madhu, Tony, and Chandru, the motherly bond between Tony and Leela, and the fatherly bond between Madhu and Babu are all examples where Deshpande portrays men as well in her writing.

Deshpande has emphasised that not all men are evil and immoral. She also highlights society's suspicion and intolerance of friendship between opposite sexes. When a woman and man has a public place they cannot be friends in others view, Madhu comments over as, “Men and women can never be friends” (254). Deshpande has continued to state that the myopic society's invisible wall of gender discrimination separates men and women which are inherited in them from their childhood.

Amar Nath Prasad in his work *In New Lights on Indian Women Novelists in English Part 2* (2004) observes the characterization of men and women in Deshpande's novels. He says, “Shashi Deshpande’s novels clearly reveal the author’s perception of the imbalance between man-woman relationships in the middle class

family of our Indian society. It is evident that the novelist tries to correct this imbalance in her novels” (98).

In *Small Remedies*, Deshpande has depicted a feminine sensibility through the exploration of womanhood, motherhood, and widowhood. Womanhood, in her opinion, entails a set of shared experiences. Every woman has an innate maternal instinct. Motherhood appears to be the pinnacle of womanhood. Savitribai and Madhu have depicted as biological mothers in the novel, but Leela's maternal instincts take precedence. Munni has rejected her relationship with Savitribai for obvious reasons, whereas Aditya separates himself from Madhu for personal reasons. Both of them are estranged from their mothers.

Madhu finds Bai's indifference to Munni unacceptable because she, too, is a bereaved mother. Aditya's death has hit her hard, whereas Munni's disappearance has no effect on Bai. As a result, Madhu and Bai have opposing personalities. Madhu narrates her as, “when I look into the mirror, I see only what I want to see: a mother, a loving mother . . . Putra Moha. Yes, I am obsessed with my son” (188).

Madhu is equivalent to Kaikeyi from “The Ramayana” in that she blames herself for the death of her own son. Leela, despite is not being Tony's biological mother, appears to be a caring stepmother to Tony, Paula, and good second mother for Madhu after her father death. Tony and Madhu treat Leela as if she were their own mother. The novel has revealed that Paula has no children. Deshpande has depicted the issues of childlessness. Madhu says, “Childlessness is the worst curse humans could think of for their enemies since ancient times” (117). Widowhood is considered as a contemplate issue of women. In the work of P. Adinarayana Reddy *Problems of Widows of India* (2004) comments over widowhood, he says:

Atlast the poor status of widows are seen in the context of patriarchal institutions the custodians and interpreters of civil and customary law are male legislators, judge, administrators, police and traditional court accessors. 'living custom' and religion are likewise interpreted and enforced by the male village chiefs or religious leaders. (95)

Widows are constantly insecure, and their self-worth is thrown into question. Leela is a widower and a deglamorized figure in *Small Remedies*. Unlike the marginalized group of widows, Leela actively participates in and advocates for societal issues. Shashi Deshpande's novel has clearly revealed the authors perception of the imbalance between man woman relationships in the middle class family of our Indian society. It is evident that the novelist tries to correct this imbalance in her novels. Leela mentions her state among the people, she says, "The black sheep of the family. A widow who remarried. And, what was worse, infinitely worse, married a *Christian* man. These were the things the family spoke of . . ." (45). Even after her husband's death, Leela continues to live in his home and educates her in-laws. Her cross caste remarriage with Joe while retaining her identity demonstrates her self-determination towards her social work.

According to Deshpande, tradition has lied on moral and social values for coexistence, whereas modernity is the assertion of one's own individuality. All of her female characters are modern, educated, and empowered women, despite the fact that society labels them as subaltern. Among them her character Madhu, Leela, and Savitribai are considered as Modern Women. Madhu and Savitribai, has walked out of the wedlock. Leela, on the other hand, is a strong Leftist woman who openly declares her hatred for Gandhiji's principles of Ahsa and Sathyagraha.

In *India Today* Malathi Mathur in her article “Book review: Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies*” (2013) comments over the novel as, “Memory carries its own truth with it. As long as there is memory there is always the possibility of retrieval, as long as there is memory, the loss is never total”. *Small Remedies* has appeared to be a journey from feminine awareness to self-affirmation. Madhu's search for identity is linked to Leela and Savitribai's quest for liberation and selfhood. Madhu comments over her life, “My own life had ceased to exist and I could only watch, from a distance, others living out their lives” (44).

Experience is a span of feminine insecurity and identity crisis following the death of her father. Later, when Aditya and Som abandon her, she goes through a similar trauma. To get out of it, she begins writing Savitribai's biography, which only adds to her anguish. Madhu has gradually realized she has a new whole self and decides to start a new life with Som. Leela, too, decides to emerge from her cocoon after her husband death and move on. Savitribai's search for identity as a singer compels her to give up everything. Savitribai appears to be the most free spirited of the female characters. Memory, as a device, plays a significant role in women's journeys towards selfhood and self-assertion. As a result, Madhu asserts with the following note in the end of novel, “Memory, capricious and unreliable though it is, ultimately carries its own truth within it. As long as there is memory, there's always the possibility of retrieval, as long as there is memory, loss is never total” (324). Deshpande's character is encountered to be in pursuit of the truth in order to achieve their individualism and dignity as females.

In a nutshell, Deshpande in *Small Remedies* strongly condemns "self-proclaimed men", that is men who exploit and discard women. Deshpande from other feminists is that she does not see feminism as an extreme challenge to patriarchy, but

rather as a call for men and women to reconcile. So, she has wisely chosen her characters by creating an alter ego, they had tried to find their inner-self through it. Her characters, however, are capable of breaking free from the shackles of docility.

It is past time for the world to find a supportive man for every single woman. As a result, it cannot be a solitary struggle, but rather a collaborative effort in which men and women work together. Deshpande has attempted much more in *Small Remedies* than she did in her earlier novels. It is a sensitive depiction of women search for identity in a patriarchal world. With her deliberate denial of sentimentality and total control over the unwieldy material, it is the most confident assertion of her strength as a novelist. Madhu is a lonely daughter, a sensitive and capable woman, a very vulnerable wife and mother. The novel has depicted Madhu's struggle with her shattered family life as she deals with her husband's sudden transformation into a suspicious nagging husband who wants to know about her previous relationships before marrying him.

