

---

## Shashi Deshpande – Life and Work

**Dr. Deepali Sharma**

Assistant Professor

FET, Agra College, Agra

### ABSTRACT

*Shashi Deshpande is a well known name in the field of Indian literature. She was born in Dharwad in Karnataka as the daughter of the renowned Kannada dramatist as well as a great Sanskrit scholar Sriranga. She pursued her education in Dharwad, Bombay and Bangalore. In this paper, we give the description about her life and also her working.*

### Shashi Deshpande

Shashi Deshpande was born in the year 1938 in Dharwad, Karnataka, India as the daughter of the renowned Kannada dramatist as well as a great Sanskrit scholar Sriranga. Shashi Deshpande received an English education at a protestant mission school in Karnataka. As a schoolgirl, she read the great British classical novels in English, and particularly liked the works of Jane Austen. She received her graduation in Economics from Elphinstone College, Bombay and in Law from the Government Law College, Bangalore. Much later, she took a post-graduate degree in English from the Mysore University. She married Dr. Deshpande, a neuropathologist (now Professor of Pathology) in 1962. The initial years of her marriage were largely given over to bringing up her two sons.

Shashi Deshpande had a very sharp mind. Infact, she was a gold medalist. Shashi Deshpande, the living dynamic woman writer in Indian English Literature occupies a prominent position. She has treated the typical Indian themes very sensitively and has pictured the contemporary middle-class women with rare competence. After getting married, she shifted to Bombay (now Mumbai). During her stay in Mumbai, she decided to pursue a course in Journalism. So, she got herself enrolled in the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Thereafter, she took up a job as a journalist in the magazine "Onlooker". She worked there for a couple of months. **Shashi Deshpande** is an award-winning Indian novelist. She has been actively involved in writing books for children. Shashi Deshpande lives in Bangalore with her husband who is a Pathologist.

Her father's ideas and beliefs, the intellectual freedom he provided, his rational logical thinking, his love for Gandhism - all formed part of her childhood. From her father, Shashi Deshpande must have acquired an intellectual bent of mind and love for reading and scholarship, which have won for her degrees in three various subjects and a diploma.

Shashi Deshpande believes that she began writing most casually and without any intention of settling down to a career in writing. She had accompanied her husband, a commonwealth scholar, to England and lived there for a year. Her husband encouraged her to put her experiences down on paper. In order not to forget them, she began writing them down. Her father sent this write-up to the Deccan Herald, a southern Indian newspaper. Much to her surprise, her articles were found 36 worthy of being published. This encouraged her to try a career in journalism. A stint at Onlooker, further encouraged her to try her hand at short stories and in a sudden burst of creativity; she wrote several short stories which were published in reputed magazines. Thus began her writing career.

### Her Publications

#### Novels

- The Dark Holds No Terrors. New Delhi, Vikas, 1980.

- 
- If I Die Today. New Delhi, Vikas, 1982.
  - Roots and Shadows. Bombay, Sangam, 1983.
  - Come Up and Be Dead. New Delhi, Vikas, 1985.
  - That Long Silence. London, Virago Press, 1988.
  - The Binding Vine. London, Virago Press, 1994.
  - A Matter of Time. New Delhi, Penguin Books, 1996; afterword by Ritu Menon, New York, Feminist Press, 1999.
  - Small Remedies. New York, Viking, 2000.

### Short Stories

- The Legacy and Other Stories. Calcutta, Writers Workshop, 1978.
- It Was Dark. Calcutta, Writers Workshop, 1986.
- The Miracle and Other Stories. Calcutta, Writers Workshop, 1986.
- It Was the Nightingale. Calcutta, Writers Workshop, 1986.
- The Intrusion and Other Stories. New Delhi, Penguin India, 1994.

### Play

#### Screenplay:

- Drishte, 1990.

### Other (for children)

- A Summer Adventure. Bombay, IBH, 1978.
- The Hidden Treasure. Bombay, IBH, 1980.
- The Only Witness. Bombay, IBH, 1980.
- The Narayanpur Incident. Bombay, IBH, 1982.

### References

1. SAUNET: Bookshelf: Shashi Deshpande
2. The Hindu, October 9, 2015 After Sashi Deshpande steps down, Akademi explains its silence
3. Joseph, Margaret Paul. Jasmine on a String: A survey of Women in India Writing Fiction in English
4. H.E.Bates, *The Modern Short Story* (London, 1941). Pg. 73-74
5. K.S.Venkata Ramani, Jatadharan, Madras, 1937. pg 530
6. C.V.Venugopal, *The Indian Short Story in English*, Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1976, pg.30.
7. V.Y.Kantak, 'The Language of Indian Fiction in English', *Critical Essays on Indian Writing in English*, (Ed. Prof. M.K.Naik, et.al., Darwad, 1968).
8. Literature Alive, pg. 13.
9. Indian Communicator, 20 November 1994.
10. "Interview", *The Sunday Observer*, 11 February 1990. Eve's Weekly, 18-24 June 1988, pg. 27.
11. Wasafiri, 17, 1993, pg. 25-26.
12. "Interview", Ibid., pg. 26. Lakshmi Holmstorm
13. Indian Communicator, 20 November 1994, pg.2
14. Wasafiri, 17, pg. 22.
15. Roots and Shadows, New Delhi: Disha Books, 1983, pg. 15
16. Delhi: Penguin, 1989, pg.1, That long Silence.
17. Raman Seldon, A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989, pg. 150-51
18. The Hindustan Times, 26 March 1994
19. Literature Alive, 1/3, pg.11

20. The Sunday Observer, 11 February 1990).
21. Ibid.
22. Eve's Weekly, 18-24 June 1988,pg. 28
23. Wasafiri, 17, pg. 26.
24. Ibid., pg. 26
25. Eve's Weekly, 19-24 June 1988, pg. 28
26. Wasafiri, 17, pg. 26.
27. Literature Alive, pg. 13
28. K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar, "Postscript", Indian Writing in English, New Delhi: Sterling, 1984, pg.761.
29. Ibid.pg. 761.