

## A HARBINGER IN FEMINIST MOVEMENT

---

**Dr. P. Prabavathi,**

Professor of English,

Hindusthan College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore,

Email: [prabavathi.08@gmail.com](mailto:prabavathi.08@gmail.com)

---

### Abstract

Shobha De is an eminent and most popular Indian woman writer in English and feminist writer. She is a gifted novelist with extraordinary ability to discuss very sensitive aspects of human life tactfully. It makes an attempt to form comprehensive essential comments on her fiction with a stress on the image of lady delineated in her novel. In this fact changing world, the role of women in the society too, has been changing fast, affecting greatly the Sexual monograms and social norms prevalent in the society. She reacts against the male culture and powerfully detests the social process of ladies. She is that the 1st girls to explore the globe of urban girls of upper social strata. In Socialite Evening, the first novel of the author. is regarding the journey of a distinguished city influential person Karuna, from a middle class girl to a self-sufficient woman. The novel presents the institutions of family and marriage existing in the wealthy class of the Indian Society. An enduring theme in the novel is the search for identity and selfhoods; Karuna suffers due to the callous and non responsive attitude of her husband. Her husband treats her as a mere object subjected to his can as a result there's an entire loss of her identity. In this novel male dominated society no one cares about the dreams of a female where as it is father or husband women have to suppress their ambitions inside them. In her married life too Karuna was not happy. Her marriage is a failure since it is loveless and without any enjoyment her life was Joyless.

Keywords: *eminent, comprehensive, novel, Indian Society, .etc*

-----

Shobha De is an eminent and most popular Indian woman writer in English and feminist writer. She is a gifted novelist with extraordinary ability to discuss very sensitive aspects of human life tactfully. It makes an attempt to form comprehensive essential comments on her fiction with a stress on the image of lady delineated in her novel. The way she narrates each and every aspect of human relationship in general and man-woman relationship in particular, is superb.. She is a writer who believes in very frank narration of incidents and absolute open-heartedness. She has carved a niche for herself in her writings. She concentrates on women's

problems and gives a new approach to them. A socio-political movement that Feminism advocates concerned active participation by girls to demand for his or her rights. It is thought-about movement that is fought against feminine oppression below social system. There square measure varied {ways|ways that|ways in that} by which {a lady|a lady|a girl} is ill-used or will|we will|we are able to} say that victimization of woman can occur through varied ways in which like caste, color, race, attitude towards motherhood, etc. The campaign was truly started by white girls UN agency primarily imprisoned from class in Western Europe and North America. This trend accelerated in 1960's with cool right movement and the collapse of European colonialism in Africa, Third wave feminism advocate for equal rights for the girls and taking charge of their own Sexual fulfillment.

The new generation of feminism embraces beauty and power of women's gender to attain their desires. They consider sexual pleasure human right. The heroines in her novels rebuild their lost fortunes; make all efforts to look glamorous by losing weight and spending money in massage parlors. They try to appear and act otherwise from ancient|the standard} and traditional girls. They like to fall enamored with their appearance by that they fight to draw in individuals. It offers them Brobdingnagian pleasure once individuals fall head to heels enamored with them and those them square measure least involved concerning it.

In this fact changing world, the role of women in the society too, has been changing fast, affecting greatly the Sexual monograms and social norms prevalent in the society. She reacts against the male culture and powerfully detests the social process of ladies. She is that the 1st girls to explore the globe of urban girls of upper social strata. She has worked for the complete emancipation of woman. She comes the concepts of liberating lady through fulfillment. Human relation supported gender distinctions, masculine domination, women's predicament relating to tradition and modernity are all important issues. Shobha De, through her ordinary stories, brings out the reality of our world around us. In all her novels she represents the image of a New-Woman. it is a fascination study from the Indian point of view. The emphasis is on the image of woman with critical comments regarding the new emerging woman of modern cosmopolitan India. She portrays a variety of women from the traditional, subjugated and marginalized, extremely modern and liberated women.

