



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE PROCESS OF SELF IDENTIFICATION: A STUDY OF SHASHI DESHPANDE'S
THE DARK HOLDS NO TERRORS

*Meera Babu

Department of English, St. Dominics College, Kanjirapally, Kerala, India

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 29th December, 2017
Received in revised form
09th January, 2018
Accepted 12th February, 2018
Published online 30th March, 2018

Key words:

Liberation, Independence, Self,
Identity, Confidence, Individuality.

Copyright © 2018, Meera Babu. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Meera Babu, 2018. "The process of self identification: a study of shashi deshpande's the dark holds no terrors", *International Journal of Current Research*, 10, (03), 67261-67265.

ABSTRACT

The paper intends to explore the theme of self discovery and identity in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. For a woman, the need for self fulfillment, autonomy, self realization, independence and individual actualization are important and this quest triggered off by some crisis in their lives make them strive heroically to overcome their cultural conditioning and barriers created by society in matter of tradition and manners. The study also attempts an enquiry into the Indian womanhood that has got estranged from self and others due to reasons varying from personality traits to societal expectations and their changed consciousness as presented in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*.

INTRODUCTION

The women who have so far been subjected to the marginalization and oppression of male patriarchal society have suddenly transformed themselves in the present day scenario of social and economic revolutions. The volcano of silence and the power of endurance have suddenly exploded and the 'New Women' refuses to play the role of second fiddle to her husband in various walks of life. Changes in socio-economic conditions have affected the familial relations especially the man-woman relationship. Shashi Deshpande in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* presents the heart rendering tale of injustice, violence, guilt, and terror to portray a tortured and bewildered woman who in spite of being successful, intelligent, independent, sensitive and attractive is condemned to live a miserable life of an unhappy marriage. The novel analyses in depth the meaning of being a woman in modern India by probing into the inner recesses of the protagonists psyche to discover the root of her silent suffering and passive resistance, thus helping her strive towards self realization and self actualization. It is the post modern dilemma of Indian woman, who needs to redefine herself to escape the perpetual darkness of torture, injustice, and ignominy (Sharma 44). *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is about the struggle of an educated and professional woman Sarita. After fifteen years she returns to her father's house as she has heard about the death of her mother.

Sarita or Saru got the opportunity to review her relationship with her father, mother, brother, husband and her children. She remembered her past days. She got the admission in medical college despite the strong opposition of her mother. Her mother always tried to compel her to live within four walls. While doing her medical Sarita fell in love with Manohar, a dynamic student of college and later on she got married with him. Her mother strongly opposed this relationship but it was of no use. Saru became a successful doctor and Manohar became a teacher in a third rate college. But after sometime when Saru became popular doctor in their locality things started to change. Saru in hands of Manohar felt herself a terrified trapped animal. Manu's male pride was hurt and he decided to take revenge. Manu became a mean person that he started to tease and torture Saru. He enjoyed her glory at day and ill treated her at night. She became two-in-one woman, in day time a doctor and during night terrified trapped animal. So she came to talk to her father because there was no one who could comfort her. But at the end Saru tries to make compromise with the situation. There was a hope of resettlement. She revolts against the tradition but ultimately tries to compromise with the reality. The novel opens with Sarita, a reputed medical practitioner with two children, returning home after fifteen years hearing the news of her mother's death. Saru a prisoner of her own fears, confusion, and self righteousness now returns home in an agonizing mood in search for herself (Aswathi 107). Though she had once sworn she would never return she now undertakes a journey in search of identity, selfhood, and individuation.

*Corresponding author: Meera Babu,
Department of English, St. Dominics College, Kanjirapally, Kerala, India.

She hailed from a tradition bound family whose adherence to patriarchal rules had left scars on her psyche. Saru's mother's obvious preference for her brother Dhruva coupled with a deprivation of parental care and affection made her live a pale, loveless life in the early years of her girlhood. Treated as a second rate citizen in her own home owing to sexual discrimination she developed a sense of alienation within her and precipitated a sense of rootlessness and insecurity. Sara recalls there was "always puja on Dhruva's birthday. A festive lunch in the afternoon and an arti in the evening. My birthdays were almost the same but there was no puja" (168). She was always made to feel that she was like a bird of passage in her parental home the conversation between the mother and the daughter reveals it,

