

BREAKING THE SILENCE: A STUDY OF FAY WELDON'S *THE LIFE AND LOVES OF A SHE-DEVIL* AND SHASHI DESHPANDE'S *THAT LONG SILENCE*

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ABSTRACT

Women have been adored as the goddess of sacrifice, care, creation and compassion by many writers. But in recent times the feminist movement has produced a more conscious depiction of the roles of women and presented through images or metaphors to voice their opinion. The present paper endeavours Ruth's and Jaya's realisation of the power hidden inside them. The power of self-discovery makes them the real Jaya and the real Ruth. Fay Weldon has presented a balanced-image of woman with proportionate quality of goodness and evil in her novel *The Life and Loves of She-Devil*. Ruth, the protagonist, breaks her silence when her husband Bobbo addressed her as a "*She-Devil*." Ruth is less feminine and is not presentable and because of that Bobbo leaves her and goes to his love interest Mary Fisher, a romantic novel writer. This desertion makes Ruth revengeful. After going through several extreme phases, she discovers her "*Self*". Contrarily, Jaya, the heroine of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*, strives for her identity and breaks her silence through writing. Both the lead voices of the two novels, face the desertion from their husbands but their perspective is quite different. Ruth adopts unfair means to take revenge from her husband whereas Jaya silently vents out her silence through writing and waits for her husband. Both the female voices unanimously present the fact that women should realise the hidden power in themselves to break the silence levied on them by the society. The paper attempts to study the different faces and phases of the two female characters- Ruth and Jaya and their evolution as a new woman.

KEYWORDS: That Long Silence, the Life and Loves of a She-Devil, the Beauty Myth