

Anita Desai's Green Delineation in *Where Shall We Go this summer*

K. SIVARANJANI, S. RAJARAJAN

ABSTRACT

The most influential contemporary Indian writer Anita Desai adroitly shaped the image of new women by her shrewd illustration. As an Indian grandee, she recoils her narration with different dimensions. Her expertise brings out the inner mind of women, which crammed with rigidity, foiling, disaffection and stiffness in this modern world. Sita the protagonist of the novel finds it tough to lead a serene life in the city. She was earnestly anxious about the ecological catastrophe and its fortification. Anita Desai brazenly swings her description from the extent to the former ecological note and jauntily expounds the impending future of nature's fabrication. It is the depiction of the inner and outer ecosphere of present existence with eco-crisis.

Keywords: ecosphere, modern existence, eco-crisis, ecological note

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning the fourth novel of Anita Desai, *Where shall we go this summer* was published in 1982. Anita Desai recites the story of the middle-aged Sita, who is fed up with the mundane routine of a futile existence. She feels suffocated in her tidy, posh flat in Mumbai and scuffles hard to break away from it. Sita desires to get back to the island of Manori where she had relished her golden days of childhood with her father. Currently, she is seeking peace, pleasure and a great pause. This novel is tinier in dimension but profound in connotation. Seema Suneel remarks: "The novel is considered the most socially-oriented because it depicts human relationships in its varied aspects. In other words, the novel may

be considered a document of social criticism. It tends to reflect the contingent reality in an artistic fashion.” (Seema 198)

The setting of the story is ensued in the period before and after the independence of India. The authour skilfully divided the novel into three parts. The first part of the novel entitled monsoon'67 to depict the incident occurred in 1967 at the monsoonal season portrays Sita as a rebel against green crunches and her escape from the polluted city of Mumbai to the parental house of Manori. The second part winter '45 which reveals the story that has happened before independence at the winter season in the year 1945 depicts Sita's memoirs of her pre-married life and her gladdest flashes she shared with her father and siblings. The third part monsoon'67 is an amalgamation of part one and the existing life with the same title. Anita presented Mumbai as an awfully polluted city with environmental perception.

To Anita Desai the aggression and contamination of metropolitan city are excruciating. Sita expelled the mood of the author through her deeds by protecting the eagle from the meal of the crow by overreacted in shooting the crows with her toy gun. Though this incident seems stupidity but the inner core is, she wholeheartedly urges to protect the nature and environment by her nominal means. Anita's other novel *Voices in the city* published in 1965 which also shares the hectic life of the metropolitan city of Kolkata equal to this novel. Sita intuited effluence and vehemence of this diverse city are inexcusable and feels the necessity for living on the island of Monari with the hub of nature is the elucidation to her distress.

Sita could not bear the ferocity which made over nature by the creature of the universe. “She not even tolerates her own daughter, Menaka, crumbled a sheaf of new buds on the small potted plant she had been labouring to grow on the balcony.” (WSWGS 41) She could not abide though Menaka made this demolition unconsciously; the vision of such insecure

devastation would cause more damage to the known one. She accuses her daughter who nips the bud who unknowing clogged the blooming of beautiful flowers which would give fragrance and happiness to the soul of everyone around there.

Sita was in the pre-natal neurosis who never wants to give birth to her fifth child in this humanity less universe. Naturally, she urges to protect her unborn child from the polluted atmosphere of Mumbai and so takes refuge in the lap of nature in Monari – the island where she spent her juvenile life. Like a dice, her life repeated the same side twice. In the first part, after her father's death, Raman protects from the remote island and married her and in the third part, he came back to Manori to take back her and their children from the acute locus. Though everyone wants to be in the clutches of nature it is difficult to be close to it. At our best, we should take an opportunity to devote some time to nature by not polluting the environment for our broods.

