

THE PORTRAYAL OF DESERTED LIFE

ANITA DESAI *IN FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN*

S. Sindhuja M. Phil., Research Scholar, Department of English, Urumu Dhanalakshmi College, Trichy.

Dr. J. Albert Paul Raj, Asst. Prof. Department of English, Urumu Dhanalakshmi College, Trichy.

Abstract

The Psychoanalytic reading disturbing experience and feelings of a tragic event such as a war, torture, rape or murder, which the surviving victims. These memories of the past event continuously come later on in life under the troubling influence of recurring flashbacks of the traumatic events, nightmares, irritability anxiety and social withdrawal. These undesirable traumatic past experience and memories repressed in the unconscious obviously causes individuals to have a kind of psychological disorder which powerfully affects their daily behavior, life and identity. Psychological reading by Anita Desai is clearly reflected in one of her masterpieces "Fire on the mountain". The novel mainly deals with the loneliness and isolation as well as the resultant anguish agony in the deserted life of old window. Psychological experiment of the writer in the novel can also be seen on the portrayal of Raka's character. Psychologists attach great significance to the parent child relationship because according to them the patterning of emotion takes place particularly during childhood.

Introduction

The world literature responded to the new era and started to deal with different gloomy faces of modern society. The new generation novelists very popular in English literature. Today Indian English Literature has won for international acclaim and distinction. Fiction is the most powerful form of literary expression and it has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature. It has won for itself an international awards for their works. Now Indian English literature is very popular in all over the

world. Today, the novel is the most powerful and important literary form of expression. It has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature.

The concern of psychological reading by Anita Desai is clearly reflected in one of her masterpieces “Fire on the mountain”. The deseted life of old widow. The novel narrates the story of Nanda kaul who live in carignano, a desolate and haunted house in kasauli, away from the world of bags and letters. Message and demands, she had wanted to be left to the pines and cecadas alone. Whatever else came to happened would b an unwelcome intrusion sand distraction.

Psychological experiment of the writer in the novel can also be seen on the portrayal at Raka’s character. Psychologists attach great significance to the parent child relationship. Child learns the patterns of behavior which the parents set out to teach him in order to make him an acceptable member of the society. The emotion of the child and his parents Anita Desai’s character have strange childhood and the experiences and interactions during the formative period when combined with their congenital hypersensitivity contribute towards their inability to establish and maintain harmonious inter – personal relationship in late life.

Anita Desai’s celebrated novel fire on the mountain is analysed in this chapter from a psychoanalytic perspective based on aspect of feminine psychology propounded and expored by psychoanalysts suchas Karen Horney. Rober a.Johnson, irone Claremont De castile and Erich Neumann. Nanda kaul, the female protagonist in the novel, undergoes psychic pressures such as psychic conflict, contursion, dilemma, struggle, stain, illness and worries due to the impact of various hostile forces with which her mind comes in confrontation. These forces are such as but problems that a woman has to face in her life. Male domination. Hypocrisy, the evils of patriarchal social set up the double standard of the male and the female. Male chauvinism, infidelity of the life partner , neglect by children over burden of house hold duties, dissatis faction in marriage and the like. Though Nanda undergoes mental problems due to the strain of these unpleasant forces, she clings to the fundamental characteristic of the feminine psychic patterns such as desire for respect, recognition and love, love of nature, motherly feelings identification of shadowy character. Sincerity in marital relationship and retreating to an isolated place for peace. Fire on the mountain incorporates the story of Nanda kaul and

her great – grand daughter Raka. Nanda flees life only to realize that it is difficult for her to keep her past out of her mind. Some wherein her unconscious Nanda has become an epitome of devotion, duty and sacrifice by attending to many guests, looking after many children and serving her husband efficiently. In the novel we can notice a critical situation when Nanda retreats to carignane. When the novel opens we find that she is thoroughly disillusioned with all her emotional bonds, whether matrimonial or filial. She felt lonely and neglected. Her husband's life long affair with Miss.david was source of agony throughout her life. This creates a sickness in soul and she distrusts the social relevance of all attachments and affairs. Nanda dominates the narrative. She appears like the centre of the consciousness that built up in the novel. Her mind is assailed painful memories in her husband's home she was the home maker. She was acting so many roles simultaneously.

