



PRESENCE OF REALISM IN THE NOVELS OF ANITA DESAI

Sameer Sanaullakhan Pathan¹ & Jai Shankar Tiwari², Ph. D.

Abstract

Realism as literary movement was very much present and the whole of the literary world discerned its presence. Especially prose fiction has been a potent instrument of realism. The realistic school of the mid-nineteenth century emphasized sincerity as against the liberty professed by the romantic school. The growth of science, industry and commerce also fostered the growth of realism. An accurate and detailed documentation, a deep sociological perception and an observation of the material facts of life were advocated by the realist school. Realism, as a movement, began in France in the nineteenth century. Writers of realism painted the everyday situations and conflicts that characterize real life in an accurate manner. Works featuring realism flowed uninhibited in France.

Keywords- Potential, Manifestations, Dimension, Romanticism, Psychology, Human Psyche.



Scholarly Research Journal's is licensed Based on a work at www.srjis.com

INTRODUCTION-

The present study is based on this element of realism. The researcher analyses the elements of subjective realism found in the novels of Anita Desai. This is done by resorting to appropriate literature in Psychology. Thus, the researcher attests that the elements studied in her novels are manifestations of realism. Anita Desai has given a new dimension to the Indian English novel by turning from the outer reality to the inner reality. Thus, she has revealed an immeasurable poetic potential of the human psyche.

HYPOTHESIS-

Anita Desai has been profoundly influenced by Realism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY-

The research is based on the secondary data collected through various resources like journals, books, and web sites.

OBJECTIVES-

- To understand Anita Desai's Study on the human psyche.
- The study can be examined from the light of Anita Desai's exploration of the self.
- The Principal objective of this research work is to bring out the dynamics of the presence of realism.

The present study is “Realism in Anita Desai’s Novels”, the researcher attempts to analyze the definitions of realism and explain how it is portrayed in the novels of Anita Desai. The term realism is always found to take another word for support. This tendency expresses the perennial fluctuations in the meaning of the word. Here are a few illustrations of its tendency to take a qualifying word: social realism, subjective realism, objective realism, psychological realism, quotidian realism etc. The variance in the significance of the concept of realism could be seen in these terms. The term is adopted from philosophy. It became popular in the nineteenth century. But during the eighteenth century, the term had gathered a different meaning. It was that the objects are the things that are comprehended, and that they possess a strong entity even outside of the mind. Thus, the term assumed the meaning of the idea of an intrinsic and physical entity, which is quite apart from the mind. Later, the term identified itself with idealism. It believed that such aspects as justice or goodness hold a real existence and are unattached to the things in which they are found. Therefore, the term has always generated a conflict over its exact meaning.

The portrayal of inner realism and the employment of the language of the interior provides insights towards understanding Humanity in general. The evaluation of human experiences and the inner reality of man endows literature with richness in content. The emphasis on inner realism mitigates the heaviness of the documentation of mere external details. This probe into the inner reality demands a novelty of technique. The method enables the facts to speak for themselves. Psychological or inner realism is unique and distinctive. It is universal in its prospects. However, it does not swerve from depicting the experiences of human sufferings. The thought processes and the psychological reverberations of the character composes internal realism. Internal realism dwells upon the development of the character. As such a novel delves deep into the psyche of the character, the plot is considered secondary in importance. The plot emerges out of the character’s responses to his/her predicament. Anita Desai says that she prefers the word ‘pattern’ to plot. She says that it “sounds arbitrary, heavy-handed and artificial, all that I wish to avoid” Therefore, such a novel begins in the middle as quoted earlier and the ‘tinsel package’ is avoided. The psychic process, struggles and conflicts are presented in the manner in which it occurs. The empirical findings of psychologists can be of great assistance for the development of the novel that deals with inner realism. The method of moving deeper into the psyche of the character and describing the mental processes was influenced by Freud. A novel portraying the inner realism is an effective mechanism to lay bare the complexities of the human personality in such a way that it is even more acute than the medical literature of psychology or psychiatry.