'Don't go out in the sun, you'll get even darker'
 'Who cares?'
 'We have to care if you don't; we have to get you married.'
 'I don't want to get married.'
 'Will you live with us all your life?'
 'Why not?'
 'You can't'
 'And Dhruva?'
 'He's different. He's a boy.'(45)

Many such scenes were etched in her mind and the Indian view of the girl as a liability and the boy as an asset were firmly implanted in her mind. The preference for boys is blatantly acknowledged in most Indian homes. The reasons are rooted in our tradition bound society which demands the mandatory presence of the male child in important rituals. The patriarchal society also considers only the male offspring as worthy enough to carry on a family line (Shukla 83). Kakar notes that for Indian women, in patriarchy, delivering a male child is a deliverance from insecurity, it is a "certification and redemption" (Bhavani 25). Society treats male offspring as an ultimate panacea to all problems but a girl child is an unwanted burden as she cannot fulfill the parental needs or ungratified ambitions within the given social calculus. The plentitude, warmth, and importance given to a male child are denied to the girl and this makes her either depressed or rebellious. The mothers were stricter with daughters because daughters are trained to submit and adjust in a new household. For sons it is different. They were the ones who would carry on the family name and light the pyres of their parents. As for a daughter she is only a temporary inmate of her parental home. She has to be given away in marriage to another family with a dowry. Therefore she is always a liability, a burden. This gender discrimination unfortunately forms an integral part of the socialization of a girl child in the male dominated society of India in which she is conditioned to accept submission and silence as a natural process (Bhatnagar 51). Added to this were the grief and the guilt caused by the death of Dhruva who drowned while following Saru in the fields. Her mother further nourished her insecurity when in a bout of hysterical anger she screamed "You killed him, why didn't you die? Why are you alive when he is dead?"(34). so deep was the hatred Saru developed for her mother that she wanted to be as much unlike her as possible "If you are a woman, I don't want to be one" (63). This gender discrimination and the thought that she is an unwanted child made her lose the basic satisfaction every human being needs i.e., a sense of belongingness (Aswathi 103). A deep rooted sense of fear, insecurity and rejection ingrained all over her psychic self. At a deeper level her mind was conditioned by the tradition but because of her mother's

strict adherence to tradition and total submission to male hegemony, she wished to move away from it. Saru later took a decision in defiance of her mother and society- to become a doctor. It was partly prompted by her fierce desire to be different from her mother and also her disbelief in the gender based categorization as she had got fed up with the material tantrums and the dictates of do's and do not's. She nurtured the seeds of rebellion within her and gradually became a psychotic rebel. Patriarchal systems hatred towards a girl child is evident in her mother's response to her decision to join medical college. "Medicine! Five, Six, Seven... God knows how many years. Let her go for a B.Sc... You can get her married in two years and our responsibility will be over" (144).

Behind her determination to become a doctor was the intense desire to prove her mother wrong and an unappeased hunger for recognition. It was, in a way, for her an act of rebellion, a step towards her liberation from stereotyped existence. Her mother's attitude always filled her with a determination to become financially independent so as to prove her worth as human being. To her becoming a doctor creates an identity for herself. After becoming a doctor, she resented the role of daughter and looked forward to the role of wife with the hope that the new role will help her in winning her freedom. Saru married Manohar, an ambitious poet belonging to the lower class. She married beneath her status to turn away from the traditional ways and values her orthodox mother adhered to and to attain autonomy of the self by recovering the lost love. Manu was her savior, the ideal romantic hero who rescued her from her insecure wooden existence in the maternal home. The marriage in fact was her assertion and affirmation of her feminine sensibility. Her life moved on to another level as a married woman and as a doctor and she passed through phases of introspection and self awareness and finally discovered an identity for herself.

The initial experiences in her girlhood days influenced Saru heavily that she wanted to become a powerful dominant person in her life. This made her realize that she can fulfill her ambitions through education. After her school years she aspired for college education. Her neighbours become aware of her professional identity, the day she walks back in a blood stained coat, after treating victims of an accident. Instantly her profession achieves for her a position superior to Manu's. She is recognized and respected by the neighbours who came frequently to consult her. The respect that Saru gets disturbs the traditional equilibrium of the superior husband and inferior wife. Later analyzing her marital relationship she recalls, "But now I know it was there it began this terrible thing that has destroyed our marriage. I know this to that the human personality has an infinite capacity for growth. And so the esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller. But perhaps, the same thing that made me. Inches taller made him inches shorter. He had been the young man and I his bride. Now I was the lady doctor and he was my husband" (42).

