

Religious Perspective in the Novels of Anita Desai

Ravi Chanagi^{1*} Dr. Pankaj Dwivedi²

¹ Research Scholar, Swami Vivekanand University, Sagar

² Associate Professor, Swami Vivekanand University, Sagar

Abstract – Anita Desai wrote on her own cultural and traditional Indian issues. In the second part of the nineteenth century, a cultural renaissance in India promoted the development of English-Indo-India literature as well as of local languages. In modern India, they are working to transcend society's constraints imposed by a patriarchal culture with a long-standing history. It concentrates on Anglicized inner struggle. It seeks to introduce the cultural and socioeconomic changes which have swept India since its British independence in 1947. Most of her books address the significance of family ties and examine inter-generational conflicts. Desai's books support the intricacies of contemporary Indian society from a women's viewpoint while emphasizing the Indian female dilemma of keeping an individual woman's identity.

Key Words – Anita Desai, Religious Perspective, Novels, English Fiction, Multiculturalism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Anita Desai was born on 14th June 1937 in Mussoorie. She is of Indian origin and is famous as a fiction writer. She wrote novels, short stories, and children's stories, and became well-reputed in the field of Indo-Anglian literature. Like other contemporary writers of Indian-English literature, Anita Desai paved way for her recognition on the global map. Today she is the source of inspiration for many young aspiring writers. Anita Desai's birthplace Mussoorie, a quiet little hill station, is close to Delhi. Anita Desai christened Anita Mazumdar was born of a German mother, Toni, Name, and a Bengali businessman father D.V. Mazumdar. She belonged to an unconventional family which contributes a lot to nurturing writing aspirations in her young mind. In an orthodox family, one cannot think and act freely which are the essential elements to be cultured and civilized. [1] Had Anita Desai not been attached to a well-refined and unorthodox family, she would not have been so reputed and significant personality. During her childhood, she was intended to learn different languages such as German, Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, and English. Gradually she acquired a deep and wide knowledge of many languages which compounded her passion for literature. Without having immense knowledge in many languages, a person cannot have a profound perception of different facts. A particular subject doesn't contain sufficient knowledge of the universe. She received her early education from Queen Mary's Higher Secondary School in Delhi. After it, she earned her

bachelor's degree in English Literature from Miranda House, the University of Delhi in the year 1957. To pass her adult life she chose Ashbin Desai and married him in the year 1958. Soon after completing her graduation from Delhi University, she engaged herself in marital relations to accomplish her activities more successfully. Ashbin Desai was the director of a computer software firm and the writer of the book 'Between Eternities: Ideas on Life and The Cosmos'. The couple was endowed with four children in the following years. Among their children, Kiran Desai was destined to follow in her mother's footsteps. By her genius and diligence, she acquired name and fame almost like her mother. [2]

Anita Desai was never fascinated and affected by the American landscape. She was not curious to enter the American world. She came there when she was already too old to set in her ways and in her way of thinking. Anita Desai was the winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award and Guardian Children's Fiction Prize for her excellence in writing. She has authored as many as sixteen works of fiction, some of the best ones being 'Fasting, Feasting', '**The Village By The Sea**', 'In custody' and '**Clear light of Day**'. Her style of writing is distinct and graceful. Her choice of characters is according to the need of the story. Her subject matter is based on a realistic line. On account of these characteristics, she becomes much popular in Indian English literature. With her refined and impressive skill and technique, Anita Desai succeeded to acquire many awards worth recognition. She was shortlisted for the

Booker Prize twice. In 1980 she was awarded Booker Prize for 'clear light of Day' and in 1984 she was again shortlisted for the same prize for her excellent work 'Fasting. Feasting' beside her contribution as a significant writer, she has brightened the future of India Being an ideal and prominent teacher. Today she has become the source of inspiration for many young aspiring writers. [3]

2. ANITA DESAI: THE NOVELIST

She is one of the most excellent and famous novelists in Indian fiction in English today. She has written remarkable as well as notable masterpieces to the world of literature. She is among the prominent Indo Anglian novelists. Her novels present social situations but she keeps greater significance on the findings of the inner-self because it is the inner self that determines the mark of a person. Srinivasa Iyengar is aptly said....