She doesn't believe in describing her women characters as love slaves or mere helpmates at home. She as a writer tries to mirror or portray her feminist mindset while portraying women in her novel. A broader analysis of her work reveals her protest against the nice recent image of ladies UN agency can't live the means she needs to and do things the means she wants to. Women characters in her novels are represented as sexually liberated and free thinking who have been termed as, "New Woman" . She talked about the self-realization of women. The high class.

---

Educated, sensible women became protagonist in her novels. These new category of ladies whose lives weren't overrun by issues dowery or financial condition. These Indian w2omen lived a blessed life as far as material standards are concerned, but there was something wanting, some vacuum in their lives. These Women were facing the problems of identity. They show concern concerning basic human issues and to them.

Their ladies square measure the victims of a male-dominated society. In her novels men don't seem to be invariably sinners or oppressors. She has raised woman's problems and strove to achieve to their solutions also. In all her writings Diamond State represent new morality, in keeping with that lady isn't to be taken as a mere toy, associate degree object of lust and short pleasure, but man's equal and honored partner. Women character undoubtedly reveals their feminist ideology. She portrays a range of ladies from the standard, defeated and marginalized to the very fashionable and liberated ladies. She explored the lives of bored house wives and their loveless made husbands and family. Her novels mirror the life styles of the elite and the middle classes of urban world. The portrayal of the image of defeated and marginalized ladies in Shobha De's novel : influential person Evenings [1989], Second Thoughts [1996], starlit Nights [1992], Sisters [1992] are studied with a stress on men's pride, incompatible marriage, traditional norms of behaviors and patriarchal social system as the real forces of the oppression and exploitation of women. She draws our attention to women's exploitation, decimation and emancipation. She perpetually tries to shatter patricentric political system and raises a voice of protest against male dominance.

In Socialite Evening, the first novel of the author. is regarding the journey of a distinguished city influential person Karuna, from a middle class girl to a self-sufficient woman. The novel presents the institutions of family and marriage existing in the wealthy class of the Indian Society. An enduring theme in the novel is the search for identity and selfhoods; Karuna suffers due to the callous and non responsive attitude of her husband. Her husband treats her as a mere object subjected to his can as a result there's an entire loss of her identity. Her entry in the glamorous world of modeling and friendship with Bunty are the act of rebellion. After marriage she established extra -marital relationship with Krish revolts against her insensitive husband and finally divorces him.

The advantages resulting from the states of marriage are that the two sexes may reciprocally satisfy the natural desires which are felt equally by each... that they equally submit the exercise of the reproductive organs to a healthful regularity; that they may equally perpetuate their common species; that they may equally by respective duties provide for the children proceeding from their mutual union; that they may equally assist each other throughout life by reciprocal affection

In all three phases Karuna was to be affected and her life readers paint out the rebellious instinct.

Karuna in her childhood days she was the only child with a discipline problem both at home and at school. She did not like going to school by train or bus. Whereas in his way other girls are dressed in uniforms. She wore her girdle hipster style. Her sisters preferred to concentrate on their percentages whereas she preferred to discover Bombay and Bombayites. Karuna's words clearly expose how. She protested to follow the traditional path of etiquette and manners and the ways that come in the way of her total development as a woman.

She comes across that her companion is presently the regular Indian partners who are monotonous stimulating as well as qualified. He is not ready for introspection. (10)

In this way she grew-up there developed in her the emotional urge to identify with the outside world, the modern crowd and the fascinating world of affluent girls who had everything. She was not interested in her studies like her sisters and other classmates. She was associated with her college friend charily and also acted as a model for agency much against her father's will.

It has been the desire of Karuna to get rid of her middle class background and iniquity of her life as the daughter of middle-rung government official. It is on this occasion she meets Anjali a prominent socialite and the wife of wealthy playboy. Anjali is an independent lady, rich, confident and beautiful. She has everything the modern woman needed; Anjali makes Karuna to think that the fashion world can bring wealth. Freedom and status in her life and world help her to fulfill all her desires. So she freely indulges in the fashionable world of modern life introduced to her by Anjali, middle-aged prominent socialite. Karuna showing herself in the glamorous world of modeling and friendship with her boy friend Bunty, is the act of rebellion against the accomplished traditional norms of society. Although in the novel, Karuna's psyche developed through protest and defiance. On the other hand she seemed as „revoltingly self-assured disgustingly self-sufficient. The author depicted Karuna as a capable woman, able to surround her bet in life and launch into a kind of life style of modeling and independent Journalist essays, that is still not acceptable in conventional Indian society.

