

The Novels of Anita Desai: A Study in Feminine Sensibility

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While Indian Writers have been making significant contributions to world Literature since Independence, the past years have seen a flourishing of Indian fiction in the International scenario. As Indian writers become more popular criticize the attention their work invites to social problem in Indian, with many political loss than thrilled about the recent boom in Indian fiction. This special report highlights a few notable Indian writers who have recently made a mark on the international Literary scene. Indian writing in English is now recognized as a major cotemporary current in English language – Literature. Indian writing is a relatively recent phenomenon as for as, literature goes.

Anita Desai is one of the world famous and of India's best modern novelists in English. She is an Indian novelist, short story writer, screen writer, and children writer. Anita Desai can be described as a diasporic writer historically and culturally. The word "Diaspora is derived from the Greek-dia-speirin, which means 'to scatter through.' She also took interest in essays, reviews and articles. The Illustrated weekly of India published Calcutta Kaleidoscope in 1958, and pilgrimage in 1966. The article Gangtok published in Envoy, London. Within and without tradition came out in ACLALS newsletter 1979 and out of the shadows in Indian Express 1984. She also worked for a year in Max Muller Bhavan Calcutta. Anita Desai, "grande dame" of South Asian diaspora writers, is the critically – acclaimed writer.

Anita Desai was born on 24th June, 1937, in Mussoorie, a hill station situated in the foothills of the Himalayan ranges, near Dehradun, in the North Indian State of Uttaranchal India. It is conveniently connected by road to Delhi and major cities. It is called, "Gateway to Yammunotri and Gangotri, Shrines of Northern India." She was formerly known as Anita Mazumdar, a daughter of Dhiren N. Mazumdar, a Bengali Business Executive, and the former Toni Nime, a German expatriate, a teacher. Her first name was also very French – Antoinette, later shortened to Toni Her Father, Dhiren Mazumdar's native place was Dhaka but he has settled in Delhi Anita Desai, the advantage of having double perspective when writings about India and Indians. She grew up during World War-II and was no stranger to discrimination,

which is reflected in her writing. She has been awarded numerous prizes and honours, including the Winifred Holtby Prize of the Royal Society of Literature in 1978; the Padma Sri Award from the Government of India, Alberto Moravia Prize of the for Literature in 2000. R.S. Pathak notes : “Her concern for human lot has imparted profound appeal to her novels.”

Three Indian writers – Anita Desai, Rupta Bajwa and Siddharth Dhanvant Shanghvi – have stormed through the prestigious Grinzane Cavour Literary award in Italy by winning three prizes. The awards have never had an Indian winner in their 24 years history. R.K. Dhawan observes: “Her novels have drawn worldwide attention and she stands in the company of Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing, Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood and Flora Nwapa.”

Further, the debut book of the writer Critiques Cry, the Peacock a typically feminine novel. The writer of the book has considered Anita Desai as often Port raying female protagonist, young and old, rich and poor, married or widowed. The writer of the book has narrated Anita Desai who explored in Feminine Psyche and sensibility. Fire on the Mountain present a Brilliant and varied analysis of the novel and discussing the varieties of loneliness with appropriate illustration very convincingly voices in the city – a presentation of cultural and historical, peculiar novel balances victimization with different modes of part. The internal monologue of the narrative is characteristic of Anita Desai’s “stream of consciousness” style of writing. Most of Desai’s work engage in the complexities of modern Indian culture from a feminine perspective while highlighting the female. Indian predicament of maintaining self identity as an individual woman. Anita Desai is concerned with a group of diasporic Indians in Britain of the late 1960s in her novel Bye-Bye, Black bird. She has also related with the character of a migrant Austrian Jew in India in her novel Baumgartner’s Bombay. In the Novel, Journey to Ithaca, she has shown an Egyptian acculturated in India along with an Italian spiritual seeker in the subcontinent.

Anita Desai has the gift of opening up a closed world and making it clearly visible and by the end, familiar: - Sunday Times. Salman Rushdie once described Anita Desai’s subject as solitude. Her characters tend to be outsiders, torn between privacy and the powerful family and social bonds that both stifle and unite them. Anita Desai shared artistic deals in scripting her novel in Custody for Ismail Merchant’s film Muhafiz and how “tearing the pages and shaping them a new” for a different medium opened up new possibilities of expression though both were narrative structures.