During this time, Madhu's son Adit is killed in a post-Babri Masjid bomb blast, which have tossed Madhu and her husband Som off balance psychologically. It is the tale of Madhu. Who, faced with the terrible void left by her only son's death, embarks on a long and lonely journey in an attempt to come in terms with her loss. Madhu's healing process begins when she is confronted with the love of two other women, both of whom are courageous in their own right. One is Savitribai Indorekar, who made headlines not only for her singing but also for the way she lived her life. The other is Leela, with whom she spent her childhood and adolescence.

Madhu is recovering from the emotional trauma of her only son Adit's death, her husband Som convinces her to write a biography of Savitribai, a well-known vocalist. Swapna M in her article "Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies*: A Remedy

to solve Life's Mysteries" (2016) mentions the state of Madhu as, "the idea of forgetting the past and making her present devoid of what people say, seems to bring some respite but not the final relief. Madhu's long sessions with Savitribai enable her to experience the guilt and melancholy, which cannot be ignored" (224-225). Madhu has recalled her childhood memories and the younger Savitribai, who had lived as a neighbor for a time. Munni, Savitribai's adolescent daughter, was unlike the other girls in Madhu's small town. The novelist has depicted the child's innocent split of Savitri's strange world, her Muslim companion husband Ghulam Saab, and the singer's unconventional household. Madhu have visualized Bai's as:

I imagine her, a young woman who had lived the sheltered life of the daughter-in-law of an affluent Brahmin family, living this kind of life. A woman who'd been both as a child and as a married girl, part of a large family, living in a strange town among total strangers. With the added burden of being a Hindu woman, a married Hindu woman, living with a Muslim partner, and, of course, the greater alienation that not knowing a language brings. (38)

The cultural changes occur immediately after independence and those that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s are contrasted through the shifting time structure, as are the processes of change, development, and regression in the lives of individuals, communities, and nations. The novelist has linked many strands of personal life with public matters, highlighting the ways in which one can inextricably linked to the neighbors, communities, and public spaces.

Madhu has investigated Savitribai's life while waiting for the old woman to speak about her daughter Munni. Munni's absence from the household appears to be a total erasure of her daughter's existence. But Madhu is well aware of Munni's

rejection of her parents and her persistent construction of a new, desired family.

Madhu mentions Munni as, “Munni herself rarely speaks of her own mother. Unusual, because most children are forever quoting their mothers, going on and on about ‘my mother said [. . .]’ not Munni, though” (33). The novels has absent characters, Adit, Munni, Leela, and Joe, where quite well noticed. These characters have served as the novels present context in the novels structure, linked to their neighbour, communities, and public spaces and it serves a place for the three women to create their other self.

A person multiple layers of relationships invite a wide range of interests and it leads to a variety of constructions. Madhu has realized this with a surprise as she speaks about Leela, who works in the pre-independence period for the struggle against colonial tyranny. Leela has defied many conventions and helped many destitute women. Madhu has mentioned Leela’s role as:

It was Leela’s role during the emergency that caught his attention . . . her involvement with the striking railway workers, with their families. Of course, all this came out only after the Emergency had been lifted. But even in the Emergency days, there was the grapevine on which Leela’s name travelled. (46)

Madhu, on the other hand, has known as a surrogate mother, caring for her after Madhu's father died. She is very much excited to see her aunt other self, who is working for the peoples benefit. As the interviews with Savitribai progresses, Madhu finds that Bai tries to produce a carefully constructed past. Savitribai has desires to project her image along with her past. Madhu has realized that it will result in a book that is quite different from the author desired points of view; several narratives are intertwined, because her mind wanders in many directions. Other contemporary texts are intertwined with the novel as well. Some recent films about women driven by a

desire to learn music come to mind. Middle class conventional values and male exploitation has more visible issues related to such struggles, which are more painful but are silenced in the mind's dark recesses.

Through the characters alter ego, the novelist has carefully portrayed the streaks of pain, love, anger, and frustration. This novel has clearly depicted contemporary Indian society, specifically the awareness of conflicts between our aspirations and life visions, the threats of intolerance, anger, and violence, and the survival of our traditional values and ideals, as well as our cultural heritage, in the present circumstances. Sailaja. T in her article "Traditional Perspectives in the Select Novels of Shashi Deshpande" (2000) mentions her view on Deshpande's writing as, "a distinction between a traditional woman and modern woman is shown by the author". Deshpande is possibly the only Indian woman novelist who has taken the risk of giving voice to women's frustrations and disappointments through different perspective by using her as well her characters alter ego. This novel provokes one's thought and deeply moves to identify our real self.

Madhu, in addition to Savitribai, also narrates the story of Leela. She says that Leela is a remarkable woman. Madhu comments over Leela as, "ahead not only of her generation, but the next one as well" (94). She was a fiercely independent woman who was devoted to communist ideology. In *The Hindu* an article "On her own terms" (2000), Meenakshi Mukherjee observes the noticeable changes in Deshpande's works and says, "*Small Remedies*, Deshpande's sixth and recent novel, is the most confident assertion of this strength and a deliberate denial of sentimentality". In the article *The Hindu* Meenakshi Mukherjee has further view point in the article "On her own terms" (2000), she says:

Of the four remarkable novels I have read in recent times that deal with music- Vikram Seth's *An Equal Music*, Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her feet*, BaniBabu's Bangla novel *Gandharva* and now *Small Remedies*. ShashiDeshpande, I think, faces the toughest challenge. This has to do with incompatibility between the discourse of Hindustani music and the English language.