"Anita Desai has added a new dimension to the achievement of Indian women writers in English fiction. Her two novels, (Cry, The Peacock, and Voices in the City) the inner climate, the climate of sensibility that lours's or clears or rumbles like thunder or suddenly blazes forth like lightning, is more compelling than the outer weather, the physical geography or visible action. Her forte, in other words, is the exploration of sensibility that is ill at ease among the barbarians and the philistines, the anarchists and the moralists."

The hammer of the writing of Anita Desai is a very distinct and unique one in fiction. She has a social fabric but a matchless personal insinuation. In her novels, the main characters are seen in the finding of their identity. She has given the account of psychic drama through flashbacks, diary entries, self-introspection, meditations, rattling interlocution, and mental inspirations of her fictions. R.K. Dhawan's quote on her fiction, "Anita Desai is one of the major voices in modern Indian English fiction. She ushered in a new era of psychological realism in this genre with her novel 'Cry, The Peacock' in 1963. Her novels are materially different from those of the other eminent Indian women novelists writing in English such as Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabwala, and Nayantara Sehgal who concern themselves mainly with social and political themes of East-West encounter. Anita Desai's serious concern is with "The journey within" of her characters the chief protagonists being female characters." [4]

3. HISTORY OF INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION

An analytic study of the history of India leads one to consider the rigid development of changes. This slow process of modification resumed velocity through age from the tremble of both internal and external components. The nineteenth century becomes the

most enthusiastically variable century in the millennium of Indian history due to its witness of the struggle between a weaker social order at the edge of breaking down, and the dawn of a new-found ethos in the process of raising planned by experienced Indian scholar V.D. Mahajan quotes, "India made tremendous progress both in the religious and the social fields during the 19th century and after. It was a period of transition from media – evolution to the modern age. The Indian mind was stirred as a result of its contact with the forces from the west and no wonder progress was registered in many fields." [5]

At the time of this community anguish, a peaceful explosion of ideas, of morals of feelings transpired with the preface of English Education, coronal of the honor of Indian Revival. 1857 saw the foundation of the first three Indian universities about which M.K. Naik says, "These universities soon became the nurseries of the resurgent Indian genius, which within hardly a generation thereafter ushered in a renaissance in the political, social, cultural and literary spheres of Indian life."² Hence, the general notice is changed in favor of employment which brings a pledge of safety and security. With the growth in the number of university graduates, a contest for employment becomes greater and gradually they fell victim to unemployment. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is a great social reformer, deflected writer, being impacted by the Mutualism School, increased a modernized approach of life that immediately finds exhibit through his writing on social reforms. Raja Ram Roy's contribution to literature is looked at, "The Raja made his contribution to literature also. He was a prolific writer in many languages. He was one of the greatest savants of his age. He was a great linguist and master of style. He is known as one of the creators of modern Bengali prose." After several popular authors like Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, and Nehru tones the social restlessness and based remedies through their literary writings.

Indians begin to use English for creative voice much before 'Macaulay's Minutes on Education' (1830). Bankim Chandra Chatterjee becomes the first Indian writer of a novel in English literature. He makes his emblem with, 'Rajmohan's wife' published in 1864 'One Thousand and one Night' by S.K. Ghosh and Indian detective stories by B.B. Banerjee are other works of prose fiction in English with Indian hands. The Indo-Anglian novels have gone far ahead of poetry both in quantity and quality. It is only with the Gandhian conflict for liberation that Indo-Anglian naturally comes to its own. Today the Indian novelists writing in English are large in number; apart from Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan, the three foremost Indian writers of fiction in Indian writing in English. There are also. K. Nagarajan, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Kushwant

Singh, Balachandra Rajan, Kamla Markandaya, K.S. Venkataramani, and Anita Desai. All these writers and many more have amply enriched Indo-Anglian fiction. [6]

Mulk Raj Anand's '*Untouchable*' and Raja Rao's '*Kanthapura*' are likely the finest tones echoing the socio-political alters of the 1930s.

