

THE EXPRESSIVE AND EXPLOSIVE WOMEN IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF SHOBHA DE

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"A woman especially if she has the misfortune of knowing anything should conceal it as well as she can...imbecility in women is a great enhancement of their personal charm"- Jane Austen (*Northanger Abbey* 199)

The Feminist approach is integrated with the idea that women's place in society is unequal to that of men, and that society is systematized in such a way as to support men to the political, social and monetary deficiency of women. However, Feminists have come up with different theories to elucidate these inequalities and have encouraged different ways of redressing inequalities, and it is marked on geographic and historical variations in the nature of feminism. The rights and means of contribution include legal shield and addition in politics, business and scholarship and gratitude and construction of women's cultures and authority.(68). It's notions overlaps with those of woman's rights. It pursues to disclose the monopoly of male sex in masculine society as well as in male dictating literature. From the very beginning, it has been entangled with political trials and "it has always meant a belief that women should have the same right, power and opportunity that men have." (Kumar Sanjay 51) The feminists of earlier were women who were vigorous associates of civil rights movement, who griped against the Vietnam War and thrashed for the obliteration of oppression. They comprehended that the approaches used to overwhelm the black were comparable to those used to keep womenfolk docile. An critical need was sensed to

recognize the essential of viewing woman as a distinct group. The similar emerging spread to the reading of literature. The criticism about feminist began as sprout of the women's emancipation movement. Literary criticism and literary theory has conventionally been fortified male-conquered areas. It's been considered that the descriptive reader, writer or critic of literature was male.

In present scenario, Feminism is a revolutionary global ideology. Feminism, as a literary cultural, social, and political movement of the twentieth century calls for a certain set of attitudes. Marilyn French defines feminism Indian English literature has risen a galaxy of woman writers emotive of several facets of human life. The feminist standpoint attained the importance in Indian fiction ever since the post-independent Indian novelists such as Anita Desai, Kamala Markandeya, Nayantara Sehgal, Arundhati Roy and Shobha De began to portray the Expressive and Explosive Indian women characters.

Shobha De is a devoted antagonist of the traditions and customs of the Indian society that remains as clutches for women in a position substandard to that of man- physically, politically, socially and economically. Her novels express about the women who have fixed to decline to continue with the conservative arrays of sexuality and gender explicit roles. Her novels index the mirror image of the writer on the lives of modern women of the high class society, their difficulties and trepidations. Her protagonists try to take control over her situation in

her own way. However their accomplishments do not get a sense of total contentment to them. Their obsession with power prevents them from excelling their environment and undergoing the joy of 'total' fulfillment. Betrayal, incest, rape, lies and death prominently mark their world. On a wide-ranging canvas, the women characters are found to be stifled, burdened and victimized in various ways at various levels of society.

The rebellious women in Ms. De's Novels restore their lost fortunes; put all efforts to make themselves 'survival of the fittest' and at times 'struggle for the existence'. They like to be glamorous and posh, spending money in spa. They like to be very modern in attire and mind than traditional way. They want to conquer the hearts with their charisma to lead elated life. They feel elite, when people bound to them as slaves. De never portrayed her protagonist as maids and slaves at home. She always elevates the mindset of women in her novels. It very appreciating that she sketched women as leaders and frontrunners of the society rather than typical ancient women. The characters of women in her novels are denoted as sexually enlightened and free thinkers who have been termed as 'New Woman'. These so called new women are much more bodily active and proactive than their mothers or earlier generation. Feminist – New Style, a journal (1927) declared that "The new woman is a blend of physical freedom. Sexually and stamina with feminist self-assertiveness and traditional domestic femininity, a woman who can combine pleasure, career and marriage. They are eager to participate in pleasure as they would do in play, work etc."

The protagonist of her novels, be it Karuna, Aparna, Mikki, Alish or Asha Rani are rebellious ultra-modern Indian women who encounter the orthodoxy of social taboos. They differ much from the sexually unaware Indian woman which is quite contrary to most Indian male writers who feel that sex is an unkind subjection to man's desire-necessary in order to have offspring. Heroines of De's challenge this stale and traditional set of the society and raise their voice for equal rights otherwise by overruled. They are much more assertive, domineering and bold in comparative to men.