Deshpande has used her alter ego to convey the characters difficulties. When Madhu is working on a biography of Savitribai Indorekar, the publishers believes the victim stories and comments that, "victim stories are out of fashion, heroines are in" (167). But Madhu has refused to write a trendy biography at the request of the publisher. By abandoning her depression, she has attempted to depict the true events of Savitribai through her alter ego as a writer. In the article *The Hindu Meenakshi Mukherjee* remarks "on her own terms" (2000) as, "Madhu cannot impose the new concept of 'heroinism' on an old fashioned woman who white washes her life through selective amnesia". Madhu has recognises that there are different yardsticks in our society for men and women and she recalls her memory in Neemgaon. She says, "each family had its place marked out for it according to religion, caste, money, family background etc . . ." (138).

Madhu has cited the example of Savitribai's father-in-law, who had a mistress, a famous Thumri classical singer. The old man visits her. People in that area were perplexed by his choice of mistress, but there was never any outrage. According to the society, it is acceptable for a man to indulge in his love of music and even have a singer as a mistress. But for a daughter-in-law there is a restriction to take music lessons seriously, as if she wanted to be a professional musician, was scandalous and unthinkable. While recalling the narration of Savitribai and her family, Madhu has

used her alter ego to highlight the glaring inequalities in orthodox society. Madhu herself is a victim as she was got abused in her father's absence, as we learn near the end of the novel. She feels that, she is not accompanied by her mother because she was dead when Madhu was too small. As a child, she has raised by two men, her father and Babu, a male servant. Madhu has commented over her childhood as, "Motherless child, that I am, motherhood is an unknown world to me, The mothers I see in my childhood are drab creatures, forever scolding their children, certainly they are not the women to arouse a sense of deprivation in me" (182).

Madhu further adds:

I get some images of motherhood in the movies I see myself through the songs that speak of 'ma kapyar'. But real life shows are something entirely different. Munni's mother, who ignores her daughter . . . stern, dictatorial and so partial to her sons; Sunanda, sweetly devious and manipulating. Som's mother, so demanding- none of them conform to the white-clad, sacrificing, sobbing mother of the movies. (183)

Madhu has turned out to be an adoring mother who was always aware of her son's every need. Aditya's death is a bomb blast and it is the tragic part of her life. Savitribai Indorekar is domineering toward her servants, students, and even Madhu at times. Savitribai has occasionally gives instructions to Madhu on how to conduct the interview and when Savitribai illustrates her childhood, Madhu recalls how Bai's grandmother abruptly asked her to stop singing as a child during a family gathering, she detects resentment in Savitribai's voice. Madhu also recalls her memories of Bai, Madhu mentions the state of Bai as, "i think of her face when she told me this story, when she came to this point- a confused, resentful look. The child's resentment at

being interrupted, at being told to stop doing something she is enjoying- this was what I saw on her face” (28).

She also recalls the rumours about Savitribai that circulated in Neemgaon. A station director frequently visits Savitribai's home, he was always willing to assist her in obtaining a variety of radio program. The novel has explicitly states, “a woman who had left her husband's home - what morals would she have anyway” (222). Savitribai undoubtedly leads the most unusual life that anyone in the society could have imagined. It has Savitribai's daring spirit and courage to achieve her goal. She has been disguised as an alter ego, concealing her true identity. She did not say anything to Madhu about her daughter. She is terrified of disclosing the existence of her child.

Leela, on the other hand is a remarkable woman who was deeply committed to communist ideology. Before her marriage, she was known as Sindhu, but she has another name Leela, it serves as her alter ego to engage in charitable work. She is also a member of the Quit India Movement. She has criticized Gandhi's “Ahimsa” and “Satyagraha” principles. She did, however, come to regret some of her actions later in life. She has resigned from the party because it was clear that she was a woman who felt that the party’s reaction to a political situation was inappropriate. This prompted Leela to make a remark, despite the fact that she have never complained about the actions occurred in the party. Leela thinks herself, “It seems you have got to become a widow for the them to remember that you exist” (224).

Leela is financially self-sufficient. When her family was educating her in-laws, she is forced to live in the overcrowded chawis near the cotton mills. She has forced herself to work for the welfare of poor women infected with the contagious disease tuberculosis. During this time, she met Joe, a doctor who ran a clinic specifically for

T.B patients. Madhu recalls Leela's reaction to the movie "Davdas". When Leela has remained silent for a long time after watching the film "Davdas", Madhu assumed that the film had brought back memories of her late husband, who is similar like Devdas, the film hero, died of tuberculosis. Leela have expressed her emotions to Madhu. Leela poured her emotion towards her husband as, "Now I know why that poor man drank so much. He had nothing to do, he didn't have any work at all. If any intelligent man like him remains idle, what else can he do but take to drink" (96).

Leela has not approved her life that did not extend beyond oneself. She wishes to live a simple life. She did not like the high standards, her family set for themselves and she is surprised at what made them so special in believing it. She also has no regard for caste, creed, or color. Madhu is the only woman among her relatives who had accepted Leela's marriage and invited them to stay with her when they did not have a place of their own. She is a kindhearted woman, always willing to assist those in need. As a result, she has volunteered her for the sake of women who are suffering from tuberculosis.

It is a world in which a widow is expected to cease living and exist only in name. In a world where the words for widow and whore are interchangeable. A world in which a widow is unable to hold her young son in her lap during the upanayana ceremony because she is unable to participate in auspicious or holy rituals. As Madhu observes her hostess, Lata scatter her belongings throughout the house, Madhu muses:

. . . women leave their impress on quotidian life much more than men do, to make up perhaps, for the blanking out that is a woman's destiny after her death. Nothing left, often no picture, not even a name. Except . . . the sati stones. Stones engraved with the names of those women who died satis. An example to other women, perhaps; or was it a kind

of bribe? Deny the possibility of life without a man, and your name lives forever. (168)

Savitribai has the courage to leave a suffocating marriage and name her illegitimate child “Indorekar”, a name she later adopted as a singer from her mother’s hometown of Indore, without compromising either her maiden or married names. Her child has only her name, not the name of either parent. This is a strong statement, distinguishing the child as not the result of conjugal life or an illicit relationship, but as the child of Bai alone.