action many roles together, Nanda was the centre of attention. But this was a kind of burden on her shoulders as most of them oppose each other ila Das tells Nanda, "isn't it absurd, rattled on, how helpers our upbringing made us, Nanda. We though we were being equipped with the very best French lessons, piano lessons, English governesses all that only to find it lifeus helper, positively handicapped" (127). Nanda's enthusiasm to read repeatedly the passage from the pillow book of sei shonogon shows how her psyche works and her attitude towards the women who are home – maker.

An analysis of Nanda's attitude towards Mr.Kaul's outside marital relationship based on feminine psychology will make us assume that Nanda might have expected her husband's revelation of his inmost thoughts to her one day. But as feminine and masculine psychology differs kaul cannot rise to the expectation of his wife.

De castillejo's observation of feminine and masculine psychology is apt to quote here. She observes, "Even the modern women who consciously admits a man's right to live his life without accounting for every moments of his day expects to do the same herself, stillwants to have his inmost thoughts and feeling, for that to her is the essence of true relationship" (FOM 101).

This reveals the fact that Nanda is not easily iseparable from her original pattern of feminine psyche – being tolerant and giving a man enough time to repent his sin. Even it is nulled aside by a strong force of man’s infidelity she seeks identification with him to reveal it himself. This is genuine difference in their mental behavior and attitude cause their psychic estrangement.

The patriarchal social set up allows such lapses on the put of men.

Conclusion

Through a psychological study of the various novels, a picture of the subject matter of Anita Desais novels has emerged. Anita Desai brings forth some marked deviation from the style of her predecessors. She tries to grasp her characters psychologically, she is a great analyst of human mind the human relationships a creator of brilliant characters and astute interpreter of life and its problems. The world of Anita Desai is an ambivalent one where the central harmony is aspired to but not arrived at and the desire to love and live clashes at times violently, it the desire to withdraw and achieve harmony. Most of her characters are pre-occupied with themselves, and are lonesome. Yet they are tried to rebel against the established norms and struggle to protect their privacy.

Nanda retreats to Carignano. When the novel opens we find that she is thoroughly disillusioned with all her emotional bonds, whether matrimonial of filial. She felt lonely and neglected. Her husband’s life long affair with Miss.David was a source of agony throughout her life. This creates a sickness in soul and she distrusts the social relevance of all attachments and affairs. Nanda dominated the narrative. She appears like the centre of the consciousness that is built up in the novel. Her mind is assailed by painful memories. In her husband’s home she was the home-maker. She was action so many roles simultaneously. She had grabbed the roles of a hostess, wife, mother, tailor, and queen. This is because of her feminine nature.

Nanda’s life is made up of various selves that often override each other and her real self and individual are sacrifice at the altar of family. As concluding remarks, it can be started that Nanda Kaul the women protagonist, is driven by immensely strong forces such as unhappy family life, the burden of household work, loveless relationship with her husband, the neglect by children, the patriarchal social set up and its double moral

standards, male chauvinism, male domination, male infidelity, psychic torture, male chauvinism, male domination, male infidelity, psychic torture, male hero archetype, hypocrisy and intrusion into privacy. Sometimes she goes along with some of them in accordance with her nature, but quite often she is an unwilling victim of these forces.

At other times she is compelled to go along the course or gets plunged into the entanglement of the evils which she does not like but is incapable of resisting.

Reference

Anastasi, Anna. *Differential Psychology*. London: Routledge, 1913. Print.

Balliappa, Meena. *Anita Desai: A study of her Fiction*, Calcutta: Writer's workshop 1971. Print.

Bandle, Usha. "Childhood in Anita Desai's Novels: A psychological interpretation."

Iyengar, K.R.Srinivasa. *Indian writing in English*, New Delhi: Sterling publishers Pvt Ltd., 1984. Print

Vaughter, M. *Psychology and Women*. Denmark: Blackwell, 1977. Print.