



AGONISED PERCEPTION IN SELECTED NOVELS OF ANITA DESAI

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ABSTRACT

Anita Desai is one among the Indo-Anglican writers. She explored Indian's makeshifts to escape attachment and detachment and finding finally love with life in disillusionments that are entrapment of their alienation, obsession, conflict for self and diffusion of their self. In novels of Desai from the very beginning she used the intricate and delicate web of family conflict which is a greater theme of her novels. Her pet themes include alienation of both physically and psychologically. Most of the novels by Anita Desai portray the tension and conflict experience of women due to their inability to share feeling inside the family that leads to form a tragic situation in life. As per S.L.Paul comment, "Probably Desai was the first novelist to introduce Derry psychology in Indo-Anglican literature". So as to understand 'how novel can make a progress with agonised perception?' present research will help. In literature every written work has humour, climax, emotions, action and tragic vision. But this tragic vision is very important element. Here we come to know about style writing used by Anita Desai which is unique in her own way and three important areas of her excellence such as characterization, themes and plot structure. In most of the novels of Desai she portrayed psychological problems in married life such as marital discord, alienation, lack of understanding, loneliness and unfulfilled expectations. These are in real life also a big reason for conflict and tragic situation in life.

Key words: *Entrapment, alienation, conflict, agonised perception*

INTRODUCTION

Anita Desai had given a great contribution to the Indo-Anglican literature. Themes handled by Anita Desai are alienation, man-woman relationship, search for an authentic existence,

SAVITA SARDAR PARDESHI

1Page



existential predicament, victimization of weak etc. This will help to understand the tragic vision presented in her novels.

In novel *Cry the Cry, The Peacock* (1963) her first novel, deals with Maya who is trapped in a bad marriage to Gautama who is much older. The action of the novel is set in Delhi. Almost the entire story is "remembrance of things past" by Maya herself. It is really her effort to tell the story to herself to understand and find meaning in her life. Her husband, Gautama, is a successful, middle aged lawyer. He does not understand the temperament-partly spiritual-of his young wife. The complexities of her inner life is effectively brought out through the landscape as is her resentment against her husband for his inability to communicate with her. One day during a dust storm when both husband and wife go up to the roof of their house, she pushes him off from the parapet and he dies. A few days later she too commits suicide. The peacocks are one come to know about the depth of characters, symbolism, plot structure, themes, narration style, way to present the story and etc. This chapter will help us to explore new mechanism used by Anita Desai to present the alienation, disillusionment carried by Maya (protagonist of the novel) from very familiar topic like marital discord.

In novel '*Fire On The Mountain*' Desai has presented scheme of self isolation used by main protagonist Nanda to overcome the past grief of her life. Ironically the presence of Raka granddaughter of Nanda makes disturb in her isolation. This novel shows the powerlessness of Ila with a sensitive crime rape and then murdered by someone. Nanda Kaul is the heroine of this novel. In order to break with her past, she retires to a haunted house "Carignano" in Kasauli. However both the past and the present impinge on her existence depriving her of any peace. The past intrudes through the memory of her husband's infidelity. The present appears in the form of her great-granddaughter, Raka, who disturbs her cherished isolation. Things get complicated further with the presence of her classmate and friend, Ila Das who is now a welfare officer. Although she dislikes Ila, she pities her and decides to invite her over to stay with her. But she does not execute her plan one day a police officer phones Nanda and informs her that Ila has been raped and murdered. She finds it difficult to accept the news and finally succumbs to the shock Raka is the sole survivor. Ironically, Nanda Kaul who longed for stillness and calm attains it in a very strange way.

Voices in the city (1965) followed *Cry, The Peacock* and is set in Calcutta. The city of Kali—Goddess of Death. Desai makes the mother of Nirode and his two sisters. Monisha and Amla, also like Kali who unleashes her evil powers. Monisha kills herself because she cannot bear the strain of her marriage to Jiban. The greater part of the novel is devoted to Nirode's move from failure to failure. Amla, who has not been in Calcutta for long (and here. Desai clearly shows the evil associated with the city) rests the city's influence, The narration is on behalf of the characters after whom the chapter is entitled. Here the symbolism is used for non living



thing. Voices here presents very deep meaning it is about emotional crash, pressurized commitment in .

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