They do not want to be submissive in any situation and guilty of their situations.

In Sultry Days (1994), Sujata is a prostitute, who does for her livelihood and she feels good. This gives her pleasure and money. She defines her own life which is not defined by her husband. She sets her rules and comfortable with whatever she does. She speaks her mind. These women don't want to compromise on their professional skills. The writer explores the world of urban women, who are shrewd enough to use men as a means to achieve their aim to become rich, famous and independent.

De never portrays the image of the Indian woman as weak, docile person depends on her husband or father for any financial or social matters. All women these women are daring and dashing to face any kind of challenges that hampers from reaching their desired goals.

In Second Thoughts, Maya a pretty girl who is anxious to escape her dull, middleclass home in Calcutta. She got fed up with routine and dependent life. She marries Ranjan, a handsome, ambitious man who has a degree from American University and from an affluent family. Later, Maya finds herself trapped and stifled in the rigid conservative life style. She feels to overcome loneliness in Mumbai. She clings in friendship with Nikhil, a college going neighbor, towards love and betrayal. She wants to escape from the clutches of despair lifestyle and to prove she achieved her joyous moment. But the stale relationship between the husband and wife remains with them.

In Starry Nights, The love affair between the Aasha Rani and Akshya Arora is based on the Bollywood filmdom. Aasha Rani hails from a middle class background and enter film industry enforced by her mother. But she understands the world behind the celluloid screen and adjusts with parameters where a woman could never think of, the producer introduces her with every bigwig and he also enjoys her bodily pleasures. She becomes a star, always in limelight. But the affair between Akshay could not succeed as he settles down with wife. The male-dominated world

passes the time for their enjoyment and never look into the status of woman, who craves for love and identity.

In this novel, De depicts the miserable condition of a women in the society to sustain their professional life. The protagonist's leads a futile relationship because she is exploited by many married males just for pleasure. But she never feels regret or guilty because she wants to fulfill her desires by using the males as gadget or ladder to go up in the life.

In *Socialite evenings*, all about the families of echelons, Mumbai high class society. The housewives of rich families whose husbands remain busy with their work and never looked into the situation of their wives at home. Their marriages are often seen as loveless and just a societal norm. Karun the protagonist gets bored with her married status and occupy herself busy with write ups of her memoirs. She acquires good fame through her writings, pride in her venture. She becomes a socialite to firm her profession in media. She leads her profession in all aspects with her charms, intelligence and boldness.

De differs comprehensively because she rely on very frank expression of instances and openheartedness. She uses a new idiom by gathering the modern-day society to the English language that adds to the charm for the novel. She speaks the bitter truth of reality and makes aware the miserable condition of women and discriminations to them by the counterparts in the patriarchal society.

The rebellious and challenging characters of women in De's Novels seem to tie them up with relationship problems like lack of filial love, money, impotency, communication, hypocrisy, power, sex and progeny are to be considered in her novels. Money plays a vital role in her novels. Sex is the crucial parameter in all the relationships which weave to a successful life. It is

the bedrock of all relations among them which ultimately makes them happy.

De puts forward both the good as well as the bad qualities so as to create the bond of relationship between the characters and reader. She naturally gives a negative images of her male characters; useless, clumsy, unworthy, selfish and unwelcomed.

De is well known about her as an exuberant and uncontrollable personality, her novels are full of enthusiasm for challenges of women characters and also a good motivation for readers. She highlighted the struggle and mental agony of women from conventionally male-prejudiced society to self-satisfied individuals. Her views about marriage is balanced in the concept that men should understand the psyche of woman, her emotions, and freedom of choice. She depicted the protagonist from varied background such as traditional, subjugated and marginalized to the position of ultra-modern and liberated women called as 'new woman' He woman characters both in their contribution in creative works and in their declaration as an autonomous entity, discard the idea of living a life of depression.

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