



EXPLORATION OF LOVE AND DESPAIR IN GAURI DESHPANDE'S POEM "THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES"

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Abstract

Gauri Deshpande writes about love and relationship in her books. Isolation and lost love are the recurrent themes in her poems. Her poem "The Female of the Species" conveys a kind of feminine feeling and the need deeply felt by the poetess to communicate with the world as a woman. She wants to talk about love and despair and ungratefulness of children but she didn't speak about that. Like Keats, she gives freedom to imagine and fulfill the unspoken words.

Love is the basis for all human beings. Woman plays various roles at home as mother, daughter, sister, wife, home-maker, manager, accountant and nurse on the basis of love. Central theme of this poem is the existential predicament of woman as an individual and stresses the great yearning of the woman to be understood by her male partner. Woman, the embodiment of love, without any expectations gives happiness to her family members but her sufferings are unknown and unheard.

She is symbolic of loneliness of a woman – a wife and a mother – a loneliness conditioned by family and society

"The Female of the Species" and its refrain has been used as a catchphrase in other works. There are many poets who wrote on feminism. Feministic perspective women is expressed in Gauri Deshpande's poem The Female of the Species. Gauri Deshpande published three poems of poetry besides an anthology of Indian English Poetry. She wrote short stories and novels in Marati. Isolation and lost love are the dominant themes in her poems. "The Female of The Species" is simple poem. A common reader can understand the meaning without any difficulty. Her exploration of love, despair and ungratefulness of children is splendid.

While writing about feminism, Elaine Showalter says about three phases – Feminine, Feminist and Female. "In the Female phase, ongoing since 1920" women turned to express the "female experience as the source of an autonomous art." (p.405) Elaine Showalter distinguishes the difference between 'women as reader' and 'women as writer'. Here, Gauri Deshpande, conveys the feeling of a woman to the women in her poem "The Female of the Species". She is symbolic of loneliness of a woman – a wife and a mother – a loneliness conditioned by family and society

Srinivasa Iyengar when writing about female writers he says, "we have reached the stage where more women than, men are essaying verse and packing the universe into pellets of poetry. This cabaret room where the elite woman sits -----.

The women are 'splendid'. they are clever; they are touchy; they are ductile in their own ego." (p ,729) Mother is fated to love her children. To unburden herself she needs women to share her experience with women.

"Sometimes talk of love.....ungratefulness of children"

For the sake of love mother sacrificed a lot in her life. But when she becomes old she was not loved by her family members especially by children and husband for whom she sacrificed her life and her likes.

She won't express it directly because it may hurt them. Women, the homemakers discussed the price of necessary needs to exist. Their existential predicament, their talent to meet both ends and their sacrifice are shown through this poem, "The Female of the Species". Just to exist on the commercial world, women sacrificed a lot.

Her need of outlet to express her feelings is conveyed significantly in this poem. Women discussed about the "rate of rice and price of tea" and the scarcity of cheese. Now many people are in search of money and the love for the fellow being is given less importance. In the economic and busy life people hardly find time to spend with the parents and siblings.

The poem is a plea to take care of parents and spend some time to talk with the parents in the busy world and not to send their parents to old age home.

So, first woman want her mother who knows about her and who cares for her in the family. Second, she wants her sister who has shared everything with her from her birth and from whom she learnt sharing in her childhood. Still she needs the company of her sister. Next she speaks to her school friend because a friend in need is friend indeed. Without any expectation true school friend helped each other. Her helping nature is developed by her school friend. Not giving when you have excess. Giving one when they are really in need. Then she considers her first child especially girl to share on whom you shower love like your children Then she thought of second school friend.

She wants to accompany with friends and relatives. Man, the breadwinner of the family hardly finds time to her feelings. He is the deaf and dumb to her feelings. After experience she decided that there is no use to speak with man. Certain things a woman cannot share with man.

They didn't complaint about their family members directly. She did not reveal anything about her sorrow and suffering as it may hurt her family members. She knows only how to make others happy. Their longing for people and yearning for love is not fulfilled because they expect more. If she expresses the ungratefulness of children it would damage the image of their children. So they can't share.

Due to unavoidable circumstances all are busy in this commercial world. To grease their life women needs the company of the fellow beings. After her daily routine she needs the company to share her feelings Nobody is there to share her feelings. Grown-up pride can't hide the need to belong. Her need of people to talk, share and listen is not fulfilled.

The cost of living is more but the source of earning is less. But she has to manage life. Woman, the home minister managed her family with the meager income. She only knows whether she had food. She finds happiness in feeding others. She is the caretaker of the family but nobody is there to take care of her. Women are in need of company to share their feelings which they can't share with their men.

Women didn't speak about their love and despair and ungratefulness of children. As they were sailing on the same boat they understood each other. She didn't speak about her love and despair and ungratefulness of children. She couldn't express what she has actually planned to discuss. Keats says, "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter". Like Keats unheard melodies are sweeter women untold miseries are endless. Though they just discussed about the price of tea and rice their untold miseries are endless.

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