The initial years of marriage were sheer bliss when she thought that she was the luckiest woman on earth. But, happiness, she soon discovered was only an illusion. The problem arose when she gained reputation as a doctor. Sam's total dedication in treating the victims of an accident in a nearby factory encouraged the women of the neighborhood to consult her in their medical problems. Gradually people started paying attention to her than previously. Her neighbors kept coming to her with sundry complaints glad to have a doctor in their midst.

“And now when we walked out of the room, there were nods and smiles murmured greetings and namastes. But they were all for me, only for me. There was nothing for him. He was almost totally ignored” (42). Manu initially encouraged her to work because of the additional income she brings home and Saru also in the initial exhilaration at her exalted status as a doctor failed to notice the change. Gradually Saru’s financial and social status grew far beyond that of her husband. She became a busy successful doctor in contrast to Manu who is an underpaid lecturer in a second class college. She established herself as a career woman. Her profession satisfied her ego but brought no happiness at home. The reversal roles were apparently too much for Manu to accept and he gradually underwent a change from that of a romantic hero quoting Shelly and Keats to his beloved to a morose husband uncomfortable with his wife’s steady rise in status. “The esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller, made him inches shorter. He had been the young man and I his bride. Now I was the lady doctor and he was my husband” (42). With Saru’s steady rise in status the chasm between Manu and her deepened and the warmth between them cooled off. The rift between them widened when a girl came home to interview Saru for a magazine innocently enquired “How does it feel when your wife earns not only the butter but most of the bread as well?” (200). It turned Manu into a wild animal at night when he began to physically abuse her in the privacy of their room. A psychologically hurt Manu, smarted from a sense of being dominated, tried to assert his manliness by assaulting her at night.

The financial ascendance of Saru had a terrible negative impact on Manu. It rendered him impotent and the only way to regain that potency and masculinity is through the sexual assault on Sam, which for him became an assertion of his manhood (Bhatnagar 52). “He attacked me like an animal that night. I was sleeping and I woke up and there was this... this man hurting me. With his hands, his teeth, his whole body” (201). Strangely enough he is a normal man, a loving husband during the day, who turns to a rapist at night. In front of this lecherous, libidinous rapist Saru became a mute sufferer wallowing in self pity and choked in silence. “I put another brick on the wall of silence between us. May be one day I will be walled alive within it and die a slow, painful death” (96). Saru’s femininity was brutally crushed and her well sought identity crumbled down into pieces. “Saru is now a two-in-one-woman- a successful doctor in the day time wearing a white coat and an air of confidence and a terrified trapped animal at night” (134). She suffered at the hands of her husband whom she trusted before marriage and now she “casts no shadow” (159). The self willed and self centered person who aspired for power and popularity comes down to have simpler needs in life and says “My wants are simpler. To sleep peacefully at night through. To wake up without pain. To go through tomorrow without apprehension. Not to think, not to dream. Just to live” (27).

Saru’s emotional conflicts were intense making her feel disintegrated and she examined her patients in the clinic as a “well trained” (24) animal. Even though she held all possessions and a respectable position in the society there is a “sense of vacuum in her, an emptiness, just a white coat containing nothing, Emptiness and the dummy in white coat” (19). She turned out to be a complete picture of chaos of personality, a symbol of complexity, confused, perplexed and miserably failed to observe reality. A pain of fragmentation has

sickened her, a sense of loneliness and rootlessness evaded her mind. “There is a new fear of disintegration. A terrified consciousness of not existing” (201) the nights for her are “a terrible nightmare that left behind this horrible aftertaste of fear” (201). This legalized rape recurred in response to similar other situations which terribly hurt her ego ‘I never knew till then he had so much strength in him... I couldn't fight back. I shouldn't shout or cry, I was so afraid the children in the next room would hear. I could do nothing I can never do anything. I just endure.” (201) She is so offended that she cannot talk about it to him nor can she mention it to anyone “She couldn't, wouldn't draw aside the curtain that hide it from the world” (154). So for the world she is a lady doctor with “a happy family, with the skeleton locked firmly in the cupboard” (37) but in reality she is a victim of patriarchy. This duplicity of her life has been killing and choking her real self. She cannot socialize, mix up with people, participate in any event in a lively manner. “I felt a deadly fear. I was isolated from everyone, from the whole world” (114). Old horrors of her childhood now gave way to new ones and a sense of loneliness became an integral part of Saru’s self. Communication became a closed option for her and her powers of love, to give and receive affection seem to have damaged. She became “alone really alone” (194). The urge to confide in someone, to talk to someone was growing in her. Often she had found herself staring at people, weighing them up, thinking... are you on my side? Are you? And even more often, waking up at night with a start, thinking... I am alone. Knowing with a kind of cold helplessness, that it was not a dream, but real. That she was awake, not dreaming, and was truly alone. (45)

