

GLIMPSES IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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ISBN No. 978-93-83995-65-4

Published by:

Anuradha Publications
Cidco-Nanded

Publication Year: 2019-20

Price- Rs. 100/-

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Printed by

Gurukrupa Offset,
Near Police Station, Gangakhed

Typesetting by:

Simran Computers
Gangakhed Dist.Parbhani

Cover Designby:

Mr. Imran K. Mohammad

CONTENTS

Sr. No.	Content
01	Non-Verbal Communication as an Integral Aspect of Personality Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam & Dr. Tukaram Bobade
02	Theme of Partition and Religious Discord in Khushwant Singh's "Treain to Pakistan" Mr. Kailas B. Giri
03	आधुनिक हिंदी उपन्यासों साहित्य में दलित चेतना प्रा. डा. निवृत्ती एस. भेंडेकर
04	Feminine Consciousness Reflected In Rabindranath Tagore's Play 'Chitra' Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam
05	दृक-श्रव्य प्रसार माध्यम : दूरदर्शन और हिंदी विज्ञापन भेंडेकर एन.एस.
06	Voice to the Unvoiced In the Play of Mahesh Dattani'S 'Tara' Mr. Kailas B. Giri
07	आंबेडकरवादी समीक्षेचा मानदंड: मूल्यवेधी सम्यक समीक्षा डॉ. कीर्तीकुमार मोरे
08	A Complex East- West Culture Conflict In Girish Karnad's "Driven Snow" Dr. R. T. Bedre, & Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam
09	आईच्या संवेदनशिलतेने क्रांती घडवू पाहणारी कविता: प्रश्नांची मातृभाषा प्रा.डॉ. कीर्तीकुमार मोरे
10	Anita Desai's 'Fire on the Mountain: A Critical Study Mr. Kailas B. Giri

ANITA DESAI'S "FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN": A CRITICAL STUDY

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Abstract:

Women writers have contributed a lot to Indian English fiction. It offers research insights and a lot of human foresight and understanding. One cannot highlight Indo-English fiction without mentioning the magnificence of the work done by women writers. Anita Desai broadened the thematic horizons of Indian English fiction, dealing mainly with the psycho-emotional situations and psychological characteristics of female characters. He does not want to follow the traditional tracks of Indian traditions, culture and values. He wants to improve the present situation of Indians by giving them new hope and ambition. "Fire on the Hill" presents the psychological and spiritual agony of an old woman, Mrs. Nandu Kaul, the protagonist of the novel. She is tired of playing the role of the wife of the vice-chancellor of Punjab University. The title itself is highly symbolic and descriptive, referring to the words of Raka, the daughter of Nandu Kaul's grandson, who says, "See Nani, I set the forest on fire See Nani, the forest is on fire". That is, Raka's words clearly propose to destroy a world in which a woman cannot hope to be happy without being unnatural. We see that this is a symbolic fire

burning in the old woman's heart. The exploration of Nandu Kaul's inner emotional world is the central theme of the novel.

Keywords: Silence, Tradition, Agony, Psyche Etc.

Introduction:

Anita Desai (née Mazumbar) is a critically lauded 20th-century writer, and her novels on the experiences and inward lives of Indian men and women are known for their pity, expressive style, and coherent prose. Having come of age when India achieved independence in 1947, Desai interweave politics and gender issues into her works.

Anita Desai very carefully paints a picture of Indian life and a remarkable and comprehensive sketch of the old woman. She looked at the whole history of human life. It can be considered the story of the anguished cry of Nandu Kaul, an old woman who has the world with her but is not satisfied with it. He looks like a sugar bowl in his former life. Withdrawn from her former life, she moves to the hill town of Kasauli with her servant to escape the haunting memories of her past. She becomes happy and enjoys the sterility and solitude of the Kasauli house "She humbles her strong longing for silence She should be silent, yet - she would be a charred tree trunk in the forest, a broken marble statue in the desert, a lizard on a stone wall. The search for Nands private and peaceful life in her husband's old house contrasts with the intense and busy life of the world. He feels calm when the tiring routine is over. He feels glad to leave everything behind. He greets the silence with great joy and says "Release me..... I have fulfilled all my duties, release" 3 R.S. Sharma comments, "Nanda's quest is to freeze time into static permanence, but time passes through his past, which he repeats as he reacts to his present environment. "Nandu Kaul wants a private and permanent life which can be seen as a contrast to her past, Nanda's character reveals that she

is a woman facing an emotional infertility problem. She felt ignored by all the family members. The novel is divided into different parts.

