



GAURI DESHPANDE'S POETRY REFLECTIONS ON THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT:

In some of her poems, Gauri Deshpande has questioned hypocritical social mores, much to the discomfort of the male establishment of the time. This article is an examination of her poetry, which plays with the image of Indian women just after the British period. The shown picture of women is a complete representation of all post-colonial Indian women, regardless of caste, creed, or religion. The experimentation includes gender inequality as its backdrop, which is pervasive in both personal and societal life, and it culminates in the predominate yearning for freedom from patriarchal confines. As shown in her poetry, it progresses toward the unique quest for an authentic self-identity of Indian women, who are free and recognised as both human beings and masculine counterparts. Gauri Deshpande has written widely in both Marathi and English, and her works include poetry, essays, and short tales. She consistently seeks to reframe social ethics in all of her poetry and advocates for women's liberation from gender injustices that exist in both social and private life. The poetess imagines a real self-identity for women, one that will be valued and regarded equally with men's.

Keywords: *Emancipation, Gauri Deshpande, Indian Literature, Post-colonial feminist theory, Post-Independence poetry*

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of the research is to investigate whether or whether the representation of women in works of literature accepts or rejects the societal factors that, throughout history, have prevented women from attaining complete equality. The study starts with a presentation of the image of women that is imagined by society in India, and it finishes with the image being altered from one of oppression to liberation, which is what the poet wants to achieve via self-

realization. It sheds light on a number of issues that pertain to the complicated interactions that exist between men and women in the home as well as in public settings. Her family, employment, educational institution, and economic environment all violate her right to private space. The issues of one's identity and one's dignity are brought up. The use of a post-colonial feminist approach has been made in order to investigate the true understanding of the real nature of women, as expressed in her poetry, and to analyse in a methodical manner the misconceptions that are held about women in society as a whole. Additionally, this has been done in order to gain a deeper and richer understanding of the nature of women. This paper sheds light on the fact that there was a remarkable shift from a voice of complaint against alienation and oppression to a voice demanding liberation in her poetry, representing Indian women with patriarchy as the background. This shift occurred from a voice of complaint against alienation and oppression to a voice demanding liberation. This paper throws light on the fact that there

POST-COLONIAL FEMINISM:

Around the middle of the 1800s, the word "feminism" was used to refer to the "qualities of females." [Citation needed] Since the First International Women's Conference, which took place in Paris in 1892, the phrase has been used to refer to an advocate of equal rights for women based on the concept that the sexes are equal. The "First Wave" of women's rights activism began in the middle of the 19th century with the fight for fundamental political rights. The "Second Wave" of women's rights activism began in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the fight for greater equality in all aspects of life, including education, the workplace, and the home. The "Third Wave" placed a strong emphasis on the concept of "identity" as a location of gender conflict.

After the United Nations was established, the 1940s and 1950s saw the birth of post-colonial feminism, commonly referred to as "Third World Feminism." In it, several aspects of colonialism, such as slavery, oppression, gender, diversity, representation, and resistance, are dissected. During the 1980s, feminist critics like Sara Suleri and Chandra Mohanty became aware of the pressing need for a more comprehensive and all-encompassing comprehension of this philosophy. Postcolonial theory is applied to investigate how women are represented in post-colonial literature and challenges the

assumptions made about them in both literature and society. Chandra Mohanty, a prominent theorist within the movement, addresses this issue in her seminal essay "Under Western Eyes." From that point on, postcolonial theory is applied to examine how women are represented in post-colonial literature. Postcolonial feminism is an approach to feminist thought that makes an effort to address problems that have been identified as existing within postcolonial theory as well as Western feminism. It argues that colonialism and patriarchy have a tight historical relationship to one another and describes how patriarchy continues to be a source of oppression for women even after the end of British colonial power. Even though the colonisers have long since departed India, the subjugation of women by males is still ongoing, which is what is meant by the term "post colonialism." It is used as evidence to demonstrate that patriarchy is not just the supremacy of the father, but also the male hegemony, which inhibits the essential freedom of women. Patriarchy is not simply the ascendancy of the father. "Patriarchy is not just the ascendancy of the father in a family; rather, it encompasses all of the symbols of the imposed tradition, culture, and power, which affects both men and women equally." Patriarchy is not just the ascendancy of the father in a family. Patriarchy is not just the ascendancy of the father in (Singh 2008, 77).