Saru’s predicament was contrary to her belief that economic independence brings fulfillment to woman (Reddy 59). She found out that in the institution of marriage an economically independent woman is still bound by shackles and must forever live in the fear of hurting the ego of her husband. Saru observes bitterly “a+b they told us in Mathematics is equal to b+a. it becomes a monstrously unbalanced equation, lopsided, unequal, impossible” (42). This is the problem of every educated Indian woman, to make a choice between her professional achievement and the obligations of her family responsibilities. Saru’s hope that she can seek compensation in her medical profession for her loss of belongingness and lack of accountability of life became futile. The assumption that economic independence can serve as a means of self actualization arouse before her as a question and the truth that profession of women does not entail the potential to reduce the gap between man and woman came to her (Reddy 61). That is why when asked by a friend Nalu to talk on “Medicine as a profession for women” to some college students, Saru makes up a speech which sarcastically sums up the conditions necessary for a successful marriage.

A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband. If he is an M.A., you should be a B.A. if he is 5’4” tall you shouldn’t be more than 5’3” tall. If he is earning five hundred rupees, you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety. If you want a happy marriage don't ever try to reverse the doctor-nurse, executive- secretary, principal-teacher roles. It can be traumatic, disastrous. And I assure you, it is not worth it. He’ll suffer. You’ll suffer and so will the children. Women’s magazines will tell you that a marriage must be an equal partnership. That’s nonsense, rubbish. No partnership can ever be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it’s unequal in favor of your husband. If the scales tilt in your

favor, god help you, both of you. (137) Disillusioned, despaired, lost and fed up with such a life without self dignity she went back to her home to escape the disintegration of self or rather to escape from her own self. In the peace of her paternal home she analyses the dark corners of her soul. She realizes that though she had adopted outward modes and styles of living, her psychology remained tradition bound. She is emancipated but still not free or liberated. Though she has overcome the 'scarcity syndrome' and identity crisis she is also vulnerable, submissive and conformist to a certain extent. In spite of her repulsion for social establishments Saru has condescended to the concept of a 'total female', and the age old feminine dream "of being adored and chosen by a superhuman male. That was glory enough... to be chosen by that wonderful male" (59). The very existence of a girl is subordinated to the fact that she must someday please and serve, obey and sacrifice for her man. Saru's personality also is continually eroded by the fact that she's a mere girl. Once she failed to fulfill 'the eternal female dream of finding happiness through man' (124) she felt lost. It is not easy for women to free herself from the clutches of these social prejudices. She cannot just undo the mental feeding she has received since her birth. Saru is also helplessly entangled in that racial and social prejudices prevalent in the society. Though she is in an independent status she is married by the fear of rejection. "The fear was there, the secret fear that behind each loving word... lay the enemy, the snake, the monster of rejection"(66). Sara's self was stifled in this conformity to traditional models of womanhood and female ethics. That is why once she even thought about giving up the medical profession to remain in the role of a satisfied wife and mother. The intricating environment created by superstition, myth, tradition, gender biases, social norms and guilt complex that haunted her mind since her girlhood led her to bitterness and frustration. She found no peace as she was haunted by phantoms of her own insufficiencies and infirmities.

Saru represents the dilemma of successful career woman who suffers the pull of modernity as against the traditional attitude of an ideal Indian wife who has to cope with her marital discomforts to the best of her ability. The picture here is ironic showing forth the real dilemma of middle class career women. Sara is a so called liberated woman only in name, outwardly. Inwardly, she is the silent humiliated wife, who cannot break away from the constraints of her marriage when she thinks of the suffering of her children (Tiwari 89).