R.K. Narayan's 'Bachelor of Arts and after, 'The English Teacher is the micro tender of the impact that moved the artist within him. 'The English Teacher and 'Mr. Sampath highlight the modification of sinless to materialism. Raja Rao's '*Kanthapura*' alike, is a representation of the Gandhian impact over the unsophisticated villagers. The mature writings of Anand, Narayan, and Raja Rao Seven Summers, '*The Guide*', '*The Serpent and the Rope*', and '*The Cat and Shakespeare*' are notable literary masterpieces. Bhattacharya's first novel, '*So Many Hunger*' makes a try in portraying characters from different parts of the community. With the joining of the noble states into the Indian Union and division, two major problems come out lively through Manohar Malgonkar's 'The Princes 'and' A Bend in the Ganges.' The problem of division, more of a treasure island than a crisis itself, maintained in providing both carnal and manure for the energetic development of the Indo-Anglian fiction. A novel by an Indian author claims direct interwoven in the worth and undergoes which are valid in the Indian relation, and the same was absent in the early creative writing in their languages or to social reforms and political chambers. [7]

4. INDIAN FEMINIST NOVELISTS

It was during the Second World War that, Shrinivasa Iyengar quotes, "Those women novelists of quality have begun enriching Indian fiction in English. Of these writers, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, and Ruth Jhabwala are unquestionably the most outstanding." Nayantara Sahgal, Santha Rama Rau, Sakuntla Shrinagesh, and Mrs. Anita Chaudhary are some other names to be referred to in this context. This forwarded more among who, Ruth Prawar Jhabwala, Anita Desai, Khushwant Singh, Attia Hosain, Chaman Nahal are significant. Jhabwala's '*To whom she Will*', '*Desai's 'Clear light of Day*' and 'Hosain's '*Sunlight on a Broken Column* burn and practice the terrible reminiscence of division and condition following the Independence. The result comes out through Jhabwala's pen in this manner, "They had lost almost everything their houses, their businesses, many of their valuables, all had to be left behind. It was a complete disaster, absolute ruin: if it had happened to one man alone it would have been unbearable. But there is consolation in numbers and there were hundreds of thousands of them." [8] The Problem of alienation frustration, loneliness, and exile caused by the process of urbanization has been

uplifted in the novels of Kamala Markandaya, Arun Joshi, Anita Desai, and B. Rajan.

Technically, the post-independence Indian English novelists display a trend for realization in technique and style. The most reverent narrative technique has been that of the first-person point of view. The use of images, symbols, and myths from scriptures and epics is a major aspect of these novels. "The stream of consciousness" technique of novel has been successfully employed by Raja Rao and Anita Desai and Shakuntala Shrinagesh in her, '*The Little Black Box*' (1955). In other paths also there is going on the defended realization in the form of the fiction.

The liberty agitation brought the Indian ladies out of her harbor protection. It sustains her onto the political and social scenario and she too begins to undergo the regnant reformist enthusiasm. Though the earliest novel in English by Indian ladies was written as early as the middle of the nineteenth century, a post-independence novel by ladies gains a distinct identity. The first significant woman novelist to enrich Indian fiction in English was Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai. Individual concerns form a vital category of her fiction, whether it is, '*Nectar in A Sieve*' (1954) which has been compared to Pearl S. Buck's '*The Good Earth*' and deals with the troubling of the peasants and farmers in colonial India or '*Some Inner Fury*' (1957) which is a tragedy designated by the political dilemma of the independence conflict with mighty political pressures affecting the existence of the characters. [9]

