



A review of voice of the subaltern in ANITA DESAI's

The Village By The Sea

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ABSTRACT

Anita Desai is a well-known post-colonial Indian English writer whose works have been well praised. As a result, she is revered as a literary icon both on and off Indian coasts for her contributions to the modern Indian English novel. It's noteworthy that she's breaking new ground in the field of fiction writing by taking a fresh look at the pressing concerns facing Indian culture today, in both rural and urban settings. Her characters' conflicts are well-captured in Desai's works, and much more fascinating is the way she scours their thoughts, allowing her to investigate the psychological subtleties of human beings. It is the goal of this research paper to analyze the book *The Village by the Sea* by Anita Desai, one of her most notable works. This work tells the narrative of an Indian rural family that overcomes a time of adversity to reconcile in the end owing to the endurance of the two heroic children, Hari and Lila, in a very interesting manner. The work under review examines the writer's most crucial theme: how to survive and adapt to a new environment. Desai's book, *The Village by the Sea*, also explores a number of other controversial problems in current Indian culture. The novel's popularity may be attributed to the liveliness of her themes and her strong focus on the complexity of human life, as well as her outstanding storytelling skills, which demonstrate her quality and distinctiveness as a novelist.

Keywords: *The Village by the Sea*, Anita Desai, thematic concerns, contemporary society, adaptation and survival

Introduction

Indian author Anita Mazumdar Desai was born on June 24, 1937, in Mussoorie, India, and has been nominated for the Man Booker Prize for Fiction three times. In 1978, she received a Sahitya Academy Award from the Indian National Academy of Letters for her work, *Fire on the Mountain*. A distinguished jury of British children's authors evaluated the 1983 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize for *The Village by the Sea*, which she won. For Desai, English is the language of literature, and she uses it as a means of self-expression. In spite of her lifelong desire to be a writer, she only entered India's literary scene after independence. As a writer and activist, Desai focuses on the lives of children and women who are caught in the chains of



today's pressing social concerns. Desai's major novels are not tools for escaping reality, but rather microscopes through which she focuses on the human condition and the inner psyches of her characters, as Dr. Ansari argues in his paper on *An Analysis of the Themes of Alienation, Detachment, and Relationship Crisis in Anita Desai's Major Novels*. Because of her contemporary themes and inventive style, Desai has become one of the best-known Indian authors in English. Author Anita Desai aims to illustrate numerous issues in her work *The Village by the Sea*. This is a really affecting tale about a rural Indian family whose life is stifled by poverty and hopelessness. Lila, Hari's older sister, and Bela and Kamal, his younger sisters, round out the family. His mother is a TB sufferer, and his father is an alcoholic who seems to have disregarded his duties as a parent and a spouse totally. As a result of their current predicament, Lila and Hari have been obliged to assume primary responsibility for the household and care for their younger sisters as well as their ailing mother. As the protagonist Hari and his adored sister Lila struggle to find better lands for their family, it's as if they're angels from heaven toiling upward tooth and nail with unflagging bravery. G. Vaidyanathan writes in *The Village by the Sea: A Critical Study* that survival and adaptability are two of the novel's most important themes. Desai brilliantly and passionately illustrates the significance of being able to change with our surroundings in order to survive. In a world that appears to be undergoing revolutionary and nearly inescapable changes at an unparalleled pace with the passage of time, it is imperative that everyone maintain a lifelong commitment to learning. When it comes to the concept of survival and adaptability, Desai relies heavily on Hari. Hari is a twelve-year-old boy. Despite his age, he has the mental capacity to grasp the gravity of his responsibility to his family. Even though he is only a child, Hari is obliged to accept his family's dire financial plight and works tirelessly to make ends meet to save his family from starving to death. Using his net, Hari fishes along the sea belt on the property they own, harvesting coconuts and cultivating it. Unfortunately, even for his own family's sustenance, the produce gathered is insufficient. Even though he does all he can to catch fish, he often ends up returning home without a catch. In spite of his reluctance, Hari perseveres through the growing pile of trials and obstacles with great patience. At first, most of Hari's efforts to support the family are in futile, but he never gives up. Finally fed up with the alcoholic father and never-ending family drama, Hari decides to travel to Bombay for work, leaving Lila alone to deal with the issue at Thul's nadir. Following an extremely tough time, the family is reunited and finds peace, proving that no matter how little your problems may seem, there is always a solution in sight if you are



