

A Review Study of Feminine Identity by Attia Hosain and Anita Desai

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Abstract:

Ample stuff has been produced and propounded on female domination, realism, women social status, gender discrimination, feminine existentialism, etc. In the works of above mentioned authors. However a critical analysis of feminine identity is yet to be unfurled. The study chiefly centers upon exploring female subjugation, neurotic anxieties, psychological tumults, lack of freewill and identity crisis in the male dominated society and devaluing traditional feministic virtues of service and submission. This research endeavors to analyze feminine characters, their psyche and sensibility, by exploiting mixed methodology and psychoanalytical approach. In this paper we conclude about the feminine and provide some solution, In this research paper we also discuss little bit about the life of mainly two authors i.e Attia Hosain and Anita Desai.

Keywords:- *Feminine, realism, endeavor, Dense imagery, married.*

Introduction:

Women's marginalization is an old story. Women have been regarded as subservient to men since time immemorial. Even great thinkers and philosophers have regarded women as inferior to men. Aristotle, the great philosopher believed that femininity is an incomplete version of masculinity. He believed that a woman lacks qualities that are essential to men. He believed that women are defective by nature and incomplete in comparison to men. They are mentally and physically weaker than men and should passively allow men to dominate. Aristotle used biology to reinforce his claim. Aristotle opined that women are defective, because they cannot reproduce semen which contains a full human being. When a woman and man cohabit, the man supplies the substance of human being (the soul), whereas woman provides only the matter in the form of nourishment. Aristotle concluded that a woman is comparable to an infertile male. Freud, the well known psychoanalyst was also prejudiced against women as he postulated the notion of 'Penis-Envy' in order to define female sexuality.

According to Freudian psychoanalysis, 'Penis-Envy' is a theorized reaction of a girl during the course of her psychoanalytic development. The little girl recognizes the distinction between male and female gender when she notices visible penis of her male counterparts. This deficiency instills in her a penis envy as she considers male gender superior. Rousseau defined male-female niche as well as education on the basis of his prejudiced view of female nature. He held the view that a man should be strong and active whereas a woman should be weak and passive. Fidelity, modesty, and devotion are the key attributes that Rousseau sought in a perfect woman. As far as women's education is concerned, Rousseau expressed the view that women's education must be planned in relation to men. The educational ideals of Rousseau promoted ideology that moulds women into a patriarchal niche. He postulated the roles of women in the following terms: "To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend to him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all times, and this is what she should be taught while she is young."

Lady has been the focal point of numerous abstract works as the centuries progressed. In the 21st century, which is a time of advancement and change in each field, it's not possible for anyone to effortlessly disregard the half of the populace which are considered as reasonable sex. Indian journalists in English have likewise left their covers of "non-connection" and have begun recognizing the status of the Indian lady in a male-ruled society. The idea of Indian womanhood is as dissimilar as the nation itself and has experienced exceptional and sensational changes every once in a while. India has gone from her radiant past to degeneration; from profound authority to mutual conflicts; from bondage to freedom; from agrarian upheaval to digital innovation. The job of the Indian lady has likewise transformed from that of god to devadasi, from shakti to abala, from homebound animal to an expert. The Indian fiction in English developed out of right around six many years of scholarly furthermore, scholarly age that had started in 1930s' with the triumvirate of R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. They were trailed by another gathering of scholars in the 1980's who managed different subjects in a dialect of flippancy set apart with suspicious inflexibility. The individuals who knew tones, tenor and substance of Indian fiction in English in the most recent decades, incorporate Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Allan J. Sealy, Geeta Mehta, Anita Desai, Shobha De and Arundhati Roy who among others have earned impressive acclaim for their anecdotal commitment. Numerous Indian Women writers have investigated female subjectivity so as to build up a character that isn't forced by a man centric Society. The Indian English novel, in the hands of ladies writers, demonstrated a stamped deviation as far as both subjects and characters. Anita Desai, in this regard, is a standout amongst the most eminent names in Indian English writing. She is one of the world renowned and of India's best present day authors in English. She is the most imperative and well known contemporary female author in Indian English writing. She has been known as the unmistakable writer in the present age. Desai registers her name as an author, story and short-

story essayist and furthermore as a screenwriter. She has advanced Indian anecdotal world with her noteworthy abstract yields.

