

INCULCATING HUMAN VALUES THROUGH ART, LITERATURE, CULTURE, MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

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INCULCATING HUMAN VALUES THROUGH ART, LITERATURE, CULTURE, MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

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- Edited by -
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&
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RESEARCH CENTRE

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Novels of Shobha De: A Study

Dr Anuradha Jagdale

Shobha De has earned a distinguished place in Indian English Novel due to his mastery over craftsmanship. She is a novelist of life and literature. She comes out on top to make clear and comprehensive communication to the readers. That touches the heart of readers. His novels have brought international recognition and bagged many prizes and awards for her. Her place in the contemporary Indian English Novel is commendable. She has created her fictional world with social, political and cultural discourses. In fact, the man-woman relationship is the backbone of of her literary world.

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Human being is the centre of her fictional world. By virtue of that human pain, he puts on display goodness as well as badness in human being. She projects a combination of two sensitivities-the sensitivity of an artist and the sensitivity of a humanist. She throws light on the diversity of cultures, their determined conducts and attitudes. However, her fictional world is larger than the real world.

The women of today are in a fair way to dethrone the myth of femininity; they are beginning to affirm their independence in concrete ways; but they do not easily succeed in living completely the life of a human being. Reared by women within a feminine world, their normal destiny is marriage, which still means particularly subordination to man; for masculine prestige is far from extinction, resting still upon solid economic and social functions (Beauvoir 30)

Shobha De is one of the most widely read Indian novelists writing in English. Her novels delineate the awakening of woman's consciousness which impels her to strive for self-actualization. This awakened consciousness of woman stands for the human efforts to be a whole human being her novels raise a voice of protest against male dominance and reject the traditional value system of Indian society. In her novels feminism, in terms of women's struggles against patriarchy, does not take a political stance. Apart from the feminist consideration,

Shobha De's novels express her awareness of the cumulative pressure of social experience, in fact, she raises her voice

against the constructive conditions of the socio-economic environment that stifle a person if he/she refuses to conform to its system of values. The major characters in her novels are highly sensitive women who are aware of the absurdity of life that threatens their individuality and thwarts their desire for freedom those educated modern women emerge from a male-dominated middle-class society with conservative values. They are also conscious of their individuality and their desire to live their lives according to their own values. The clash between prevailing socio-cultural values and their own values system brings out their struggle for realizing their potential. They actualise themselves by fulfilling the different needs and this finally leads them to the sovereign purpose of life- self – actualization. As a feminist, she knows the problems of women due to her sense of observation. The gender difference has already become clear to her just after birth. However, she wanted to be active, dynamic, frank and assertive so as to prove her work and talent. Her columns had already established her worth. Since she had worked for the magazines for a long time, she knew the power of words.

Shobha De's novels have emphasized the value of equivalence power. Whenever this balance collapses, there is tension in society and double-dealing and hypocrisy predominate. The novelist can easily visualize a change in this respect taking place in the contemporary society, but men.

Shobha De has hailed as a heavyweight champion of human soul and psyche. She has faithfully painted a personal world of human sensibility and impersonal world of socio-cultural affairs with a smooth brush on the strong realistic base. She discloses unmitigated hypocrisy, self seeing attitude and double standards of human being through the diversity of cultures. She is a prolific writer, who puts the theme of Indianness. She has travelled widely therefore, she has got a multi-cultural experience.

Shobha De belongs to the modern feminist school of thought. As a feminist writer, she deliberates on women's issues with a fresh approach, fairly unlike from other contemporary novelists. She began to depict the Indian women characters in her works as protagonists, treating women's issues on the main concern foundation and focusing on the grounds of the Indian woman.

Shobha De is strongly blessed with feminist consciousness and not by a polemical ideology. She has voiced the same reservation and said that she found it impossible to whip up any interest in a mass of women marching forward under the banner of feminism. She believes that the writer has a social commitment. She is a feminist artist who articulates herself to her art sincere and confirmed within ceaselessly. Her wish makes her anxious to experiment with a number of themes and vice versa.

Shobha De's mind is one of the most confrontational and significant areas currently under probe as a researcher than a writer. It is the centre of intelligence and is always in motion or process.

Shobha De's portrayal of modern Indian women characters in her novels is quite different from the tenets prescribed by sacred texts. She unabashedly writes about the deviousness of women as well as the vulnerability of women. A close study of her oeuvre reveals that her women protagonists are products of the ultra-modern era who seek to realise their individual worth and do not shy from defying the ancient traditions of Hindu society. Her women characters and their experiences despite their varied names appear to be more human due to fallibility.

In Shobha De's novels, sexual union and satisfaction are the bedrock of all relationship. The women in her novels willingly uphold the responsibility of their own sustenance and seek their own salvation. Geeta Barua in her article, "Rise and Fall of a Star: A Study of *Starry Nights*" comments: The novel is also a faithful portrayal of the film world with all its perfidies, glamour, crimes, lies, and deceits and sexual exploitation. Since Shobha De the novelist has been long associated with the Bombay film world as a journalist she knows it first hand and has been able to portray it well. (Barua 174)

The novelist has fingered upon dissimilar facets of an urban woman's life and her plight. But no issue has voiced with so unambiguous and full-throated expression as the subject of matrimony and sex. Her voice is nearly all determined and prominent as compared to her contemporaries. Shobha De's women are not uncertain in using sex as an intended strategy to increase social and financial benefits. Hardly ever does one see an Indian author writing with such frankness and obvious feeling.

Shobhaa De discovers the world of urban women, typically Mumbai groomed women. The Indian society in the last few decades has witnessed enormous and tremendous changes as far as its women are concerned. She raises the women characters in her novels to be on par with the male character. They have an equal amount of independence in all walks of life.

Shobha De has explored imaginatively the varied world of women characters in her popular fiction. She emphasises the quest for the meaning of life, identity and unfulfilled emotional life of women characters through her novels. Being a woman, De is more aware of the predicaments of women. She presents the vital reality and leads to understanding the miseries of women and injustices done to them by the patriarchal society. De's novels such as *Socialite Evening*, *Starry Nights*, and *Second Thoughts* etc. are crowded with female characters.

Shobha De has repeated the independence of women devoid of adjusting her role as a householder. She lays stress on the proper education of women and to turn into self-sufficient before she can step forward for having an important effect reaction and abandons the parochial society without being labelled as a rebel.

Shobha De's achievement as a novelist lies in his ability to project the image of a contemporary Indian socio-political scene in an intensely. As a result, she comes out with flying colours to offer the equitable justice to both the personal and the impersonal worlds. Nevertheless, in both the worlds, she brings out the fountainhead of humanity that is culture, which is and for the

essential human community as a sanctifying power in human life. Her prime purpose of the pen is to use against the vicious exploitation, cruel injustice. She puts into service that likes the sword on the worst enemy of universal humanity. By such presentations Shobha De proves herself to be a 'Sex Orgy' or 'Sex hungry Maniac' as, "pornography in Shobha De's novels becomes a symptom and symbol of the female's defiance of a male-regulated female sexuality" (Sanjay Kumar 60).


Shobha De moderately openly and without any reserve s relate s each and every feature of the subject she handles. Although reviewers have been scornful of her work, various serious critics are not as dismissive as them.

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