Karuna's life has three phases. The quest to know about herself, which started towards the end of that first phase, is stopped abruptly with her marriage. It is under this situation in the second phase and springs up in the third phase after the separation from her husband. The cause of Karuna's mother's fear is very obvious because in a patriarchal male-dominated society. It is the father who chooses the profession of their children. When children do something appreciable the credit goes to the father but when they do something mischievous, only the mothers are

responsible. Mother play a very significant role in a child's life but it stop when a child grows up and wants to take up a decision related to his profession. In brief, important decisions, are taken by others not by the mothers.

In childhood life Karuna wanted to do something different. She was attractive and new modern girl. She does not want seen other girl from her class she was like 36 Anjali desired to be wealthy person in her life:

Karuna without getting the permission of her parents performed in many add films and stepped towards her new life with the help of Anjali. But no one easily understood that that her father wanted to control all his daughters in the same way. He never talked to them directly and tried to know about their likes and dislikes. In the male oriented society fathers crush girls' sense of Individuality in order to impose their male authority on them. Their earlier lives exploited by their fathers or father, figures, make them react irrationally and violently. Karuna and Anjali both were suffocated in their early life due to their father's dominating nature.

In this novel male dominated society no one cares about the dreams of a female where as it is father or husband women have to suppress their ambitions inside them. In her married life too Karuna was not happy. Her marriage is a failure since it is loveless and without any enjoyment her life was Joyless. There is no understanding between the husband and wife. She feels that she has married "the wrong man for wrong reasons at wrong time."

Some women mutely tolerate this situation and spond their whole life in suffocated atmosphere. But here Shobha De's women are different as they do not 37

She has only a formal relationship with her husband. Although she never calls her husband by his name but in a derogatory term such a „Black label.“ There is no intimacy between them. Here given an example of how she protests about her meaningless marital relationship:

Being a head of family, they are expected to look after everyone and should take care of everything but contrast to this they are most negligent and least bothered. In the beginning, Karuna tries to Adjust and make a compromise to her marriages. But her open rebellion comes forth when she admits her extra-marital relations just in front of her husband. She tells her husband's very frankly:

Karuna's husband is unable to look deep into the biological need of Karuna's female self. There was no meaningful conversation between the husband and wife. She detested the stand-offish and callous attitude of her husbands who often kept themselves busy in drab, monotonous activities like reading the business pages of *The Times of India*. But despite these laxities, a husband was above all, a sheltering tree, a rock to the wife.

She rejects the idea of second marriage and in the same way proposed to Ranbir Roy. There is a contrast between Karuna and her mother in their attitude towards the institution of marriage. Her mother stands for traditional Hindu woman while Karuna is young modern Indian women in her attitude. The women like Karuna's mother her subordinate status in the society for they accept passively everything that comes to them by fate or tradition.

Henceforth, she indulges in promiscuous sex, and makes her husband either to tolerate or ignore it. She openly accepts her deviant behaviour and challenges her husband. She further paints out to her husband that his failure to understand her as a women is the real cause of her unusual and unacceptable behavior. Although she goes a step further by giving divorce to her husband. She decided to lead a single life because she wanted to assert her individuality. The struggle of Karuna, therefore, does not remain confined only to her but become representative struggle of the modern women to be free and self-reliant. Karuna life has three phases. The quest to know about herself, which started towards the end of that first phase, is stopped abruptly with her marriage. It is under situation in the second phase and springs up in the third phase after the separation from her husband. The cause of Karuna's mother fear is very obvious because in a patriarchal male-dominated society. It is the father who chooses the profession of their children. When children do something appreciable the credit goes to the father but when they do something mischievous, only he mothers are responsible. Mother play a very significant role in a child's life but it stop when a child grows up and wants to take up a decision related to his profession. In brief, important decisions, are taken by others not by the mothers.