Part I- deals with the cauldron of Nanda in Carignano, which explains the desire of the main character to remain isolated in Carignano, although this is disturbed by the arrival of Raka, who is the grandson of the main character.

Part II- deals with the experience of Raka, who seems to enjoy the peaceful life of Carignano. Nanda does not like Raka's arrival and feels annoyed and suffocated by Raka. This means that they both want to live in isolation. But as time passes, Nanda Kaul tempts Raka to see her love for solitude. Her anger turned into love for her grandchildren in a true desire for isolation. Her hatred transformed into love for her grandchild to her genuine interest for isolation. Nanda explains "Raka you really are a great grandchild of mine, aren't you? You are more like me than any of my children or grandchildren. You are exactly like me '.

Third part of the novel is "Ila Das leaves carignano" deals with the barren life and the tragic death of Ila Das. Ila das who is a welfare officer and childhood friend of Nanda Kaul. This part deals with Ila Das's visit to carignano where they share memories of their childhood. Young age and tragic life of Nanda Kaul in past Afterwards Ila Das has been raped and murdered. Nanda Kaul Dies Shocked by the news c Ila's death. Desai depicts the futility of Ila Das's complete involvement in reality as well as nana Kaul's complete detachment to reality is an absolute illusion. There is fusion of reality and illusion. Then novel concludes with the symbolic fire of the forest. Raka who is unknown of the deaths of Ila Das and Nanda Kaul enters the house and said that she had set the forest on fire.

Thus the symbolic fire which burns in the heart of Nanda Kaul and her grandchild Raka. It denotes the alienation, suppression of Nanda Kaul and Raka while living in the forest of people. Isolation plays important role in

this novel. That's why Nanda kaul love isolation after the death of her husband. She likes haunted house at carignano. Nanda kaul is thinking of her past and she reminds sufferings of past. She asks, "What she was? Have I not done enough and had enough? I won't no more. I want nothing can I not be left with nothing?" Unfortunately, she gets no answers and she expects nothing in her life. The third part of the novel is "Ila Das leaves Carignano" deals with the harsh life and tragic death of Ila Das. Ila Das who is the welfare officer and childhood friend of Nanda Kaul. That episode is about Ila Das' visit to Carignano, where they share memories from their childhood. The young age and tragic life of Nanda Kaul in the past Hiljem Ila Das is raped and murdered. Nanda Kaul dies shocked by the news of Ila's ending. Desai describes the uselessness of Ila Das' complete participation in reality and Nanda Kaul's complete isolation from reality is an absolute delusion. A blending of reality and illusion occurs in the novel.

The novel ends with a symbolic forest fire. Raka, unmindful of the death of Ila Das and Nanda Kaul, enters the house and says that he set the forest on fire. Such a symbolic fire that burns in the hearts of Nanda Kaul and his grandson Raka. It expresses the estrangement and subjugation of Nanda Kaul and Raka while living in the human forest. Alienation plays an important role in this novel. Therefore, Nanda Kaul loves loneliness after the death of her husband. She likes the haunted house of Carignano. Nanda Kaul reflects on her past and remembers the sufferings of the past.

Conclusion:

In this way, Anita Desai proposed a solution to pass the middle path, but her characters are not incompatible with the values, traditions of the society. They cannot shape themselves according to the external world. They cannot

distinguish between reality and imagination.. Nanda withdraws from the present life in search of her real life her identity.

She realized the meaning of her no meaningful life in her husband's house.

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