It examines colonial relationships, which view women as secondary, and argues that the end of formal empire has not meant an end to the oppression of women in the former colonies. Additionally, it seeks to justify the deconstruction of power relationships between men and women, which paves the way for crimes that are committed against women, as seen in the poetry of the poet that was selected. It is used as evidence to demonstrate that patriarchy is not just the supremacy of the father, but also the male hegemony, which inhibits the essential freedom of women. Patriarchy is not simply the ascendancy of the father. themes deal with family violence, sexual violence, child brides and moms, and child mothers, all of which show gender disparities and the enslavement of women, and ultimately revolts against patriarchal ideals. The viewpoint of a socially disadvantaged people who are impacted by their dominating power is used by postcolonial feminism in its examination of the similarities between the countries that were once under colonial rule and the position of women in patriarchal societies.

POST-INDEPENDENCE POETRY:

A significant portion of post-independence poetry written in English focused on the investigation of a new persona for the India of the contemporary era. The dispute over Indian English (IE) is not simply about a literature or a language; rather, it is about the fundamental essence of what it means to be an Indian in the contemporary period. It's a discussion about who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be in the future... This whole dynamic and fluid process of nation building and culture formation is at play in the debate because it was conceived of and constructed by the imperial British, because it was contested and counter-constructed by the nationalists, and because it was modified and deconstructed by the generations born after independence (Paranjape, 1998). If it does not include the women of India in the most authentic sense, with their identity as a distinct and unique entity inside the patriarchal society, with all of the basic prerequisites such as freedom and proper respect, then the identity is incomplete and anti-national.

WOMEN IN POST-INDEPENDENCE POETRY:

Women writers of the post-independence era were given the responsibility of constructing a new image of the Indian woman, moving away from one in which she is seen as subordinated and toward one in which she is seen as emancipated. Notable women poets such as Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande, Eunice de Souza, Suniti Namjoshi, and Lakshmi Kannan all contributed to the accomplishment of this task, which was completed successfully and effectively. While Kamala Das shed light on the issues facing women from the Nair community, Eunice shed light on those facing the Goan-Catholic community, Gauri shed light on those facing Maharashtrian women, Suniti shed light on those facing expatriates, and Lakshmi shed light on those facing her own Tamil community. Even though these women writers came from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds, their concerns and experiences were very similar when it came to issues such as female infanticide, child and adolescent marriage, sexual and domestic violence, as well as the mental and emotional abuse that women face throughout their lives. Their poetry undoubtedly examined their collective awareness and the experiences they had in common in order to break through the limitations and constraints that still constrained women even after they gained their freedom.

There have been several women poets who have made major contributions to post-independence poetry. Some of these poets are Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande, Monika Varma, Lila Rai, Margaret Chatterji, Suniti Namjoshi, Lakshmi Kannan, and Eunice de Souza. Gauri Deshpande is a prominent figure in the field of feminist confessional poetry. She comes from a family that includes both social activists and academics. Her works, in spite of her high caste background and illustrious ancestry, centred on the idea of defying societal and gender conventions that confined women in many ways. Dr. Gaurishankar Jha makes the observation that "Confessional poetry is the outpouring of human emotions that were earlier regarded unpleasant gained new respect." [Citation needed] Poets convey their feelings or failures of shame, disappointment, incestuous urges and experience in their own unique ways, challenging all taboos in the process (Rukhaiyar, 2002, 245).

POETRY OF GAURI DESHPANDE:

Gauri Deshpande was born in 1942, and she completed all of her schooling in the city of Pune. Following the completion of her doctoral studies in English, she went on to teach at Fergusson College as well as the University of Pune. In addition to that, she held the position of sub-editor at The Illustrated Weekly of India and, subsequently, the position of assistant editor at Opinion. Iravati Karve, Gauri's mother, was a renowned anthropologist. Her readings of the Mahabharata opened up a new method of understanding the book's female characters. Gauri was named after her mother. Her great-grandfather Maharshi Karve was a pioneering advocate for the education of females and remarriage opportunities for widows. Her great-uncle Raghunath Karve was a pioneering advocate for the practise of family planning. Gauri Deshpande's passionate outburst against the enslavement of women and her outpouring of humanitarian sentiments and feminist ideals were inspired by everyday occurrences that she noticed around her. These incidences included the following: These caused her to have significant emotional reactions, and the poems she wrote are a representation of the intensity of those feelings. *Between Births* (1968), *Lost Love* (1970), and *Beyond the Slaughterhouse* are some of the poetry books that she has published (1972). In addition to that, she is the editor of *An Anthology of Indo-English Poetry* (1974). Her readers are compelled to go further into her poems due to the straightforwardness of her writing style, the honesty with

which she expresses herself, and the pervasive feeling of an instant response and empathy. According to Dr. Ram Sharma, "Gauri Deshpande's encounter with life is multipronged, delicate, controlled, and mature, with a developed idiom," all of which contribute to her status as a more remarkable and reading poet.

