

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CAMOUFLAGE IN ANITA DESAI'S NOVEL
*CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY***

M. Aarthi

Asst Professor

Department Of English

M Kumarasamy College of

Engineering (Autonomous), Karur

Abstract

The problems of camouflage are problems in perception, perhaps the most advanced field of psychological study. The fundamental laws on which camouflage must be based are partly psychological. Usually, camouflage technique is to pretend the opposite. "I'm not wounded or needy, I'm special". This means we go to great lengths to camouflage our animal nature, that use as a species are not so different from other animals. In this novel, *Clear Light of Day*, each characters are affected by the camouflage nature. Chief among them are Raja, Bimla (Bim), Tara, and Bakul. Other characters become just the agent to witness them.

The story revolves around the Das' family. It is shown that the entire family has to be suffocated in the perception of life. They have the deep anguish related to the various super logical incense. With every one's point of view every other persons are deeply analogous to each other.

Fiction is more important and powerful form of literary expression. Nowadays it acquired a prestigious position in India. After 1930 there came a sudden flowering in the Indian literature in English. During such time the society is compelled into such awareness – the time when Anita Desai was given birth. Anita Desai is a luminary brilliant group of women novelists in the firmament of Indian fiction in English. In her novels Anita Desai tries to portray the psychic elements. It shows clearly that she focuses the outer in the inner part of human existence reflects especially the neurotic females, highly sensitive and alienated from their surroundings and in that way she has attained the remarkable success as a women novelist. She uses the stream of consciousness, technique, flashback, and interior monologues.

The novel *CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY* which is taken for the study is full of eliminating thoughts imbibed with the emotional needs a parents' growing up children, Bim, Tara and Raja. In this sequence it is important to review the summary of the novel *CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY*. Bim, Tara, Raja and Baba are brothers and sisters. Tara marries Bakul. Raja marries Benazir. Tara visits Delhi after a long period to attend her niece marriage. Tara recalls her sweet memories during her childhood. Onseeing Tara's activities, Bim was surprised, since her

behaviours are childish “Was Tara grown woman, mother of grown daughters, still child enough to play with a snail ?” (*Clear Light of Day*, p 2).

The problems of camouflage are problems in perception, perhaps the most advanced field of psychological study. The fundamental laws on which camouflage must be based are partly psychological. Usually, camouflage technique is to pretend the opposite. “I’m not wounded or needy, I’m special”. This means we go to great lengths to camouflage our animal nature, that use as a species are not so different from other animals.

In this novel, *Clear Light of Day*, each characters are affected by the camouflage nature. Chief among them are Raja, Bimla (Bim), Tara, and Bakul. Other characters become just the agent to witness them.

The story revolves around the Das’ family. It is shown that the entire family has to be suffocated in the perception of life. They have the deep anguish related to the various super logical incense. With every one’s point of view every other persons are deeply analogous to each other.

Bim was much attached to her pet cat and dog. At that time Baba, who is her mentally retarded brother was playing with the old gramophone. Onseeing Baba’s ghost like hair and white, blanched face, Tara was shocked. Bakul was getting ready to see his friends and relatives in a hurry. But Tara refused to go, she stays there. Bakul leaves alone. Bim and Baba leaves to the insurance office. But Baba returns home soon, so Tara takes care of him. Tara feels boring and dull in the morning because Bim was with her students and Baba was playing. So, she started reading book “Jawaharlal Nehru Letter To A Daughter” which she read during her childhood days. Bakul returned home in the afternoon.

Tara feels dull and boredom of her childhood and youth are stored in the room “Under the warm dusty rugs”. At that time Bakul told that their daughters were adapted to this weather. On her childhood days’ she was the favorite of the family. One day Tara was afraid of her father, when he was putting insulin injection to his wife. Bim tells Tara that her travel round the world have made her very “Snobbish”. Suddenly they recall about their elder brother Raja and Haider Ali, who was the landlord and neighbourhood house. Raja spends time in that house with Benazir. Haider Ali guide him to write Urdu poetry, Raja was fond of that. After sometime Bim rifles through the file and takes out Raja’s letter mentioned that Haider Ali was dead. Raja had married Benazir and settled there itself. Now he become the landlord and asked Bim to pay the rent regularly. Bim was much anguish on him. So she refuses to his daughter’s marriage. She has not been able to forgive him sofar. In the evening Bim, Tara and Bakul visited Misras to see Jaya and Sarala, who were rejected by their husband and now.

