

## UNIVERSAL WOMANHOOD IN SHOBA DE'S SPEED POST

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### Abstract:

Shoba De as one of the universal mother tries to analyze the modern predicament of the mother where she faces various kinds problem from birth to death at the hands of various individuals particularly in the patriarchal system of the country. Speed post(2000) is a collection of letters written by Shoba De at various stages of their lives by chastising them for late night telephone calls, growing pains, internet addiction, adolescent anxieties about love, sex, and friendship. She handled mundane subjects to the core issues related to the motherhood. New mom which is quite different from the older one who kept all the things into consideration and asked why mothers are not allowed to be angry when they are facing problem at each and every stage.

Keywords: mother, universal, individuals, adolescent etc

Introduction: Mother suggests the biological needs of the maternal function of what North American feminists regularly named Sisterhood. There is something of the mother in every woman seems to stabilize maternal meaning in the female body. If a mother indicates love and affection in her speech and behavior can really be called mother. The barriers confronting girls and women worldwide are gendered roles and expectations. Because of women's productive abilities, women's societal roles must be compatible with childbearing and nursing. Even in developed countries, where constitute nearly half of the paid labor force, women's domestic activities are presumed to be women's main priorities.

The women conveyed disruption to daily life that was more serious in nature i.e a woman gave birth to a baby by facing a lot of toils and struggle in a local hospital. The attending doctor didn't bother the perturbed condition but gives an instruction that you need not to do this business. Do you think that you are beautiful? The women realize that disfigurement has changed their roles in the conduct of everyday life but giving birth is the noble and sacred cause of attaining the purification of soul and the way to come closer to the Almighty. This is the reason through which human beings are is increasing day by day otherwise today humanity will be an endangered species of the word.

Traditional scholars and religionists envision purity as a sacred concept signifying a vertical continuum of spiritual cleanliness that accounts for a world chaste hierarchy. While some may see purity and pollution in term of bodily discharges, a belief that classifies women as less pure than women until women pass through puberty and menopause or physical cleanliness while others say puberty and runs parallel to continuum of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness where high caste and unpolluted people have a purity of mind and body that comes from good karma and grace of God. Women who survive burn attacks display the fact that they were burned every minute of every day. They cannot deny or hide their history. Nor they can conceal the scars as a sign to others that they are damaged physically. Women's qualities which include obedience, chastity, and physical beauty are taught to most Indian girls as models set forth by the exemplars of feminine persona. Girls and women are expected to follow the ideal life paths of Sita and Savitri. In particular, Sita's purity, obedience, and sacrifice in the service in the service of men symbolize the national representation of ideal womanhood.

Shoba De is one of the conspicuous and confident voices exploring the individual and universal predicaments through the female psyche. Her feminism and motherly behavior is also seen in her novels where she represented as a new mom of her six children and she opens a new vision to show the path of purity and wisdom to the mothers of a modern world in the novel Speedpost. Shoba De caught in the world of strife and struggle, motherhood becomes a contested space and a terrain of much critical debate. In the post-colonial and postmodern

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scenario, motherhood became a sight to state and national anxiety. Shoba De in her all the novels can be classified as the 'New Mother' by virtue of their content and the approach which she applied for expressing modern anxiety of mothers.

Speed Post comes under this category of counter-hegemonic novels by expressing that in India there is a rise in the popular as opposed to redefining literary fiction. This includes a variety of erotic (Shoba De), romantic and crime thrillers. But in the postmodern context, there is a not categorical distinction between high art and mass culture. Consumption of polar culture is going on around us every now and then in form of films, television programmes, reality shows, video games, magazines and in a hundred other forms. Kant draws a binary and high culture which provide true pleasure is sublime and beautiful while popular culture and mass culture which provide immediate physical pleasure is only charming or agreeable. But in the postmodern context, there are no longer binaries. Thus popular culture which was in the periphery is now everywhere.

In India many entities are conceptualized as Women-Mother Earth, Ganga, Gayathri Manthra, Thulasi tree, Shakhti, Prakrithi and hundreds of other entities are visualized as women and mothers. The Panchakanyakas Ahalya, Draupathi, Sita, Tara, and Mandodari showed the greatness of chastity and sacrifice. They are revered and remembered forever and are considered icons of absolute devotion and dedication. Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Bagavatham Purana depict hundreds of women characters as exemplars of ideal womanhood and motherhood. Wives displayed modesty and were loyal to their husbands and loving and caring for children. And these met narratives prescribed as a specific role to a mother. Shoba De tries to deconstruct this age-old notion regarding motherhood and tries to bring forth an urbanized cosmopolitan image of the mother. The question is how far it is integrated with the Indian concept of an ideal mother? She actually justifies her view of motherhood in her novel.

In contemporary India, motherhood is ever caught in the dichotomy of modernity and tradition. The role of a mother in a gender role refers to the set of attitudes and behavior socially expected from ideal mothers. They are socially constructed. But, Shoba De tries to disentangle the woman from this oppression and views motherhood as a site for radicalization. Speedpost is not a discourse on sentimentalizing motherhood. This new discourse shifts the locus of concern away from the subjectivity of historical mothers, and their struggles to link sex, work, and motherhood, to constructing a new subject. Throughout the novel, the mother figure asserts her feminine psyche through protest and defiance. She is not a victim of patriarchal oppression and traditions. She is a strong-willed, liberated woman with tremendous energy and vigor.

Many aspects of mothering make it so difficult for feminists to accept that role. On the contrary, Shoba De's mother figure cherishes each moment of parenting despite the fact that

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her approach is highly urbanized and cosmopolitan. "cosmopolites" as Bruce Robbins sees it, "strives toward common norms and mutual translatability" (Cheah and Robbins: 12-13). This kind of striving towards mutual translatability is seen in the mother figure depicted by Shoba De in Speed post.