Her poetry often takes a stand against patriarchal ideals and engages in sexual explorations of female bodies and identities. "The subtheme of much of my work is sexuality—a woman becoming aware of her sexuality—and there are a few occurrences depicted," she said in an interview with Dickman (1995). "Whether she is writing in Marathi or in English, in person or in print, the prolific poet, fiction-writer, and translator Gauri Deshpande has a distinctive voice. It is strongly feminist, wryly humorous — usually at her own expense, confident yet self-critical, irreverent yet steeped in tradition, cosmopolitan yet grounded in her love for language and place. According to Urmilla Deshpande, "No matter who or where her audience is, she is guaranteed to disrupt their preconceptions, bringing both pain and joy."

Her writing is quite straightforward, and she uses a lot of colloquial and satirical language. The usage of the pronoun "I" (self-awareness in the "self") and a self-critical tone are two characteristics that are common in Gauri Deshpande's work. Her affection for the audience is shown via the usage of the pronouns "you" and "we" in the poetry lines that she writes. By demonstrating that she empathises with the struggles that women face, she views their struggles as if they were her own. She has a vulnerable side while maintaining her candour. Singh (2008, 173) makes the following observation on female authors: "They [women poets] have taken liberties with form and structure yet they display better organic coherence in their poetry. Their appearance is that of potent feelings that come out of them in an uncontrollable torrent, much like an electric jet. The woman and the world she inhabits are constantly at the heart of her writings. Singh (2004, 75) makes the following observation about Gauri's poetry: "She divulges her feminine desires, searches for rehabilitative remedies, and simultaneously strives to discover and protect her niche in the man's world." The ability of Gauri Deshpande's writing to be self-critical is what sets it apart from other writers. She has no fear when it comes to challenging false social mores and sexual ethics. Gauri was primarily preoccupied with the manner in which men treated women in any and all interactions, whether they took place within the context of the home or of society as a whole, as well as the essential fight that

the feminine mind puts up to triumph over challenges at different phases. Gauri had previously said in an interview that she had given to Ranjana of the Indian Institute of Advance Study in Simla that "As a feminist, I believe that a woman has the right to have her own space both physically and mentally." Gauri encourages all other women to join her in resisting tyranny and bringing about positive change in their own lives. A.N. Dwivedi said, in reference to Indian women poets displaying greater courage and determination in tackling social issues, "They have succeeded in voicing in their own tender ways the hopes, fears, and aspirations of the feminine world." This was said in reference to the fact that Indian women poets have shown greater courage and determination in tackling social issues. (2001, 14).

CONCLUSION:

Contemporary poets, literary critics, and readers from all over the globe admire Gauri Deshpande for her work because it reveals the oppressive nature of the patriarchal culture in which she lives. Gauri's "staying power" and "the varied range of topics that are illuminated including cultural, religious, sexual, and personal themes" are the reasons that De Souza (1997) cites in the introduction to her book, *Nine Indian Women Poets*, as the reasons for including her amongst other poets. The book is titled *Nine Indian Women Poets*. Gauri condemns the image of women as being on the periphery of society and as being subservient to male supremacy. Instead of showing acquiescence to their circumstances, she urges women to break free of the traditional confines that have been placed around them and to become aware of and sensitive to the problems that are affecting them. The examination of her poetry demonstrates the bravery that she and others in the genre of poetry have during a time when it was considered inappropriate for women to discuss topics such as love or their inner selves. Gauri Deshpande is a poet, essayist, translator, and short story writer in Marathi and in English, with an equal facility in both languages. She is a writer whose honesty and outspokenness cut through every veneer of social hypocrisy. Yet written in a personal and confessional style, post-Independence poetry has marked the beginning of the march towards social change and modernization. K.R. Usha has said this about Gauri Deshpande in her blog. It fought against the social and cultural norms that limited women's independence and put them in a position of subjection, and it defended women's right to be

autonomous. The construction of an image of a free woman was a significant obstacle for the women authors who emerged in the decades after independence. One can clearly observe the concentrated efforts that have been made by women poets to proclaim the equality and dignity of women within the context of the family and society.

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