An outsider – insider, Ruth Prawar Jhabwala is a European who writes about the only social sector of India that she is familiar with which is the civilized upper class of Urban India. She has written some popular masterpieces in English fiction which are '*A Backward Place*' (1965), '*The Nature of Passion*' (1956), '*Esmond in India*' (1958), and '*Heat and Dust*' (1975).' Belonging to a genteel family of liberation resisters, Nayantara Sahgal has published both fiction and non-fiction. Her first novel, '*A Time to be Happy*' (1957), and then, '*This Time of Morning*' (1957), '*The Day in Shadow*' (1971), [10]

5. THEORY OF MULTICULTURALISM, CULTURE AND ITS ORIGIN MULTICULTURALISM

The Term *Multiculturalism* is related to societies containing multiple cultures. The recognition of distinct cultural identities is within a unified society. It emerged between the span of 1960-65. The term 'Multiculturalism' is most often used about western nations and European countries. The term is used in two broad paths, either separately or normatively. As a separate term, it usually refers to the simple fact of cultural difference. It is commonly applied to the demographic (study of population) make-up of a coherent place, sometimes at the union level. The

sub-continent of India is a grand conference of multiethnic and multicultural practice. English being a lingua-Franca for literacy ejections has been meaningfully adequate to give vent to the cultural disputes on multiple problems. So, Indian writings in English are translated, trans- creations or inherent writings, some such problems have been complicated taking into account the accessible literary exerciser and exhibition on cultural differences. Indian literature is in its plural forms presented through distinct languages and the multicultural, multiracial, and multi-religious buildings of India are its great power. The variety and multiplicity are cornerstones of Indian literature that is searched on its perpetual culture and civilization, customs and traditions, religion, and spirituality. [11]

Though these new upheavals are often part of the broad multiculturalism, in reality, the latter relates to just a few. Multiculturalism is not about diversity and identity as such but those rooted in and preserved in culture, that is, a set of faiths and practices in which a group of people is following and the world consolidates, unlike diversities derived from personal selection, their personal life, and their corporate life. Culturally accomplished diversities vary in size and are shown and composed by an effect based on partially and historically ancestral meaning and focus methods. I use the word diversity to describe cultural differences to concentrate on this distinction between the two kinds of differences. Therefore, multiculturalism concerns cultural differences or cultural disparities. Since other contrasts but not from culture or vice versa are likely to be applauded, not all proponents or supporters of identity policy are supportive or multicultural, either for historical truth or as a matter of fact. Multiculturalism is a certain agitating and ambiguous relationship to identity politics. [12]

In a rational society, cultural diversity takes on abundant forms, three of the most common. First, though some of the members of this organization share a common general culture, some of them either distract different faiths and modes of living or connect different paths of life, "gays lesbians who follow reveal national or social lifestyle and so on, and miners, fishermen, transnational managers, artists and so forth belong to the first category. They all usually share the better technique of sense and value in their communities and earn themselves to build a gap for their various lives. They don't record an optional culture but get the current one to pluralize. I will term it sub-cultural diversity for the benefit. Second, certain community members are extremely critical of some of the core ideas or values of the prevailing culture and are successful in reconstructing it accordingly.

6. CULTURE

The word *Culture* has distinct meanings to distinct people, commonly when anybody utters culture, one

thinks of cultured, and purified, cultivated, polished, well conduct personally. Culture also mentions well-educated paths of conduct. The term culture has been defined by the standard dictionary of English Language as, "Culture is the training, development or strengthening of powers mental or physical or the condition thus produced, improvement, refinement of mind, moral tastes enlightenment or civilization." [13] The term culture in Sanskrit is 'Sanskriti'. Both the words Sanskriti and Sanskrit retained from Samaskar means ritual conduct which is a procedure of purification. The Greek philosopher Aristotle says man is a social animal. So we have become person cultured by going through the Samaskar culture is what representative of a band or class have in ordinary, the physical matter and the untouchable non-physical items like faiths, worth and laws of conduct which they part.