Anita Desai's style is characterized by the use of:

- Symbolism.
- Dense imagery.
- Third Person Omission Narrator.
- Feminine Style.
- Narrative Technique.

Anita Desai makes the use of symbolism in some of her works^[1]. Through symbolism, she attempts to project a vision. In one of her novels, she symbolizes Calcutta as a force of creation and preservation. Also Mother Kali is used a symbol of death and destruction. She writes in her novel, voices in the city: "...that this monster city that lived no normal healthy, red blooded life but one that was subterranean, underlet, stealthy and odorous of mortality, has captured an enchanted or disenchanting both her sister and brother". Here the city is symbolic but she also symbolizes nature in section 3rd Amla^[3]. Anita Desai has made her first novel, *Cry the Peacock* published in 1963, poetic by the use of dense imagery. Her character description also is poetic. In the novel, *Cry the Peacock*, she makes use of animal imagery to display the disturbed state of mind of her character. She shows inner loneliness of Maya and mental state through different images.

Attia Hosain is an early Muslim novelist and short story writer. The experiences reflected in her novel and short stories express her nostalgia for the past. They also express the sordid realities of women's marginalization, and feudal exploitations. Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* can be defined as an insider's view of everyday experiences of elite women. Along with individual experiences of the novelist, national history runs parallel to the narrative that impinges Muslim identity vis-a-vis Muslim women. A contextual reading is imperative in order to assess various aspects of the novel. At the inception of the novel, two institutions viz feudalism and patriarchy have a tenacious hold over society. *Ashiana* (the nest), the family house, is presented as a microcosm of society that contains characters from every strata of contemporary society. Jasbir Jain maintains:

Ashiana in *Sunlight on a Broken Column* serves as a microcosm of the world at large with not only its womenfolk in purdah but its retinue of servants who represent the community at large. It has a living relationship with the past not merely through the culture it cultivates but also through the house at Hasanpur at the outskirts of the city, which symbolizes continuity and permanence.'

Because of the autobiographical aspect of the novel, there are many convergences between Attia Hosain and her fictional narrator, Laila. Laila's observation of socio-political events of mid-twentieth century and their ramifications

on her own life, her family and her community are extensions of Attia Hosain's own experiences. The world of Laila is a reflection of Attia Hosain's contemporary society.

Review of the Literatures

There is lack of availability of an exhaustive and voluminous work on the critical analysis of feminine identity in the works of Attia Hosain,^[6] Jhumpa Lahiri and Anita Desai. However, writers and scholars like Bahrah Bahmanpour, Genna Welsh Kasun, S.Uma Maheshwari, Md. Eftekhar Uddin, Shubha Prakash and Sujata have endeavored to show the psychological complexities and agonies of female characters. But the maintenance of feministic ideology and identity among male dominated society have least been touched. There is a least critical concern given to the identity of females. This study is an attempt to unveil it widely. Some of the movies/ film In 1993, her novel In Custody was adapted by Merchant Ivory Productions into an English film by the same name, directed by Ismail Merchant, with a screenplay by Shahrukh Husain.^[12] It won the 1994 President of India Gold Medal for Best Picture and stars Shashi Kapoor, Shabana Azmi and Om Puri.

Conclusion

The existential crisis of females in a male dominated society makes them subjugated creatures. Uma and her cousin, Anamika, in Fasting Feasting lose their will and identity before the will and dictation of their families. In the novel, Sunlight on a broken Column, Laila – the Protagonist, finally feels alone as she gets no support from her family after the death of Ameer, her husband, whom she married against the will of her family. Current work has been carried out to show the psychological struggle of females to prove their identity with a behavioral change.

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