

THE NEW WOMAN VERSUS THE OLD POWER STRUCTURE IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF SHASHI DESHPANDE

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ABSTRACT

Shashi Deshpande, second daughter of famous Kannada dramatist and author Sriranga, was born in Dharwad of Karnataka in India. She got Sahitya Akademi Award and Padam Sri Award. She is called a woman writer. The main thematic concerns of her novels are woman's struggle, inner conflict and search for identity, parent-child relationship, and concept of marriage and sex. She portrays The New Woman in her fiction. They can be defined as one who is convent-educated; one who is professional in outlook and career-seeking; one who is seen at war against the male chauvinism, the tyranny of one's mothers and grand-mothers; one who is engaged in one's struggles against patriarchy, gender bias and discrimination in the family; one who holds one's independent views on marriage and sex; one who is prepared to sacrifice one's wifeness and motherhood for the sake of one's career, and one who does not hesitate even to use one's sex as a stepping-stone for the promotion of one's career. These women tried to demolish the old power structure in their families without creating an alternative social set up for them. Since these women fail to do so and at the same time fail to fit in the old power structure, they pass through the unimaginable anguish, grief and sufferings, and are found alienated, defeated and disintegrated in quest of their self-identities. The aim of the present paper is to highlight the new woman versus the old power structure in the family and society in the select novels of Shashi Deshpande and to delineate the fight back of female protagonists against injustice done to them.

KEYWORDS: New Woman, Struggle, Patriarchy, Society, Family