The term *Culture* was first precisely and presented by Edward Burnett Tylor, the English Anthropologist in his book *Primitive Culture* in 1871 and he gives the typical distinctness such as, "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and another capabilities and habits acquired by man as members of society." Culture comprises every custom and manner received by a person as a representative of the community. All communities have their own cultures in different modes. But it differs from community to community, society to society and so, provides a path to multiculturalism and that is more apt to the Indian text where distinct people, of the distinct society of distinct culture, live jointly. As Hunt and Horton, the famous Sociologist said, "It is the set of rules and procedures, together with a supporting set of ideas and values." [14]

Every human community has its culture which to any limits or bound simultaneously with others. The difference among the socio-cultural method is the effect of material haunts, properties actions, exercises such as manners, customs, language, rituals, employ of instruments, and the intensity of common progress. The views, laws, notions, and faiths of the personal are very much affected by the culture in which he dwells and a personal may dwell in or journey among various distinct cultures. Many Anthropologists such as Maclver and Weber are disposed to create a contrast between civilization and culture controlling civilization to science and advanced technology and culture to ideology, race, arts, and religion. Everyone admits that culture is educated conduct indifference to naturally enriched conduct. A large number of sociologists, literary critics, anthropologists, and educationists have explained the concept of culture such as, "The customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of particular country or group." [15] Some scholars define cultures as the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and conduct. So culture contains notions, faiths, language, habits, manners, rules, laws, restrictions, organizations, devices, taboos, craft, art, rituals, styles, mode, fashion, works of skill, events anniversary and any

connected elements and the progress of culture bases on person's potential to grasp or gain and to transfer information to achieve success ages.

7. MULTICULTURALISM AND ITS THEORY

The magic advances in the area of travel and speeches now make it possible for people to perceive the integration and diversity of cultures. Currently is the age of globalization, cutting-edge technology, the Internet, science, the digital age, and the mobile era. People with more information and knowledge than previously in this age that came to people in this digital form, metaphorical substitution benefitted from the improved technology and new compound websites. The term transmission era may be used as a cover for extending, making the statement of the new age more accurate and pleasant. The period is not only for the transmission or communication of digital products across the world but also for the transmission process that real individuals use while demolishing physical and metaphorical goods. The contemporary people used the computer's symbolic forms but all the assets of traditional, less conciliatory cultural impacts, which produce the most commonly, accepted prospects of everyday life. Some scholars have sought to find out that conflicts between culture and universe recognition have become the primary issues or issues for students across a wide variety of faculties. In this work, the researcher examined the cultural intersection and the fictional difficulties of Anita Desai. [16]

At the beginning of the 1970s, Australia affirmed itself as multicultural and associated with multiculturalism by its development and was associated with Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, native people, and some non-EU immigrants. Who perseveres in declaring their cultural identity, asserting American multiculturalism, and conquering the causes of multiculturalism? In Canada, this was usually also the case. In the late 1990s, Israel started to see itself as multicultural, as oriental and Sephardic Jews began to demand a reassessment of their formerly higher self-definition and national culture. Where the Sephardic conceit is one of the renowned black leopard proclamations, a belligerent band, Multiculturalism in Britain places the large presence, especially of the former, of South Asians and Afro, Caribbean's in the sixties and their rejection on the common agenda. In Germany, diversity was on the national agenda with big immigrant organizations arriving from Turkey and others who 'do not want to be digested by far anymore,' especially since it was increasingly expressed by a well-known German politician in other cultural circles. Multiculturalism in all these groups is due to the political and ideological importance of a movement that denies the integrated claim of the broader community. [17]

There are, thus, two or more cultural societies in a multicultural community. It might answer its cultural diversity. Each of the two routes may take different types in turn. Its self-image and its cultural claims are either entirely or substantially regarded by its component cultures as the prevailing trend culture. In the first instance, she is multiculturalist in her eastern perspective and ethos in the second monoculture less. Both are likewise multicultural, but only one is multicultural. The word "multicultural" refers to cultural diversity. A normative response to this reality is the phrase multiculturalism. The failure to distinguish a multicultural community from a multicultural community frequently led to a heated but mostly unnecessary debate over how to portray the group. In Britain, there is just six percent of the population of ethnic minorities, made up of many distinct cultural groups.