The stream of consciousness is an expedient technique which accomplishes even more than mere narration. Therefore, Anita Desai uses the method effectively which helps her to present her individual in a realistic way. It is found that the reality that the author portrays through her characters is akin to their models in factual life. Especially when the reality that is depicted is the inner reality, there has to be a consideration about how best this inner reality can be expressed, so that it reflects the factual reality. The reality should be a plausible reflection of the one that is seen in real life. Many a time, in real life the cause and effect chain of events do not occur. In the same way, real life does not offer well-structured plots. Therefore, Anita Desai opines that she prefers the word 'pattern' to plot. She marks a new era in the development of Indian English fiction, in that, she pioneered the novel of psychological realism. Thereby, she has imparted a unique mission and solidarity to the Indian English novel. Writing for Anita Desai is a matter of instinct. So her style allows the story to unfold on its own. The emotional turmoil, individual sensitivity and the confusion of the character is recorded with utmost fidelity. A novel that depicts internal realism is a powerful way to empathize with the suffering humans and their bitter experiences. It is essential to explain how Anita Desai depicts reality in all her twelve novels. The present study reveals that Anita Desai's fiction embodies the complexities of the protagonists' experience which should be considered as realism. The present study assumes that the exploration of the complexities of the female experience is realism. Thus, her novels can be studied as an analysis of human nature.

The reader gains a vital interest in the study of human nature than that gained from human circumstances. In Anita Desai, realism is never interface or exterior. With her, realism is a design to conceive an explanatory space. The analysis of character can be seen as a great strength of imaginative creativity in Anita Desai. By using this method of delving deep into the character, she ceases from mere dealing with the external appearances. Therefore, she is regarded as a significant milestone in the development of the Indian English fiction. She describes the cryptic springs of behavior and the enigma of the human consciousness. The action in her novels is evolved by the influence of the mind, thereby subordinating the material circumstances to the presentation of mental experiences. Anita Desai is noteworthy in that, she does not indulge in a superficial characterization, but provides a thorough analysis of the motives and thoughts of her protagonists. Certain critics contend the efficacy of analysis of the character as a technique, that it is not preferable and that it is like dissecting the human mind. They also opine that none of the so-called psychological qualities which the analyzer enumerates, really exist in themselves, but are only abstractions. But the researcher opines

that the psychological qualities which the analyzer records cannot be only abstractions. But they should be recognized as the realistic truth. The researcher studies the psychological elements found in the novels of Anita Desai by basing them on the evidence that is provided by the appropriate psychological literature. Anita Desai's novels are concerned with the day-to-day realities in human relationships, society, domestic life and emotional experiences. It is also true that the comprehensive account of everyday life and surroundings create sense. In the course of interpersonal relationships, there is an ample space for a lot of contentions and conflicts. The present study evaluates and represents the experience of these relationships as realism. Therefore, realism communicates facts over and above the writing, as the experiences are authenticated only in the readers' sensitivity. A realistic approach is expedient, in that, the details can be familiar even to different cultures; the repercussions and reactions may be different, but at least, the minimum commonality is ensured. Experiences are rendered factual by the language of the writer. It functions in the different standpoints to which the writer is familiar with, such as the place and setting, cities, area, customs and traditions etc. Sometimes the significance is implicit in the writer's experiences. The issue of lonely women, who are disillusioned in their search for fulfillment in life, through love and through varied relationships is a fact in the modern world. Unrequited love and the resultant loneliness is not a new fact of life. The values of love and care are regarded as the woman's jurisdiction, a very secondary value when viewed by men. Anita Desai throws light on the texture of the emotional lives of women. She has rejuvenated and redefined the realistic novel by fashioning it to explore women's experiences and obsessions.