Madhu has realized as some situations reflects on her life, that Leela is an unusual woman by any standard, foregoing not only her own generation but also those that followed. She, for example, always supports herself. After her first husband dies, she gets a job and educates her in-laws children. She have continued to live on her own money after her remarriage to Joe, who earns well enough, and after his death, she returns immediately to the Maruti Chawl house, where she began her married life at the age of fifteen. Madhu feels that by using her other self, she is writing about Bai and Leela. Madhu comments over the women warrior in her life:

And my mother and all those women who reached beyond their grasp.
 Bai moving out of her class in search of her destiny as a singer, Leela breaking out of the conventions of widowhood, reaching out from her small room to the world, looking for justice for the weak, my mother running in her bare feet, using her body as an instrument for speed, to break out of the shackles, finally triumphantly breasting the tape- yes, they’re in it together. (284)

Knowing her aunt and then Bai, Madhu cannot accept that either of these women has taken the easy way out accepting a man’s patronage in exchange for

dubious favors. Savitribai tells Madhu that allowing a man to assist her would not have been considered very wrong. Women did it frequently in her profession and she adds, “. . . after all, people talked about you whatever you did, I could as well have done the things they said I was doing. But I didn’t, I never took that road” (214-15).

Bai has lived in a ram-shackled house with two rooms and an outside toilet shared by others during her tutelage under Guruji. Of course, there is no electricity, and water had to be drawn by hand from a well. She has to take a local shuttle train to his house and then walk two miles through fields. Madhu has tried to imagine that how Bai was passionate towards music. She says:

. . . a young woman who’d been, both as a child and as a married girl, part of a large family, living in a strange town among total strangers. With the added burden of being a Hindu woman, a married Hindu woman living with a Muslim partner, and of course the greater alienation that not knowing a language brings. (38)

Bai has remembered the years as the best part in her life because she was doing what she wanted, what she loved the most in the world. Her Guruji does not want to teach a respectable, Brahmin, married woman and refuses to have her stay with him like the rest of his male disciples. As a result, she has missed out on many important concerts and classes that are valuable in their momentousness and spontaneity. No true Guru ever sits down formally to teach. By the way, these are always imparted as and when the moment arises, as a thought or a brilliant flash of insight. As a result, Bai’s respectability, her “womanness”, becomes a curse, and she is denied for full participation in the learning activity because it would lead, her male colleagues enjoy and take for granted.

Savitribai has illustrated Madhu about her father and mother, despite being a girl, she is treated as a “precious jewel”. Typically, girls are regarded as a financial strain on the family at the time. Savitribai, on the other hand, is born with a silver spoon. As she puts past emotions in her interview to Madhu. Savitribai says:

I was my parents’ first child, a very pampered child. My father was the eldest of three brothers, so I was the first in the family. There were the daughter’s children, of course, but they didn’t count. They were not really our family every one made a great fuss of me, not only my parents and grandparents but my uncles, my aunts- all of them. By the time I was two, I had almost my own weight in gold ornaments. (27)

Her mother songs have influenced her in childhood. Savitribai states, “She showed me the beauty of music. She has a sweet voice. She sang the sort of songs women sang then, aarti songs, ritual songs stotras. When she sang the Ramraksha it became something quite different from what it was when the women just recited it; the music transformed it altogether” (27).Savitribai has always been an independent young girl. Her mother has influenced her rather than her father. She has challenged the notion that her father is the head of the family and makes all decisions in his daughter’s life. She marries a Brahmin when she is a young woman. Her passion for music compels her to listen in private. When her father-in-law recognises Savitri’s genuine love for music he encourages her to learn it.

Music lessons begin for Savitribai in a dark and filthy corner of a house. The women in the family begin to gossip. Savitribai, on the other hand, has shown sufficient bravery. She has a relationship with a tabla player. She has the ability to make decisions in her own life. Madhu believes:

I imagine her, a young woman who had lived sheltered life of daughter-in-law of an affluent Brahmin family, living this kind of life. A woman who'd been both as a child and as a married girl of large family, living in a strange town among total strangers. With the added burden of being a Hindu woman, a married Hindu woman, living with a Muslim partner and the greater alienation that not knowing the language brings. (38)

Savitribai has given up her married life, her only daughter Munni, and eventually her relationship with Ghulamsaab in her final days. Madhu says, "Both Ghulamsaab, her lover and Munni her daughter no longer part of her life" (167). She is a solitary traveller on her life's journey. But, after a long struggle, she has carved out her own space, her own unique identity as an artist in a male dominated society. As Savitribai's Guru comments, "Todi was mine you can never get that you have to create your own, it will come through your life, your experiences, your joys and sorrows" (133).

Savitribai has followed her guru's advice in both life and music. She has refused to try any new classical music experiments. She has opted to follow the less travelled path. She suffers, struggles, and gives up everything in life, but she paves the way for all Indian women. Madhu states Bai as, "I see the artist, the woman in search of her genius, of her destiny, but the artist was born of the woman. First there was the woman and then the artist" (133).

Leela and Bai have obtained their freedom through their alter egos, and they lived on their own terms. But this unconventionality, leads to the breaking free from stereotypes, the assertion of identity and individuality does not come cheap. Madhu has mentioned the struggle of Bai's life as, "Munni's rejection was the price Bai paid .

. . Bai lost her daughter but her life moved on” (284). And, as far as Leela is concerned, the price she had to pay was Paula, her stepdaughter’s rejection and contempt. But, interestingly, neither of them ever complained about it. They have barrier towards their freedom, when they took up the cudgels, and they were willing to pay it. Madhu comments over Bai and Leela as:

. . . Leela was certainly a person who accepted wholly the consequences of her actions and Madhu realizes that she has rarely heard Bai complain about how much more difficult it was for her as a woman to reach the top of her profession: ‘to her, they were part of the road she had chosen, they just had to be endured. (224)

Leela is returning to her mother’s house three decades later, she has discovered that the old woman has assumed the role of her own mother-in-law in all matters and has become excessively orthodox. Madhu gives a glimpse about Leela’s situation, “She won’t let Leela into the kitchen or the puja room. Leela is still a widow to her mother, her marriage to Joe not redeem in, but adding rather, to her pariah status” (235). It is a fact that women have served as epitomizes of their life, it is an adage, that women are their own worst enemies. In Bai’s life she begins her musical training with the support of her father-in-law, but despite his encouragement, she finds it difficult. Madhu says:

. . . a man is not of much use to a woman. After all, she lives her life among women and with women. Anger. Derision, contempt, ridicule- I can imagine Bai had to face all these when she came out of the shadowy room back to her life among the women. . . to be set apart from your own kind, not be able to conform, to flout the rules laid down, is to lay yourself open to cruelty. (220)

In her interviews with Madhu, Bai glosses over all the inconvenient facts of her past life by refusing to speak about Ghulam Ali or her daughter, Munni. Just as Munni has stubbornly refused to accept the fact that she was Ghulam Ali's daughter. Madhu thinks over herself, “there’s no Munni in her life, no illegitimate child, no abandoned husband, no lover. In showing me her album, she’s presenting me with her own illusion of life. a life of success and achievement. Nothing lacking . . .” (77-78). Each of us is playing multiple roles and has multiple selves that change pattern and mood depending on the situation, relationships, and circumstances.

Madhu has believed that if Bai could pinpoint what she considers to be her true self, it would most likely be the following one. Bai comments her music life to Madhu as, “young woman training under her Guruji . . . free for the first time in years, living the life she wanted, steady in the pursuit of her goal, pure of purpose” (170). And it is probably why, when she speaks about her life, her abandoned husband, lover, and daughter do not enter into her flashbacks at all, because they are only the backdrop to the larger picture that she possesses in her head.

Savitribai has considered her real self as a singer and she needs to be conveyed her other self to the readers. However, if one were to examine her life objectively, one would be struck by how self-indulgent it is. And would get nonplus by looking beyond her real self. But perhaps it is ruthlessness that is required for genius to come to fruition, for potential to be realized, for genius to blossom and take its rightful place in the hearts and minds of an adoring public.

Savitribai and Leela’s lives have been characterized by existential elements such as freedom, projection, and anti-traditionalism. Madhu has expressed herself through her writing. Thus, loss and loneliness characterize these three female characters. Bai first loses her husband, then her illicit Ghulam Saab. In her final days,

she stays with her student Hasina, the daughter of Ghulam Saab. Bai has experienced loss and loneliness throughout her life. Leela also loses her husband, and after his death, she leaves her deceased husband's house and returns to her ancient house in Maruti Chawl. Madhu loses her son, Adit, and her husband also abandons her. Madhu links her life with Bai's life and says:

Does she not face the stark at that time, the truth that confronts me every moment of my life- the futility of life without children? In the month since Adit's death, my mind has been ceaselessly exercising on the treadmill of this one thought: how does one live with the knowledge of a child's death? It is our children who reconcile us to the passing of time, to our aging, to our irrelevance, our mortality. Without them the world makes no sense, without them we have no place in it. How then does one live without them? Can Bai give me the clue to this? Has she found the secret?. (154-55)

Loss, loneliness, and freedom are the essential existential elements found in the characters to find their other self, prompting them to seek out their alter ego in order to discover their true self. When Savitribai illustrates about her childhood, Madhu have realized that this is not the story she came for. Madhu has recalled the fair, beautiful Savitribai, who would walk ahead of her husband, who would trail slightly behind her. Madhu has recalled Saviribai's lifestyle in Neemgaon and what she sees in Bhavanipur are diametrically different. Deshpande's novel has explored the ambiguous dichotomies of speech and silence. Many events have gleaned from Savitribai's narration and Madhu's observations. It is not simply a demarcation between speech and thought, but something entirely different. The silence, the unanswered emotions, can be noticed in turn through hand gestures.

Deshpande appears to insinuate that the woman in their life is both the victimizer and the victim. Savitribai is a very critical woman in the same way that Hasina and Madhu wonders Bai as, “this nasty tyrannical creature (is) going to be part of my book?” (61). *Small Remedies* structural design is ambiguous and unwieldy at times, but it illustrates Guru’s principle of hybridity and clash of cultures. The novel has displaced the true lives of women through their alter egos, Madhu as writer, Savitribai as musician, and Sindhu as Leela.

Madhu has instilled courage from Savitribai and Leela’s life. Through introspection, she discovers her true self, heals from her state of confusion, and gains mental plenum. While writing Savitribai biography, Madhu notices, “We see our lives through memory and memories are fractured, fragmented, almost always cutting across time” (165). However, it is her bravery that aids in piecing together all the fractured, fragmented memories that provide a meaningful existence to life. When Som departs, Madhu forms a heritage with Leela and Savitribai. Madhu ponders:

I’ve begun began thinking that in writing about Bai, I’m writing about Leela as well. And my mother and all those women who reached beyond their grasp. Bai moving out of her class in search of her destiny as a singer, Leela breaking out of the conventions of widowhood, looking for justice for the weak, my mother running in her bare feet, using her body as an instrument for speech- yes, they’re in it together. But they paid the price for their attempts to break out. (248)

Madhu has concluded that concealing her grief and living life as if it were a miracle. It is the ideal way for a woman to survive. She has accepted her son Aditya’s untimely death because death is unavoidable in the cycle of creating human life. There is a complete and large effective treatment to bring a woman out of her

claustrophobic life, small remedies do exist and must be foraged for. Madhu has tried to drown her sorrows in Hasina's melodious voice as she sings a Vachana by Mahadevi, a Karnataka saint poet, or Tony's warm hug, and it is compared to the aroma of hot oil and curry leaves roasting in it, or the splutter of mustard seeds as hunger grips one, memories come to Madhu's aid. Madhu says hopefully, "as long as there is memory, there's always the possibility of retrieval, as long as there is memory, loss is never total" (324).

Madhu is aware that she must find a way out of the quagmire on her own because no one else can. While engaging in self-introspection, Madhu has realized that her miseries are the result of life misconceptions as well as distorted egoistic perspectives, concluding that the power to overcome these lies within her. What Savitribai rejects, Madhu accepts in her life; she has become emotionally free as a result of Adit's death, and she accepts life with a lot of pain. Madhu's fate is the fate of an average Indian woman but Savitribai is one out of a million. Leela is a fantastic character, her life is similar to Savitribai's. She is a strong believer in the communist ideology and has left her family to pursue happiness in public life. The first and second part of the novel are similar, they are both about successful women, one in art and the other in politics.