8. POLITICAL STRUCTURAL OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The integration takes the state as its idea and belief that no politics can be determined and coherent until its members deal with a general cultural national, which includes public interest, concepts of huge ethical religion, and social affairs. The State is posited to have the right and duty as protector of the route of community life to assure that its cultural minority take up the ruling national cultural heritage and discard all remnants of its distinct cultural heritage. Integration postulates that there is and rarely ever is a consistent and integrated cultural and ethical building in the community. While the ethical and cultural structure of a society comes from inner clarity, it is not an integral whole. The Jews lived for two thousand years in the hands of Christians as a powerful integrating force, the moral and cultural minorities in the Soviet Union have experienced the cruelest oppression, the massive financial and cultural forces of the United States are unreliable, and their strongest efforts have failed to take the Berbers and the south from the Algerian and Sundance Governments. Cultures are a composite of religions and affairs, as well as their subtlety, their radical postulates, and their profoundness. It has been greatly supported that governments may harm their cultural identities in general and that this damage generally represents that "Charles Taylor's work can be as detrimental to individuals as to the denial of civil or political rights as a failure to recognize it." [18]

Unless you are born into it, perceptibility cannot be simple to achieve. Because the discussion here is too complex, the rational western community is very religious and does not want to look forward to strong religious beliefs and affairs. Then, cultural transactions are captivated by a fictitious natural foundation, which gives support to a falsified identity. The same procedure of cultural religionists has the same consequences here. Its cultural

differences have come into being as an overall part of life; they would not have to be grounded as abandoned and unyielding as religion and descent. It would not be unclear if religions or ethnic disparities exist, but they do not become polarized, turn into the final strongholds of cultural protection and provide more importance than they can. Positive similitude requires rights and opportunities. Similar rights should be accepted by all people and should not only include a regular civil, political, economical, and other rights repertoire, but also cultural rights. Cultural rights also acquire their adherence and excellent desire to accessibly assimilate them by making them conscious of safety and require their identity and speech to the large community. It is thus important to decide on the fight fairly and compassionately quickly and prevent the accumulation of sad reminiscences in a multicultural society. Where this is easy, "Certain types of members of the risk group are expected to bear the expenses of diversity disproportionately." [19]

Cultural societies often claim different kinds of privileges in a multicultural society that they believed they need to maintain their business identity. Some of these rights are usually a company's band. Some of these rights are not readily contributed to beneficent jurisprudence, often referred to as a group, collectively or individual rights; their promotion is logically coherent, and what kind of preaching may legally demand what kind of rights. The idea of "collective right" is common and its category includes band, personal and other rights. Like human preaching, rights have a wide range and include non-intervention rights, emancipation from generic demands, self-government, and communal stools. Although multicultural communities are difficult to organize, the need is never political and even unclear if we mold our long traditional inspection into a cultural foundation and a solidly built politics and allow them a consistent option in their corporate structures, governance methods, and ethical and political merits. [20]

9. CONCLUSION

The earthly story of stranded human realism offers Anita Desai's debut book 'Cry, the Peacock.' The book transmits the psychological condition of a young girl who is angry with the prophecy of catastrophe in her infancy. She has relentless loneliness. She was married to an elderly guy and has different attitudes and temperaments of life. Maya is forced to feel estranged by her husband's philosophical separation. Maya's life does not realize reality, whereas the truth of life is based upon her spouse, Gautama. The feeling of isolation leads Mays to odd folly. "I'm moving from every wisdom, every calm, and I'm going to be angry shortly. If I'm not, I'm not." Maya's moods in "Cry, the Peacock," Obsessions, difficulties, and abnormalities are very well portrayed. The book thus offers the picture of self-and personal issues of an unimpeded sensitive

nature caught up in the insecurity, rootlessness, and isolation crises.

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Corresponding Author

Ravi Chanagi*

Research Scholar, Swami Vivekanand University,
Sagar