

Preface

Modernity marks a paradigm shift in human thinking and human relations that brought in the emergence of modern science, technology, nation – states, capitalism, and industrialism across the societies thus producing unprecedented socio – economic – political conditions that have drastically restructured human lives. Fundamentally, modernity is the post – traditional way of being. The modern women in Shashi Deshpande’s novels are left confused between the conflicting forces of tradition and modernity. Reconciliation between personal aspirations and duties towards family and society becomes a challenge for them. Her novels deal with women’s sensibility, their sufferings, their aspirations and their struggle to rise above all the oppressive forces in a male dominated society.

This thesis is an attempt to briefly characterize the complex phenomenon of modernity through the novels of Shashi Deshpande, namely *If I Die Today*, *Come Up and Be Dead*, *That Long Silence*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Roots and Shadows*, *A Matter of Time*, *The Binding Vine*, *Small Remedies and Moving On*.

I would like to acknowledge Professor (Dr) Soumyajit Samanta for his help and supervision. Without his advice and suggestions it would not have been possible for me to complete my work. His guidance helped me overcome my doubts and confusion.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the faculty members, Professor Asish Sengupta, Professor Chandanasis Laha, Dr. Ranjan Ghosh and Prof. Bisnupada Roy (Head of the Department) of the Department of English of University of North Bengal for their cooperation whenever it was required.

I am grateful to Dr. Debkumar Mukherjee for his constant and active support for which I got the opportunity to finish my doctoral thesis. His 'small' support has rendered a great help for me in numberless ways.

I am thankful to respected Vice-Chancellor of University of North Bengal for accepting and accommodating me in the Ph. D Programme of the University. I acknowledge the co-operation of Library staff of the University of North Bengal and Prometheus Research Library, New York for support of books and periodicals.

I am indebted to my father, Mr. Upendranath Roy for his immense support, scholarly advice, fatherly guidance and constant encouragement. I would also remain thankful to my family and friends for helping me in completing my research work.

Amitabh Roy