Both Savitribai and Leela has paved their own path by establishing their own alter ego, rejecting patriarchal beliefs and their family in order to achieve higher goals. Deshpande has given the message of being in our own light through these characters. As stated in the paper's epigraph, she finds refuge in herself. In the new millennium, we anticipate all Indian women to be like Savitribai.

Deshpande has portrayed different women in her novel and it abundantly makes clear that the blossoming of one's genius and the progression of one's personality is a

concern of one's own individual choice. If Savitribai has her own method of achieving her goals, we have Leela, Munni, and Madhu who sometimes stand firm without transforming the tables totally against the world. Savitribai is callous and unconcerned about social norms and practices. Munni, her own daughter, craves acceptance and approval. She does not consider herself Ghulam's daughter, preferring to use her given name Meenakshi, and travels to Pune to rejoin her mother's family.

Frightened about her future and her true self, she relocates to Pune and marries in accordance with her grandmother's and father's wishes. Munni's avoidance of her mother's bad reputation is an attempt to preserve her immaculate identity as a woman of integrity and respect for herself and society. Ruptalin Engtipi in her article "New woman in Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies*" (2017), she comments *Small Remedies*, "The very kind of woman portrayed in the novel is that of a 'new woman'. They are the feminist who will not seat still to be marginalized and cried out their miserable condition but they are seen as rebelling against the norms of society" (15). Madhu's resentment of Som's irrational questions causes ripples in her mind, and she is concerned about society's double standards for men and women. When it comes to deciding the fate of women, man's dictates appear to destabilize.

Deshpande has depicted the situations real and it reveals the sheer unpredictability and shattered principles of male dominated society. James T. Boulton in his work *Late Essays and Articles* (2004) mentions the view of D. H. Lawrence. He says, "man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopedia, an ideal, or an obscenity the one thing she won't accept her as, is a human being, a real human being of the feminine sex" (163).

Deshpande has depicted her characters body soul conflict in *Small Remedies* as well. Despite her enormous popularity in the music world, Savitribai avoids singing Bhajans. Leela has placed a little value on her health and marries Joe in order to complete her mission and reorganize herself. Deshapande has done her best to demonstrate her premise that the decision to break free from an age old practice is met with societal opposition, even when the individual wishes to protect society from the consequences of social stigma that have plagued the human world, it remains same in some believes laid by the society.

Deshpande has openly pleaded for women to recognize that nothing is as important as retaining our identity, individual rights, and personal freedom through *Small Remedies*. Men and women is considered a merely agents, and the ability to reproduce and structure a better generation is unquestionably a woman's forte. The unimpeded privacy of perinatal and child rearing is a divine gift given to women. Women have many obstacles and breakdowns in life, but the indomitable spirit never gives in to the opposing forces, and they reach the pinnacle of success through their unconquerable self-restraint and unyielding determination. Madhu's meanderings appear to take a back seat at times, but by the end of the novel, we find her triumphant.

Som's call is the inner voice that offers reconciliation to all deceptions and the incorporation of mutual trust. Madhu has not wished to forget her past, but rather to preserve it because she believes that not only the living, but also the dead, yearn for freedom. The novel final line is the best illustration of Madhu's reformation and remarkable realization. Madhu says, "How could I have ever longed for amnesia? Memory, capricious and unreliable though it is, ultimately carries its own truth within

it. As long as there is memory, there is always the possibility of retrieval; as long as there is memory the loss is never total” (324).

Thus, in Deshpande’s *Small Remedies*, the remedy is offered through the alter ego of the characters blurred and bizarre past, where there is always hope for a new beginning. The majority of the novel’s characters experience cracks and crisis is a result of their individual choices, which compelled them to do something different. Choices have no bounds, and they not only trump each other, but also demonstrate the personal charisma and courage that can help them emerge victorious.

The true source of empowerment is our inner will and the ability to reach beyond constrained and guarded fortifications. Deshpande has successfully convinced her readers that all groundbreaking discoveries are the result of our faith, which acts as a ladder to the Zenith, and that the journey to broaden horizons necessitates an innovative effort. The individual person’s other self would definitely find their role in life.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Shashi Deshpande's novels reveal the author interpretation of the asymmetry between man woman relationships in our Indian society it revolves around middle class families. The novelist attempts to resolve this imbalance in her works. However, many supporting characters in the novels remain silent or accept their fate with surrender but do not take any action for the sake of social prestige or reputation. Shashi Deshpande is a humanist rather than a feminist or a womanist. Her novels demonstrate her deep empathy for women in our Indian society. She takes a massive step for her passion by bringing in the alter ego concept and a realistic portrayal of life through her characters.

The novels by Shashi Deshpande revolve around family relationships. She once told her interviewer that it is essential for women to live in relationships. Deshpande has been attempted to convey through her writing. Deshpande's main interests are interpersonal relationships and human emotions. She depicts a social world full of complex relationships.

Shashi Deshpande is an eminent writer whose female protagonists, all from the middle and lower classes, are sensitive, intelligent, educated, and career oriented. She strives to establish the woman as a person who breaks free from limitations imposed and redefines her identity in response to the changing social climate of the modern era. In her novels, many men and women coexist, navigating life in their various age groups, classes, and gendered roles. These novels are set in a cultural context where many significant changes in attitudes, norms, and ambitions give these people a strange sense of grouping in the new world. Women, in particular, are caught up in the process of reinterpreting and reviving their roles, positions, and relationships

within the given social world. In her works, the novelist depicts modern Indian women search for their individuality in self, family, society, and the relationship issues that are pivotal to women. She tries to convey her feelings through her alter ego as Jaya in *That Long Silence* and through the character's alter ego in *Small Remedies*.