Saru is actually a woman caught in the tangles of various kinds of imposed identities. The burden of double duties coupled with her adherence to traditional values and guilt consciousness shook her mind. But now she realizes herself and comes to a conclusion. "It's all a question of adjustment really. If you make it work, you can always do it" (118). Her quest leads her to uncover that strength in human beings which makes living a pleasurable possibility. She now feels that "marriage is no guarantee for happiness" (109) and she should gain identity as a woman. She is not prepared to fool herself with the idea that happiness is possible only through man and those others' sympathy and affection are too vital for her. This arouses a self she thought she had misplaced and now she feels "It's my life" (208) so there is no need to hide oneself from others and become a silent sufferer. She receives a mail that Manu is coming to take her back with him to their home. She could not feel easy as she does not want to be with a man who is very insensitive to her pains. She realizes that one is alone in this world and from nowhere one can hope for any success,

"perhaps the only truth is that man is born to be cold and lonely and alone" (219) and she decides to leave her father's house prior to Manu's arrival. For a split second she is numbed and comforted. She is taken back to the world of fancies and pleasant reveries where there is no burden of heaviness but, "She could not find refuge again in such a specious argument. It was too glib, too easy a way out. To say that it isn't real, it doesn't really matter... what does that make of life then? How can it help me to go on, she thought despairingly? (219). Saru now feels that escape is a ridiculous idea. It is an individual's own life. One will have to shape as well as face the events of one's life. There is no refuge other than one's self. Because every individual is essentially alone. Neither her parental home nor her parents is a refuge. She is her own refuge "all right so I'm alone. But so is everyone else. Human beings, they are going to fail you. But because there is just us, because there is no one else. We have to go on trying. If we can't believe in ourselves we're sunk (220). She becomes aware that neither her secluded life nor "the wall of silence" will help her. She has to speak and assert her will and confidence in herself. Saru is now ready to go back to Manu with a greater capacity to relate to her persona and self. She locates that the terror of darkness is within her. If she has the courage to break out of her cultivated conventional attitude, face life boldly, speak out with Manu, she would be able to become a whole person again, an individual in her own right. She decides to take pride in being a doctor again which she had been formerly enjoying with a guilt consciousness. She hopes that Manu would also accept her as the real woman she is, not a mere economic partner. The ghosts of the past no longer haunt her. Her self-awareness as a person with an identity of her own becomes the light of knowledge for her that dispels the darkness of ignorance within her.

Marching on her way to seek ultimate realization of the self, she encounters several problems. From self-alienation to self-identification, the novel evinces how she comes out of her fear which is the root cause of her suffering. She was so scared of the final confrontation with Manu that she says, "Promise me", "Promise me you won't open the door to him. Don't open the door when he comes" (218). Her father was a man who was indecisive in her eyes, but she was utterly surprised when he advised her to face the situation: "Give him a chance, Saru. Stay and meet him. Talk to him. Let him know from you what's wrong. Tell him all that you told me. Don't turn your back on things again. Turn round and look at them. Meet him" (216). He exhorts her not to leave the house without meeting him as no escape route was ever possible, "Don't go without meeting your husband. Talk to him. Tell him what's wrong" (217). Thus she hits upon the idea that everyone is alone ultimately in this world; an idea with which she was not reconciled earlier but now she seemed to accept that hard reality; however bitter it was but it had to be truthful that one is alone in this world; alone to tackle the umpteen problems which cling to oneself like the flies gather on carcass, but now she comes to terms with that concept and becomes comfortable "So I'm alone. But so's every one else. Human beings... they're going to fail you...we have to go on trying" (220). Ultimately she realizes that the fault of her misery has been her own self, "I have been my own enemy" (221). Thus she enters into a phase of light leaving behind the darkness which has blinded her vision completely. My life is my own...somehow she felt as if she had found it now, the connecting link. It means you are not just a strutting, grimacing puppet, standing futilely on the stage for a brief while between areas of

darkness. If I have been a puppet it is because I made myself one. I have been clinging to the tenuous shadow of marriage whose substance has long since disintegrated because I have been afraid of proving my mother right. (220). She realizes that escapism can never be possible way out. "Escapism is no solution; a permanent solution has to come from within" (214). Truly Deshpande sets new ideas working in this novel. She exhorts the fact that human relations cannot furnish solutions to rectify our problems. One has to look within only; then true path can be sought. It is like seeking God within. There is no possible glancing at God outside but only a real peep inside can prove fulfilling and can help in attaining the spiritual truth. No doubt Sarita is awakened in the end. She does not want to escape now but she wants to confront the harsh reality. She wants to face Manohar tooth and nail. She no more camouflages herself from Manohar's arrival. Truly Sarita attacks the paradigms of the patriarchal set up. She very well exposes the nakedness of patriarchal system of society where a fine balance has to be made. Balance here is not of being equal rather balance means that man should be powerful and the women must be weaker. In every field this balance must be maintained otherwise life is bound to be out of gear.