Bim tells Tara that it is a long time Mira-Masi was died. They recall the time of partition in 1947. She is glad that it is all over now and “We can never be young again” Bim remarks, “ I would never be young again for anything ”. Bim recalls the summer of 1947, when Raja was affected by typhoid. He was too weak on that time. Bim nurse him properly and cared him. After few days, he asked Bim to search for Haider Ali’s family. Raja became a popular poet in Urdu. The Misra brother called him as “Lord Byron” or simply “Lord”. At that time Mrs. Das had lead a painful death. Raja fight for muslims like Lord Byron. Tara told to Bim that Misras girls were “dull and conservatives and too boring to be cultivated”.

One fine evening Tara brought home a young man named Bakul (IFS). He asked Bim and Aunt Mira to permit Tara for a party. They both were impressed by Bakul and they thought that they could marry. Mr. Das suddenly died in a car accident. So, Bim takes charge of Das family and also the office. Bim managed the office along with Mr. Sharma, the manager. Bim became

as a ‘provider’ of the family. Raja was affected by tuberculosis and he was taken care by Dr. Biswas a soft spoken and an awkward young Bengali. Tara and Bakul got married Bakul. He was aware of prevailing situation in the family and he told a grateful Tara “I must take you with me, Tara. This place is bad for you _ so much sickness, so many worries. You are too young for all this. I must take you away.” (Sakthi Batra,44) After a long period Raja received a letter from Haider Ali. Bim had three problems at her hand now- Aunt Mira, Raja and Baba an autistic, Aunt Mira addicted to alcohol. Dr. Biswas took care of her. Bim visited to Dr.Biswas house to see his mother. Aunt Mira was in a dangerous condition, Raja wanted to go to Hyderabad to be with Haider Ali’s family.

Dr. Biswas sympathetic to Mira and he told her “Now I understand why you do not wish to marry. You have dedicated your life to others- to your sick brother and your aged Aunt and your little brother who will be dependent on you all his life. You have sacrificed your own life for them. (*Clear Light of Day*, p. 97).Aunt Mira died. Raja leaves the place; he promised that he will be back within few days. But Bim knows that he won’t come. Bim completed her course and now she joined in local college. After some days she got a letter from Raja. She became bitter and angry. Tara recollects the birth of Baba and at that time Aunt join in their family. A child widow was ill-treated by her in-laws. She look after all the children. After some days the children also join with Mira-Masi. She cared Baba also. She was the strong support system to the children during their growing up- years. She became as a surrogate mother.

Tara was very favourite to her, because she likes to come as a good house keeper and mother in future, but other two thoughts of coming as a hero and heroine. After her schoolings Tara married Bakul. But Bim did not like to marry without completing her education. As for herself, she declared “ I shall never leave Baba and Raja and Mira-Masi.... I shall work- I shall do things ... I shall earn my own living- and look after Mira-Masi and Baba – and be independent.” (*Clear Light of Day*, p. 140 -141). Returning to the present, Bim was correcting the answer sheets. Tara talks about Raja, but she refuses to attend the marriage function. Bim told to Tara she was not interested, Bim complied about Tara because she also did not come for the Aunt’s death, but she told that’s not matter. I am not angry with you. But I am angry with Raja. Tara realises her mistake now.

Bakul helped Bim to solve all her problems in the family and also in the bussines. Bakul was offended. Tara tells him “ I feel afraid of her ”. Tara suggest that Bim call Raja from Hyderabad to sort out the problems, Bim answers with a sour face: “ Who would be thrilled to return to this ---- this dead old house?...Anyone would be horrified to return to it..... To see it dead and stale--- just as it’s always been”. (Sakthi Batra , p.49). Tara told that Bim was adamant. Bim told that she takes care for Raja and he forget that. The marriage day was near to them, so Bim asked Baba to go to Hyderabad, but he refused. After few days she decides to forgive Raja and tears up the letter which was written by Raja long ago. Bim and Baba were happy with Tara’s daughters. Finally, at the time of departure Bim told Tara to take care and asked Raja to come with his family to spend the winter season. “ I like to that old house. Morethan anything else I want to see him”. She says.

The next morning Bim attends a party at that time she recollects about one truth of the line “ Raja’s well- thumbed copy of Eliot’s Four Quarters”. “Time the destroyer is time the preserver”. (*Clear Light of Day*, p. 182).

In continuation of this, their changes in their attitudes throughout the course of time are also be analysed. The dissertation focuses the main criteria – The certain of the individual in society – with a varied perception of mind – engages the defectiveness of simple things. For that

the time of the novel has been noted. Since it is before Independence of India, more than that while the Partition of India, the problems and frustrations in India at that time has analysed. Anita Desai laments the Partition not because of its political implications, but for the bloodshed and insane prejudice that followed in its wake. It is apt here to state few lines about the Partition.