Her struggle as a writer to focus on women issues, problems, and experiences is indicative of the rebellion against feminist expression that exists in India in the mid-twentieth century. She attempted to detach herself from women lives and points of view by employing a different narrating style. She claims that she too, had felt that their desires and experiences were minimal. Her dilemma as a woman writer was to voice women concerns. Communicating within the world of women is not a catastrophic or uninteresting attitude. The novelist uses this point of view to deliver the current world as women undergo it. To reveal the world of mothers, daughters, and wives is to indirectly present the worlds of fathers, sons, and husbands negatively.

The bond between men and women, and between women themselves, thus becomes essential from the perspective of social interactions. The novelist is primarily interested in presenting women perspectives on the battle of tradition and modernity, as reflected in the generational shift and conflict between them. Her young heroines oppose the traditional lifestyle, rituals, ceremonies, and patriarchal values.

Her protagonists, including Madhu, Jaya, and others, see the gendering of men and women as limiting their human potential and fullness. After getting married, they rebel, reject, and seek freedom from traditional norms and ways of life. Her novels depict women pausing in their adulthood as wives and mothers to write a long, careful book about the formative years of teenage to adulthood. The two stages of life, youth and adulthood, provide a new perspective on their own lives as women in a society; these all lies due to analyzing their inner self by creating an alter-ego.

These women are also rebuilding their relationships with the past and tradition and reforming their relationships with one's life by creating their inner self. The women new relationship appears to be based on a mature understanding of their roles and responsibilities in their society. Shashi Deshpande's female protagonists question the wisdom of the traditional world. Their constant battle for development and clear articulation is balanced by realizing that they live in a world with certain beliefs on women freedom.

A close examination of her fiction discloses that Deshpande is a highly sensitive writer who is acutely aware of society's male female imbalance. Her male characters fit the feminist stereotype of a middle class husband. Who is insensitive, self centred, and occasionally overly ambitious. At the same time, most of her female characters suffer from some flaw or another, making it difficult to categorize her work, as the term struggle of women requires a broader definition.

Deshpande's portrayal of women relationships is a process of individual balancing modern and traditional values through selflessness. As she manages her responsibilities as a wife and mother, the woman self-esteem grows. Women lives in society lead them to a new understanding. Women lives do not shut and inhibit, and they gain fulfilment and create self-awareness by analyzing them.

Their social interactions can help them to develop self-awareness. *That Long Silence* and *Small Remedies*, Deshpande's novel explores the lives of different women and their alter egos; it also mirrors the implausibility of ever capturing the truth about many lives in the world. It investigates the complexities of capturing the life of Savitribai Indokar, a classical singer of the Gwalior Gharana who is devoted to music in retrieving memory. We learn about the dark corners of Savitribai's life and the

enlivening saga of Leela through Madhu's version. No blatant writings are drawn in depicting these women struggles for identity by retaining their real self.

Small Remedies reflects Shashi Deshpande's writing stamp. The plot is revealed through the deepest parts of one central character, as it is typical of her writing, life is mainly concentrated through the sight of one's identity and acknowledged through the psyche of one's persona. Not only in this aspect, but also in her better way to look at life, love for imagery, deliberately slow way of unveiling the plot that is full of unexpected twists and turns, ability to look into the depths of the human heart and gave voice to the feelings buried there, and in the authenticity with which her main character challenges her own life, in the priority being given to dreams to unravel the events. It also clearly denotes the evolution of the writers philosophy. To recognize the core of Deshpande's philosophical thoughts and trace their development, it also looks no further than the book epigraphs.

Deshpande outperforms herself as a writer, establishing her place in the international literary scene through her writing. Shashi Deshpande is the most essential contemporary Indian female novelist in English. Women, who make up half of the world population, are not treated equally with men in all areas of human activity. They are restricted to their homes, oppressed, suppressed, and marginalized in accessing and sharing the accessible potential for self fulfilment. Even in the developing environment, the women's position remains unsavoury as she stands on the cusp of social change, acutely aware of man's exploitation socially, economically, and politically. She attempts to express her vehement protest, but in doing so, she risks social rejection for questioning the preciousness of honours and traditions laid by society.

Women writers, with a peculiar insight into the entire panorama of women plight in today custom bound Indian society, mirror in their novels the subtle factors and besetting influences contributing to the unsatisfactory place of womanhood in the emerging society. They examine the Indian women transformation from a timid and subservient status to a liberated and creative phase of shaping her future.

Deshpande portrays Indian womanhood sensitively, tip toeing the labyrinthine paths of the human psyche with a special gift for steep psychological ideas into the intricacies of the human psyche, supported by rich emotions unassuming and pretentious style. In *That Long Silence*, she delicately delineates the narrator protagonist Jaya's mood swings, the see saw juncture of pleasures and desperation, the remnants of emotions perceived and suppressed, heart wringing anguish. Her novels are in the psyche schools of those whose rational thought capacity vanishes after being subjected to horrific experiences in *That Long Silence*.

Deshpande admits that only women can read her books because they have been written from women self and experiences. Her novel *That Long Silence* is considered autobiographical, depicting her own experiences of the plight of educated middle-class Indian women, who are treated gender specific. Her work focuses on the status of women in contemporary India's traditional tied, male dominated middle class society.

Jaya's resentment at having to follow her husband's orders is always silent in the novel *That Long Silence*, and all her deeds serve only to make Mohan comfortable. During that seemingly endless period of waiting, Jaya subjects herself to a laborious process of critical examination, leading to a startling reawakening of her identity. She soon realized that she appeared to be imitating the deeds of traditional homemakers

like Sita, who are recognized for their blind devotion to their husbands; she was mentally estranged from their attitude.

It is widely acknowledged that Indian women lack their own identity. Power structures such as caste, class, and religion all impact the complexities of gender relations in India. Like any other woman, Jaya must imbibe characteristics of her father's personality and, later, those of her husband's. A successful wife is measured by her potential to immerse and dissolve her persona into her husband's. When the novel concludes, we have an ostensibly determined Jaya who prefers to live up to her name and triumph over the manacles of her married life. But interestingly, her behaviour is quite ambiguous. She never considers leaving her failed marriage. Despite their privileged position, the women novelists have faced conflicts that are not dissimilar to those of other Indian women.