Anita Desai has rendered a new dimension to the novel writing in English in modern India. Anita Desai has presented in her novels the predicament of sensitive women characters. The unique feature of Anita Desai’s fictional artistry is her use of imagery to carry them, to create the feeling of wholeness. It is not worthy that the novels of Anita Desai are short therefore Darshan Singh Maini regards them novellers rather than novels. Anita Desai has depicted women of all the ages and grasps in her novels. In critical literature Indian writing in English Anita Desai is seldom obliterated. Looking inward in Anita Desai’s characters. She has also explains the intricate facts of human experience bearing upon the central experience of psychic tensions of characters. Anita Desai in the most humble opinion of the writer, is a

cosmopolitan writer in approach dealing with vernacular aspects of Indian life and culture.

Desai's – Baumgartner's Bombay provided Anita Desai with an opportunity to explore her German background that she inherited from her mother's side the need for the way to write about her family. Baumgartner's Bombay is exactly of this character as it portrays the life of a German Jew, hounded out of the country, still as a boy. In Baumgartner's Bombay, Anita Desai depicts a wide canvas of different segments of time – Past and present “cleverly constructed and full sharp perceptions about human nature under the skin, whatever the color.” The Times, Journey to Ithaca (1995), Anita Desai's 9th novel and her since the celebrated. Baumgartner's Bombay is a kind of love triangle set against the moderns of extreme spiritual reaching. Anita Desai's other novels, it is also about India, a bewildering territory of degradation and dreams where foreigners especially can feel either utterly alien or at home. Truly, Journey to Ithaca remains a significant work in Indian English fiction in that it dispels the mystery behind spirituality.

Anita Desai's novel, Fasting, Feasting was also shortlisted for the 1999 Booker prize, which further consolidated Anita Desai's international reputation showcasing her immense skill in handling complex inter relationship. Anita Desai's novel hailed as “unsparing, yet tender and funny”, brilliantly her place among today's foremost Indian writers. The Fasting Feasting novel contrasted American and Indian culture, and male and female roles. Arun studies in Massachusetts, her sister Uma lives in India in a small provincial city. It was hard to believe that they had ever had separate existence, they had been separate entities and not mama papa in one breath... Mamapapa themselves rarely spoke of a time when they were not one. The novel tells the moving story of Uma, the plain older daughter of an Indian family, tied to the household of her childhood and tending to her parents every extravagant demand, and of her younger brother, Arun, across the world of Massachusetts, confused by his new life in college and the suburbs, where he lives with the Patton family. “ In Fasting, Feasting – the most recent in a series of outstanding fictions- a series of outstanding fictions- she turned to a world which is already disappearing and a million of which she remains a peerless chronicler. This is a compelling nature work by India's finest writer in English.”

Anita Desai's The Zigzag Way departed from her familiar territories and set the story of identity and self-discovery in Mexico. The Zigzag way is a magical novel of elegiac beauty. The central character, Eric, is a youngish man, an a traveller and directionless, a newly minted historian, An American sociology Graduate student from Boston. His sufficient girlfriend Em, who is researching mosquitoes in the Yucatan, is annoyed when he insists on accompanying her on a research trip to Mexico. She says, “what will you do here, Eric?” A poor girl in 1930s Vienna, achieved minor success on the stage, then married a Mexican. It is a thoughtful novel and a window into a slice of Mexican history and the Cornish immigration and their history of silver mining. The Zigzag Way, the celebrated Indian writer is where she is casually not a place far away from India. The Zigzag Way is her best effort so far in her 40 year old literary journey. “The Zigzag Way exhibits all their gifts in abundance. Sensual vivid, frightening and almost unbearably suspenseful. – Barton

Globe.,

In reality , Anita Desai is indisputably one of the most powerful contemporary Indian novelists writing in English Broadly speaking , Desai's themes characterization , and images deal with confinement and lack of freedom widely acclaimed as a gifted writer and the winner of the Sahitya Academy Award, Anita Desai can be considered the writer of the psychological novel since she writes about the interior motives of character and psychological efforts of actions in the novel Anita Desai explores and portrays the feminine psyche of a common woman and of the subnormal bordering on abnormal woman.

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