In India, women empowerment was a challenging responsibility and one needs to recognize that sexual orientation-based segregation because of this social noxiousness was common for a long time. The malevolence cannot be evacuated by receiving a couple of laws or politicize, the same number of them, however, might be on paper, yet are not executed in real terms. The basic power of the society never endeavored to elevate the status of women at various levels and the development of the women was hindered.

At this point of complexities identified with the privileges of women, the circumstance must be enhanced, once the social state of mind is patched up and the predominant fiendishness hones against the women ought to be restricted. This can be acquired by women's entrance and control over the basic leadership. Additionally expanding the social connection on women at various levels in the society as a mother, sister, and daughter and particularly she represents the mom of humanity.

In India, women are underestimated at each level of the society whether in economic, social or political support and sexual orientation difference is sneaked into the life of individuals that the ascent of the novel in India was not simply an artistic wonder. It was a social wonder to such an extent, rather the satisfaction of a social need. It was related to social, political and economic conditions which were practically identical to those which favored ascent in England. The ascent of novel and appearance of it in nineteenth-century India as it did in the eighteenth century England synchronized with the ascent of individualism and with all the ensuing political and social reorientations which took after.

One of the major reasons for Shoba De's popularity as a writer is her profound understanding of the contemporary urban position and the challenges she faces. Being a part of the high society culture of Mumbai, she understands the women-folk of that class better and so is able to produce marvelous works based on their lives. She may be rightly described as a very realistic, down to earth writer portraying the world of glamour in the Indian upper class, the real human conditions- the way girls think, fantasize and converse with each other when they are alone. How their topic of discussion revolves around their problems, desires, tabooed subject. They talk about their dreams and aspirations, general awareness, self-definition, existence, and destiny. Most of the women characters depicted by Shobha De are economically independent and socially uninhibited, who are conscious of their self-respect because they are competent professionals, working shoulder to shoulder with their man counterparts.

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Shoba De has won the hearts of people all over the world. She writes with a great deal of enthusiasm and her novels are popular with people of all age groups. She is widely read all over the world and has won international acclaim. In the Toronto Review, Paul.W.Roberts observes:

Shobhaa De's Speed post is the conjecture of letters written during her life about her children's different phases faced by her when her mother is far from them during her infancy, adult and middle age stressing the basic rights of children. For example living, loving, caring and coping in the modern world. The relation between mother and children is a special bond of human identity which gives way to human behavior and sacred relationship with her mother. Shobhaa key concerns in these letters which she has penned down during the twenty-first century of family values and tradition; discipline and disease of telephone calls late at nights, internet chats, growing pains and the adolescent anxieties above, sex and friendship, religion and God and challenge of being a responsible parent.

Speed post is the memory and love, confusion and uncertainty, reminds the records, dilemmas and moral choices as the children struggled to come to terms with our respective expectations and identities. In the first section of the book 'My Mother Is an Alien' where she writes a letter to Amanda and suggests that anxiety begins at your home when she was only nine years old. Due to business and modernity setup, I can't stop but you have to start with a new way of life.

In the next section 'circle of Love,' she wrote another letter to her children and said, "None of you enjoyed the oil baths, I so loved giving. Nobody let me rub creamy moisturizing on rough knees and elbows. I wonder why. I would love to be pampered in this manner. Gone are your hot oil hair massages too with each ritual disappearing. I little and less needed. These days I rack my brains to think of a thing to do with you.....for you". In the last and six sections, 'My Heart Goes On' Shobhaa expresses the thing like God on which many of the children keep on thinking about it and very few could answer it. Similarly, she said that it is most important to each human being to know about God. But as far as my thinking is concerned I have not believed in God and you have to do on its own whatever you like. I do not pray regularly, I have fasted for religious reasons. Nor I have asked for any special boons against the performance of specific rituals.

I want your children to follow your own path-question, seek, learn, reject and that is the only way. Then someday when we talk about this subject again, we might actually answer that will surprise us both.

The most important fact that these letters written by Shobha De had never sent to anyone by speed post, e-mail, or snail mail to any of her children at any point of her lifetime. Rather she had given us the new invention of writing in 1999 by a best-selling fiction writer as

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millennium gift for six children. In fact, this could be well described as an epistolary didactic-autographical novel in the twenty-first century. Apart from that, she educates the children about the futility of war, sympathy for poorer people, racism, God, death, the necessity of being politically aware, honesty between parents and children, sharing sex rather than protection of her children. She advises them on careers-modeling is a no-no, please note and warns them about societal violence and sexual harassment implores her daughters to learn to cook and shop and solemnly entrust on girls for their well being of future.

#### Conclusion:

Shobaa De discussed Indian women novelist, a significant commitment to Indian fiction in English has originated from women conceived as a storyteller stated of an alternate method for taking gender at the world with the female eyes. Kamla Markandya, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal and Shashi Deshpande has been broadly seen and a claimed. But the women writers like Shoba De, Manju Kapur, Kusum Sawhney, and Arundhati Roy constraints as one to consider over the top of the line or prize winner writers are extremely at its best. She is open to her children going for dating and seems perfectly calm and composed in all sensitive matters which her older counterparts brushed aside or refused to deal with. Admitting that she is not all that rigid or old-fashioned, she asks her daughter to confide her affairs in her. Though she belongs to the pre-interest generation, she says, she will get used to it. She becomes a New Mom who teaches the lesson to the younger generation and at the same time she becomes the role model for present-day Moms.

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