In childhood life Karuna wanted to do something different. She was attractive and new modern girl. She does not want seen other girl from her class she was like 36 Anjali desired to be wealthy person in her life:

Karuna without getting the permission of her parents performed in many add films and stepped towards her new life with the help of Anjali. But no one easily understood that that her father wanted to control all his daughters in the same way. He never talked to them directly and tried to know about their likes and dislikes. In the male oriented society fathers crush girls' sense of Individuality in order to impose their male authority on them. Their earlier lives exploited by their fathers or father, figures, make them react irrationally and violently. Karuna and Anjali both were suffocated in their early life due to their father's dominating nature.

In this novel male dominated society no one cares about the dreams of a female where as it is father or husband women have to suppress their ambitions inside them. In her married life too Karuna was not happy. Her marriage is a failure since it is loveless and without any enjoyment her life was Joyless. There is no understanding between the husband and wife. She feels that she has married "the wrong man for wrong reasons at wrong time."

Some women mutely tolerate this situation and spond their whole life in suffocated atmosphere. But here Shobha De''s women are different as they do not 37

She has only a formal relationship with her husband. Although she never calls her husband by his name but in a derogatory term such a „Black label.“ There is no intimacy between them. The relationship between them is totally deprived of mutual understanding, love and affection. Here given an example of how she protests about her meaningless marital relationship:

Being a head of family, they are expected to look after everyone and should take care of everything but contrast to this they are most negligent and least bothered. In the beginning, Karuna tries to Adjust and make a compromise to her marriages. But her open rebellion comes forth when she admits her extra-marital relations just in front of her husband. She tells her husband's very frankly:

Karuna''s husband is unable to look deep into the biological need of Karuna''s female self. There was no meaningful conversation between the husband and wife. She detested the stand-offish and callous attitude of her husbands who often kept themselves busy in drab, monotonous activities like reading the business pages of *The Times of India*.

She rejects the idea of second marriage and in the same way proposed to Ranbir Roy. There is a contrast between Karuna and her mother in their attitude towards the institution of marriage. Her mother stands for traditional Hindu woman while Karuna is young modern Indian women in her attitude. The women like Karuna''s mother her subordinate status in the society for they accept passively everything that comes to them by fate or tradition.

Henceforth, she indulges in promiscuous sex, and makes her husband either to tolerate or ignore it. She openly accepts her deviant behaviour and challenges her husband. She further paints out to her husband that his failure to understand her as a women is the real cause of her unusual and unacceptable behavior. Although she goes a step further by giving divorce to her husband. She decided to lead a single life because she wanted to assert her individuality. The struggle of Karuna, therefore, does not remain confined only to her but become representative struggle of the modern women to be free and self-reliant.

After her divorce, her husband meets her and expresses request to come back and live with him. It is traditionally believed that finally woman ignores the cruelties of her husband as she thinks him certain privileges over her.

In 'Socialite Evenings' the author has presented the theme of marriage and family in very critical manner. She is of the view that the concept of marriage is changing day by day due to inevitable modern circumstances; Marriage is no more a matter of chance. It has become a matter of choice in the aristocratic and high profile metropolitan culture. The concept of marriage is

related with the concept of family because both are reciprocal to each other. Family cannot exist without marriage. In spite of its biological features, it unites two separate human beings altogether to live under the same roof and share each and everything whatever comes in their way.

Shobha De's novels represent the new Indian woman's voice. A New-Woman is in search of self-identity seeking liberation all told walks of life, replacing the tradition image of Indian woman. The need for girls to hunt their identity is that the message in her novels

#### Works Cited

Ruth Robbins, Literary Feminism [London : Macmillam press Ltd., 2000]

Shobha De, Speed post.

S.P.Swain, "Shobha De's Socialite Evening – A Feminist study, Feminist English Literature.

K.Meerabai, "Feminism as an Extention of Existentialism woman in Indian English Fiction".  
Indian women Novelists, ed. R.K. Dhawan.