

## **SHASHI DESHPANDE'S ROOTS AND THE SHADOWS: TRAVERSING THE CORRIDOR OF SELF- REALIZATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Shashi Deshpande's novels are concerned with a woman's quest for self; an unearthing of the female psyche and an understanding of the ambiguity of life and the protagonist's place in it. A profound study of her novels leaves no doubt about her real concern for women. Her novel *Roots and the Shadows* gives a pragmatic description of women as wife, mother and daughter, their search for identity and sexuality as well. All women characters in the novel are acutely aware of their stifled and restrained subsistence in an orthodox male-dominated society. Trapped between tradition and modernity, they search for their individuality within nuptials.

It focuses in detail on the working of the consciousness of her main protagonist, Indu, an educated career woman who plunges into periods of psychic disturbance due to traumatic experiences in her married life. Nevertheless, the agony leads to a phase of self-introspection and later self-discovery which upholds a new perception of life. Ultimately, she emerges out of the crisis as strong woman willing to compromise with life as it comes.

**KEYWORDS:** Roots and the Shadows, Quest for Self, Female Psyche, Orthodox, Tradition, Modernity, Self-Introspection, Male-Dominated, Individuality