Saru therefore advocates the feeling that women should pretend that they are smart, competent, rational or strong. Woman can nag, complain, henpeck, and moan, but never should show themselves as strong personalities....A woman is expected to behave in accordance with the whims and fancies of her husband. Economic independence and independent identity are not meant for a woman. (Sree 155). Saru, here becomes the face of New Indian woman; assertive, independent and ready to lead her life according to her own terms but inside the institution of marriage. She is not going to be a puppet anymore. Despite her disillusionment with marriage, now she is able to preserve her identity, realizing her own personal and private limitations. Within the binding relationship she is able to; at last affirm her own individuality. "She is not satisfied with the rhetoric of equality between man and woman. But want to see that the right to an individual life and the right to development of their own individual capabilities are realized in her own life" (221). She has at last overthrown the patriarchal system represented by her mother and husband from her mind. Saru's journey is a journey from self alienation to self identification, from negation to assertion, from diffidence to confidence. She learns to trust her feminine self. Saru who had earlier entrusted her father not to open the door, when Manu comes now tells her father "And, oh yes, Baba, if Manu comes, tell him to wait. I will be back as soon as I can" (221) and rushes out to attend a patient. This is the expression of the assertion of her individuality, her willingness to confront reality and not to run away from it. She is sufficient within herself because there is no other refuge elsewhere.

The novel shows that strong will can counter any problem of however enormous dimension it may be. Self confidence and courage can tackle any problem. Escapism is not a solution. The courage is inside the human mind. One needs to be awake to that fact. Sarita's all endeavours now are directed towards the only objective to live. She is mentally prepared to face Manu. Dr. K.R. Srinivas Iyenger points out, "Sarita cannot forget her children or the sick needing her expert attention and so she decides to face her home again. In this unpredictable world, even total despair can open up a new spring of elemental self- confidence" (758). When finally for Sarita the time to face her life comes, she gets confident that her life is her own and she cannot hope for a help from outside rather she has to find out the way out from her inner self. Thus she resolves to shed off the darkness which has engulfed her life for quite a long time.

REFERENCES

- Aswathi, A. K. 1992. "The Quest for Identity in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande". *Quest for Identity in Indian English Writing Part I: Fiction*. Ed. R.S. Pathak. New Delhi: Bhari Publications, 95-111. Print.
- Bhatnagar, Parvati, 2001. "Search of Identity: A Study of Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors*." *The Quest* 15.1, 50-57. Print.
- Bhavani, J. 1995. "Nirdvandava: Individuation and Integration as the Heroine's Quest in Shashi Deshpande's Fiction". *Indian Women Novelists: Set III: Vol.4*. Ed.R. K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 20-31. Print.
- Deshpande, Shashi, 1980. *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, Print.
- Iyengar, Srinivasa K.R. 1993. *Indian Writing in English*. New Delhi: Sterling.
- Reddy, Y. S. Sunita, 2001. "You are your own refuge: *The Dark Holds No Terrors*": A Feminist Perspective on the Novels of Shashi Deshpande. Y.S. Sunitha Reddy. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 48-71. Print.
- Sharma, C.P. 2006. "Shashi Deshpande's Best Articulation of her Vision: *The Dark Holds No Terrors*." *Cyber Literature* 18.2, 44-56. Print.
- Shukla, Ajay Kumar, 2006. "The Picture of a New Woman in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terrors*." *Pegasus* 5, 81-88. Print.
- Sree, S. Prasane, 2003. Interview with Shashi Deshpande. *Women in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande : A Study*. New Delhi, Print.
- Tiwari, Shubha, 2001. "The Heroine in *Dark Holds No Terrors* by Shashi Deshpande". *Indian Women Novelists in English*.Ed. Amar Nath Prasad. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 85-93. Print.