clever enough and persistent enough to accomplish your objectives. In this way, the author conveys the urgency of the struggle for one's life. The message's impact is amplified by the choice of a twelve-year-old kid as the protagonist. Anita Desai's novel, *The Village by the Sea*, was examined through the lens of Subaltern Studies to demonstrate how Desai has represented the struggle and voice of the subaltern. Through Hari's unrelenting quest to realize his lifelong ambition of raising a happy and successful family, the story explores many of society's most marginalized concerns. Hari and his family had to deal with all kinds of economic hardships and marginalization as a result of their status as a lower-class member of society. Even if they manage to live, it becomes more difficult for his family to care for him. Due to a lack of resources, his family is forced to consume dry chapattis with salt and chile, which has resulted in disease and even death for several members. Furthermore, disease becomes a major issue for them since the remedy costs money that they do not have. As Hari's mother puts it, She's been sick for so long—gotten she's so thin and fragile. Not only that, but in order to repay their obligations, they are compelled to sell their cattle and boat. This has a significant influence on their financial situation. It's time to fix their home, but they don't have the money to do it. Due to a lack of resources, Hari and his sisters are unable to finish their schooling. When it comes to the right of children to an education, even those in the so-called upper class speak about it. Fasting Uma, a drab young woman from a middle-class family in semi-rural India, is the subject of the film *Feasting*. It goes without saying that Uma's name is a nod to the goddess Parvati. Uma's situation is virtually like that of an item, waiting for a marriage. Due to the high demand for dowry, the wedding was postponed. The second offer comes from a guy who seems to be in his forties. She and her husband and children have been given a permanent servant who they will never have to pay. This is the narrative of many Indian women who had to deal with the difficulties of dowry and servitude in marriage. In the night, these girls are used and abused for their sexual prowess, and they are raised to do nothing else except clean, wash, and cook. It's safe to say that these young ladies are a walking, talking, animal vim machine. Father Uma welcomes Uma home. Anita Desai has made an effort to emphasize the need of preserving one's individuality even when married. A woman in India's life is shown to be utterly pointless by her. Women, no matter how intelligent or well-educated they are, must spend their time in the kitchen—feeding their families first, then their husbands, and ultimately other women. There are issues of dowry and submission in marriage that Anita Desai has sought to address. In this story, Desai tries to depict the many facets of Indian femininity in all of her complexity



and diversity. Not all of the options are readily apparent. Having a job, moving out, and living on your own are not the same thing as being independent. The pursuit of pleasure is a common goal shared by all human beings. Several important issues are brought up in this book. There are many varieties of women, but none of them can be satisfied. Unsettling, to say the least, is the sight of an elderly Uma living with her parents. The scenes with other ladies, on the other hand, are as disappointing.

In 'Scholar and Gypsy,' there is a cultural conflict, where meanings are redefined. It focuses on the reactions of an American couple to their time in India. Anita Desai's great interest in psychological discovery and analysis lends a fresh level and focus to the topics of her short tales and novels. An important part of the novel is on the characters' self-discovery and self-evaluation, which is facilitated by each of the events that take place in the plot.

Conclusion: Despite the fact that there are a number of restrictions. Short tale writer AnitaDesai has a lot of promise. Short tales are characterized by a Greek perspective on life, which implies that the author has an unwavering belief in the intrinsic goodness of man and has nothing to do with his bestiality. The optimist in her is unbreakable. Because she is used to seeing life in a steady and comprehensive manner, like the Greeks did, Live Naturally, it appears, is her life's last directive. This implies that we should strive to increase our capacity to adapt as much as possible in order to last as long as possible in the war for our own survival. What Anita hopes to portray via natural living is well encapsulated in Sita's persona. Life had no phases, no stretches, Sita explains. There were no periods, no stretches. There were no periods, no stretches. There were no periods, no stretches. There were no periods, no stretches. There were no periods, no stretches. Nowhere did it go, he said. It was just a mess of muddling and confusion. (p.30)

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