In 1947 Britain divided British India into two new countries: Pakistan and India. The parts of British India that had more Muslims became Pakistan. The parts with more Hindu became India. Pakistan included two regions, West and East Pakistan. They were separated by more than 1,000 miles (1,600 Kilometers) of Indian territory.

After the British left, many Muslims left India for Pakistan, and many Hindus left Pakistan for India. Many Muslims and Hindus killed each other during this period. The book is set at various times around the Partition in old Delhi. In this novel, Anita Desai tries to delve deep into the emotional built – up and crevices of her characters, especially during the Partition by the time people’s psychology is got through a tough task. As a psychological novelist she employs very beautifully all techniques of psychological novel.

The psychological novel reached its full potential only in the 20th century. Its development coincided with the growth of psychology and the discoveries of Sigmund Freud. In the psychological novel, plot is subordinate to and dependent upon the probing delineation of character. Events may not be presented in chronological order but rather as they occur in the character’s thought association memories, fantasies, reveries, contemplations and dreams as Anita Desai used in her novel the zigsaw puzzle, diary entries, self analysis along with stream of consciousness and flashback. She makes each work of hers an accelerating exploration of the psychic self.

The psychological turmoil creates psychic imbalances, which in turn, handicap them in establishing harmonious and gratifying inter – personal relationships. There is a complete compatibility between her theme and technique. With the help of colour and symbols she reveals the hypersensitive nature nature of her heroines. She is much interested in life with its hopes, frustrations, negations, rejections and chaotic flow of events as she is concerned with the art of giving shape, purpose and wholeness to life. Her character Raja in this novel, tries to rationalise the prevailing communal tensions in the wake of Partition.

Raja’s sister Bim cannot ready to pardon him for his attitude allowing her to live in the same old house but the old rent. Another sister Tara absconded from the family responsibilities by getting married to Bakul, who is in the Indian Foreign Service. There is a reason for this psychological camouflage of these and that is “ the character house” imagery, which is at the center signifies the dust, dullness and decay.

As the novel begins, one shall notice that the house of the Das family does not change except decay. Like Anita Desai’s other novels, the setting is Old Delhi. The interesting thing one shall notice is her skillfull synthesizes of the image of house with the lives of the Das family. The house is associated with sickness, dust and disorder. And for that reason, the “grey” colour is described again and again.

So the house reflects the mentally and sickness of the entire Das family. In other words, nobody in the Das household enjoys life, all merely exists! The sickness and disorder pervade in the mind of the family members. This house is exactly in contrast with the house of Haider Ali and that is why Raja gets attracted towards it. He is helpless and restless, when confronted his responsibilities, because he views his life, not impulsively, like Tara herself.

But, in some way, Tara wants Bim to reunite with Raja at his daughter's wedding. It is of the fact that Tara, really is worried about Bim's losing of grip on life. Whereas Bim sees Tara as interfering in a life that she is happy with, except when she sees it through Tara's eyes.

Slowly, it seems that the sisters are heading towards an argument that may be the end of family life as they know it. When Tara brings Bakul home, it is Bim, who asks her to marry Bakul, since he looks handsome. Bim's this grace towards Bakul fulfilled at the climax when Bakul tries to preserve from loss, calamity etc to protect Bim's salvation. Bakul offers to help Bim in solving the problems facing the family.

Bakul is offended for this. In many of these characters, it is assumed that their thoughts influence their moods, attitudes and behaviours – generally – the perception of relationships, work situation and overall satisfaction with life greatly determines one's present and future.

The paper focuses mainly the characters' deception, misperception and misunderstandings that are reflected back to them in several ways. Their issue leads us into deeper psychological studies.

Work Cited :

- Batra, Sakthi. *Anita Desai : CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY. A CRITICAL STUDY*. New Delhi: Surjeet Publications. 2008.
- Desai, Anita. *CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY*, London: Vintage Books, 2001.
- Heaton, M. John. *WITTGENSTEIN and PSYCHOANALYSIS*. Delhi: World view Publications, 2005.
- Pakistan *BRITANNICA STUDENT'S ENCYCLOPEIA*. 2007. ed. print.
- Sharma, Shaloo. *PSYCHO – ANALYSIS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR*. Jaipur: Sublime Publication. 2001.
- Smith, Louis. *ILLUSTRATED of PSYCHOLOGY*. New Delhi: Lotus Press. 2004.
- Statt, A. David. *A STUDENT'S DICTIONARY OF PSYCHOLOGY*. New York: Psychology Press, 2003.
- Tandon, Neeru. *ANITA DESAI and HER FICTIONAL WORLD*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. 2008.