Anita Desai portrays all her characters more livelily and used skilled hands to chisel them. The narrator aroused curiosity in the minds of readers in the starting of the novel by portraying the protagonist Moses who is waiting for someone for twenty long years. He patiently guarded his oars in the muddy waves and hopefully waiting. The monsoon temporarily returns to the horizon and the climate changed to heavier, stiffer and popular among the village folks. The novel creates a great impact among readers through her camera eye technique narration.

Moses elongated years of waiting comes to an end by the arrival of Sita. He revealed the secret of the coming of Sita to the youngest daughter of the nobleman to Jamila the tea shop owner's wife and other villagers. Jamila commented that the house may fall down because of twenty years gap. But, Moses immediately jumping with confidence said that not even a brick has fallen down. He remembered the father of Sita who came with two daughters and a son before twenty years and done so

many miracles. Though the years rolled out no one forgets that. They would never overlook the song he sings at the ritualistic and dreamy with full of mollification. He sank down on the beach lingered for the arrival of Sita.

Tamila enquired about their flashback on that island. In a recollected mode he shared his acquaintance about the well-bred who lived there before twenty years and done so many miracles. Everyone like the gathering monsoon, Monari people, Moses, tea stall, intelligible chant all are now waiting for Sita. One by one they started narrating the old miracles done by him. One of the men said after his magic, snakes, and scorpions stopped biting anyone. Another said through his medicine he cured impotence of the women who had been barren for twelve years and now she is having her son. The third voiced that without any offerings he powered his pearls and rubies and he cured the fits of a villager. Moses made them recall the well he digs near the sea. "The only well in Manori that gives sweet water". (WSWGS 11)

Though he is the digger of the well he never wants any privilege from others. He went and drags the water for himself without getting anyone's help. Like his heart, his cloth is also white in colour. He walked with his barefoot as a layman. He gaits in rocks to fetch the water. One of them in the crowd snivelled he died pennilessly. He never kept anything for himself he is selfless in nature. Moses passionately took care of the well and the trees in the home and he eagerly waiting for the arrival of his children. The twilight became rigid with a strange sense of disappointment with bitterness arouse everyone's mind. After a long time waiting, a large car approved from the city side and pushed beside the hibiscus bushes.

The whole crowd looked at the car with perplexity. Sita came out from the car and she stood staring at the sea from the Island which rocked and floated there like an aluminium bowl tunnel upside down. She went before twenty years as a young

girl but, that long gap made her a grey-haired lady. Few minutes Moses wondered whether she is the mistress of that house on the island. But in his dream, he had expected someone else who had inherited the dignity, mystery and the aesthetic grandeur of her fabled father. She does not even have any qualities of her noble father. Moses heard she got four children two children are there in the car and now she is pregnant with her fifth.

With ponderous dignity, Moses came forward to take the luggage. Everyone anxiously staring at them, the oars dipped into water is the beginning of the journey to the island. Sita whispered to her son Karan, they are going to the island. The people in the land looked like ants and they went deep into the sea to reach the island. Her curiosity aroused to see her dreamland. While entering the island her boy whispered dark but, she is in the positive note says in the night he could visualise the beautiful stars which he never looked at the city. She assured her children there are only lanterns as lamps and not the electric lamps and bulbs. Karan shouted sacredly by seeing the snakes on the sea but she confirmed it as only weeds and she tries to catch it. But she enjoyed every minute thing on an island but her children looked encased and kept silence like the larvae.

Anita Desai exquisitely carved the nature of sky with two aspects. The sky was flowered with the radiance of sunset. When Sunsets the artificial lights will compensate for the darkness. No one could compete with the natural beauty. The artificiality may seem like attractive only for a few moments but nature's splendiddness would never go out. The radiance from the sun arouses in everybody's mind and life in the next morning. No one could control the magnificence of nature. The pile of clouds may hide the brightness for a few minutes but it lighted back as a gold fluid on the western sky. Though the colourful lights decorate the place in the night early morning sunrise would evade all artificiality and it gloriously horns its natural beauty.