The present study is based on the hypothesis that the observation of the internal aspects of woman's life is realism as much as is the observation of the external aspects of life and society. Women have been posited in literature as paragons of virtue and as docile creatures. This portrait of a woman has been conditioned by culture and society. Such images of women as quintessence of feminine virtue and rectitude do not present the woman in all her complexity and fullness, and as a complete human being, in all its realism. Therefore, this study presumes that, the presentation of the female experiences, agonies and an appreciation of the woman's internal aspect is realism. It echoes and represents life, because it presents the female emotional fervor, passion and human relationships which make the warp and woof of life itself. The portrayal of this realism is extremely factual and beneficent. The idealization of feminine tolerance is authentic, but even more authentic is the exploration of her agonies which are specific to an emotional being that a woman is. The study assumes that the reader recognizes the aspects of life when she encounters her own frustrations and

agonies being depicted in the novels of Anita Desai. The readers find their own emotions, circumstances, frustrations and desires are shared and shaped into a literary form. The reader encounters the fact that her own thoughts and feelings are authentic enough. The daily, mundane preoccupations, interactions and their attendant feelings, being voiced in these novels, is as much realism. The daily commonplace life of grievous conflicts of life, involvement and expectations with their discontentment—all these aspects which are an integral part of daily life, when they are depicted, it is realism. The stress on feelings, relationships of every kind, maternal love, childlessness, conflicts—the significant as well as the most insignificant aspects of daily life. These are the aspects of perennial and persistent reality which every human being encounters. Therefore, this study aims to explore the subtle tensions of the well-educated modern women as they struggle to distinguish themselves in a male world, the social inequities and the necessity for justice for the lives of women, which is voiced very delicately in the novels. The fact that women are responsible for their own situations is what one observes.

The study reveals that Anita Desai sets her novels in the realm of psychological realism— that of a woman's emotions and she renders the frustrations of the educated and sensitive woman. The characters in fiction take birth in the writer's imagination, but they imitate individuality and reality in actual life. Therefore, women in Anita Desai's novels represent the actual women in real life. Patriarchy, the ruler, which is universal, assigns the woman's place as the home and the hearth. This kind of a limitation ascribed to woman and her roles is not only restricted to India, but it is held even in other nations. Literature presents women characters as fulfilling their roles. However, all over the world, there exists a tradition who have broken through the patriarchal bastions and a representation of such female characters in fiction endows literature with remarkable characters. In a realistic novel, one sees characters who appear real and the reader visualizes so many things through the characters' eyes. Anita Desai portrays the life of a woman in totality. It is not just a slice of life, but the whole life itself. She depicts woman's life in all its vicissitudes, social, emotional, moral and intellectual aspects. Through all her novels one can recognize the intuition she possesses about women's conditions. She exhibits the knowledge of psychology and psychiatry. She renders ordinary happenings of life, men and women as they are, and according to their authentic and beneficent expression. The things that happen in the lives of people, whatever happens to them both externally and internally is graphically presented.

The researcher emphatically believes that a writer cannot be said to adhere to realism unless he/she knows his/her subject very well. Anita Desai presents the reverberations of the female mind which she knows intimately well. The contemplation of the psychic turmoil's of the protagonists has contemporary significance. Every individual is a distinct personality with his doubts, fears, suffering and loneliness. Urban life experiences several changes. One of them is the change in the woman's status and education. The spread of education registers a well-read woman with new modes of thought. Consequently her intellectual needs change. She becomes more expressive, requires more understanding from her partner. When the partner lacks the same qualities, it gives rise to tension in the relationship. In order to create the real people, the novelist understands the subjective eccentricities and singularities of thinking processes. The writer creates real life situations, but without distorting the contemporary reality.

REFERENCES:

- R. S. Pathak, *Modern Indian Novel In English*, (New Delhi: Creative Books, 1999), 94
Shyam. M. Asnani, *New Dimensions of Indian English Novel*, (Delhi: Doaba House, 1987), 78
Jasbir Jain, *Stairs to the Attic: The Novels of Anita Desai*; (Jaipur: Printwell, 1987), 10
Ranu Uniyal, *The Fiction of Margaret Drabble and Anita Desai: Women and Landscape*, (New Delhi: Creative Books, 2000), 142
S. L. Paul, *A Critical Study of Anita Desai's Cry, The Peacock*, (New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1988), 5