Conflicts of varying severity have always characterized the lives of every personal liberty of women in India, along with novelists. As a result, the novelists have naturally created characters by representing their alter ego who is competent in life's intimate and delicate experience. The characters are confronted with primarily personal problems, and they attempt to resolve them on a personal level. Psychoanalytic thinkers, beginning with Freud, viewed religion cynically and labelled it as an instrument of oppression, for example patriarchal beliefs imposed on women are regarded as a state of oppression that women face. They adopted their other selves to express their emotions and justify their life roles.

Deshpande depicts her novel to represent gender roles and societal rules about women to communicate with the reader in an attempt to sway current ideologies. For a long time, the woman has been a void in literary work, both Western and Indian; This is true not only of men's fiction but also of women fiction, who have mostly

bound themselves to write inspiring stories by bringing out their inner self. Despite equal educational and economic opportunities, women continued to be victims of forced injustice within the family and other legal rights from society.

Despite the widely recognized fact that women follow the rules set by society, they have been denied the right to express their emotions, thoughts, and pain. The women have been working indoors and outdoors, but their efforts have gone unnoticed. Although many women roles in the family and society have improved over time, they have always been inferior to men's.

The ideal image of a woman, such as the traditional Sita, is supplanted by the realistic image, which is frustrated and alienated. The initiation of liberal English works not only brought about significant changes in the middle class lifestyle, but it also instilled in women a sense of freedom; this only fueled a romantic yearning for a kind of freedom that was not easy to come by. As a result, the female writers exploited the tension between tradition and modernity. It was a portrayal of women dealing with the conflicts and problems that arise due to the fusion of traditional and modern virtues.

The transition from old to new, from traditional to modern, affects both genders, but the fair gender bears its brunt, with the disaster of value adjustment being the most unbearable. Women in the modern era are torn between the competing forces of tradition and modernity, and they find it hard to cope with the personal aspirations connected with the realities of life. It is a dispute between their desire for personal fulfilment and their obligation to family and children.

As a result, most female writers took up the theme of exploring the inner self and depicted how they are adjusting to their surroundings. Previously, women problems were more emotional due to their detachment to family and home. However,

as their self-awareness has grown, they have tried to initiate to assert themselves both inside and outside the family. A patriarchal society opposes and denies such deviation from established social norms, and resistance to her quest for individuality and selfhood becomes a source of her seemingly impossible struggle. Even though many women forums have expressed their concern, the going appears challenging.

The road ahead is complicated and full of obstacles in a chauvinistic community where most women would oppose the threat of losing the little liberation they have within the four walls. Embracing an alter ego is an extreme form of self-distancing, which includes stepping back from our immediate emotions to view a situation objectively.

Self-distancing allows us to reason about the situation. It enables us to control anguish, increases our persistence on challenging tasks, and improves our self-control. Self-distancing appears to enable people to reap these benefits by directing their attention to the big picture, it is feasible to see events as part of a larger plan rather than becoming engrossed in immediate emotions; this has led some scholars to doubt whether it could also enhance self-control elements like a determination by ensuring that we remain focused on our shots on goal even when distracted. It enables us to control our emotions, such as anxiety and impatience, while increasing our self-control and determination.

The alter ego is constructed with some psychological space between our emotions and the attitudes we want to embody. Asking how one's hero would act instantly pushes us to make the right decision rather than taking the easy way out. Alter ego can assist us in stepping outside of one's comfort zone. Possessing an alter ego can indeed be highly liberating. One's alter ego can help individuals channel their genius and excel in their lives.

An alter ego can help to get away from oneself to retain their quest in life. Having a different persona can render life more enjoyable. Some fictional characters were fortunate enough to be labeled as the author's alter ego. Others were born with the writers, who gave birth to the characters stamp. Alter ego is a mystical epithet capable of imbuing any persona with immediate depth and imbuing the actions with reality.

In fiction, a characters alter ego can take different forms, including a secret identity, a subordinate personality, or a peripheral life that is lived alongside everyday life. The alter ego is a significant feature of many fictions, which frequently feature ordinary people with alternate lifestyles or people with extraordinary powers that they only expose when they assume a disguise. Alter ego are also a popular method in spy thrillers, which frequently feature psychopathic characters who may be deceiving the rest of the world into believing they are normal.

Alter ego allows authors to explore different sides of themselves or their characters. They also aim to make certain plot lines more plausible; it would be challenging for superheroes to appear as ordinary citizens. They require the alter egos to shield their personas and genuinely help people. As a result, superheroes are required for the story to work in the case of alter ego. Furthermore, the concept of an alter ego is intriguing and exciting to audiences. Nothing is more captivating than a secret, and with an alter ego, there is always a secret waiting to be explored by readers in the story.

When a person lives multiple lives, has a secret identity, or adopts multiple personalities that alternative personality is referred to as their alter ego. Spider Man is Peter Parker's alter ego. He appears to be a regular guy during the day, but he secretly possesses supernatural abilities to combat crime. In many cases, the characters have

control over their alter egos, but in others, they focus on the psychological factors of the alter ego; they may be unaware that it exists.

This dissertation has taken for study the two novels of Shashi Deshpande, *That Long Silence* and *Small Remedies*. It has attempted to trace the streaks of alter ego that the author has exposed in these two novels. The female characters are depicted with Deshpande's thoughts and experiences. She tries to unravel the difficulties of women by exploring her thoughts; this brings in a realistic view of life, the silence throughout the novel brings out many women struggles in their real life. In *Small Remedies*, Savitribai's life enfolds several mysteries, but she tries to bring out her authentic self and succeeds in her music career. Sindhu has created Leela as her alter ego, and she finds a way to help the local people around her despite much opposition from her family. After her son's death, Madhu finds a way to regain her emotions through her alter ego as a biographer of Savitribai by exploring her childhood.

Finally, in works of literature, an alter ego can be an enticing and story defining trait. The alter ego has created a significant impact on the readers. It will persist in being a prominent feature across many types of fiction, from the superheroes one comes to know the things around the world and create a love for author character. She has depicted her work and it created her characters other self to retain their goal in life. The understanding of these various streaks of alter ego indeed creates a positive impact among the readers by exploring the authors emotions.

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