In the county side, the sunset is described by piling of clouds in the sky but in the city side, it is decoded with artificial roses. Fakeness is absolute in the city side. Artificially evade the natural beauty and it polluted the universe. After reaching island they took bullock cart to reach their home. Moses curved his lips and shouted, "hroo, hroo!" for driving his cart. Anita as a keen observer skilfully transformed the Indian way of living and their richness of landscapes in this novel. Sita's boy enjoying wholly the unique ride he never comes across on his city side.

The water in the village pond is green as spinach, thick, viscous instead of brown with muds. The water though it has green scum which may spread disease looks more beautiful to her and she dips her narrow-necked vessels of brass into it. This village is considered as skies of rose and orange while pulling they observed the paddy fields and coconut grove with the dense of darkness as the ghostly rustling and rattling sound from the palms. City people always tuned to hear the horn and humdrum sound and they failed to hear the voice of nature. People felt the presence of nature only in its calamities and they forget to observe in the time of its serene beauty.

Sita illumined Moses as a prophet led them to the small kingdom where she fantasized to spend her life. Her house was built on the high stone plinth, waved by palm lapped island, the shorter, quieter, leafier trees that can grow to the height of its balustrade. The white walls gleamed chalky above the waves of this dark foliage. Her house was on the pitch of darkness without light in the evening. The small boy cried in 'Dark! Dark!' and he kicked and twisted and would not let her enter the house. She felt despairingly eyeing in the deep veranda by expecting some lantern or candle. She expected her dark life would be brightened by the arrival of the island where the light would evade the gloominess.

She felt that Moses disclaimed them as the unworthy offspring of the illustrious and well-remembered father. Moses

lit the candle one by one as ignorance went away how education enters it's a slow bloom of irresolute light. She perceived a lot of changes in the absence of twenty years in the house. The waste of bonfire was not yet removed and the dust lay as insouciant as the sand on a beach. The spider webs were spanned in the corners as the skeletal palm leave of the void rooms. The quietness boomed like the stillness in the under seen caves and the odours of the bats were unbearable. The house looks like an abandoned shell in the sea and she frustrated by Moses not cleaning the house after the intimation of her arrival.

Sita enquired Moses why didn't he clean their home with the rigidified purple bare in his face he replied that he doesn't have enough time. The flat in Bombay flicks her memory. It was equipped with electric light, white and clean china marbles twinkled and the meal served by servants on time, the city life is entirely different from the country one. She asked about the food. Moses replied he don't know what to cook. Then she asked about the money she sent before her arrival.

Moses replied neither fish nor vegetables were available in the monsoon. She screamed to fetch the milk to the children's. The kids looked with hollow eyes and doubted whether they came to the right address. Sita narrated about the island earlier with fantastic stories but in reality, the house appeared as a horror movie to the children. She took the bags and fed them with biscuits and milk. Often she used to puff cigarettes to reduce her stress. Sometimes she is in semi-conscious who lost her strength as a Zombie.

Sita was in the kind of paralysis and imagined the lifting of the wind which would rise like the tide and lashed to the storm. She expects the monsoon will restore again which would renew her passion for nature. She as a pregnant lady, her inner core to come to the island is not to deliver the baby. She expects some miracle may happen on the island that she could never give birth to her child, she wants to keep it in her womb itself as an

unborn. To satisfy all kind of pleasure she already had four children with pride, pleasure, sensual and Freudian. But for the fifth child, she was quite paranoiac in the show of rage, fear, and revolt. She is in her age of forty-greying to behave a total barb control. The childbearing "It's not easier, it's harder, it's unbelievable" (WSWGS 29) to her.

Her husband expects after her delivery she would be normal like other women. But she was in the pile of her fury in her seventh month. He tried to stop her going to island by saying there is no medical facility is available for the childbearing but she was informed that she doesn't need baby. This stolid open locked brutal statement provoked him. The murderousness statement was an attack on the spears of beastly civilisation; he was shocked by the behaviour of women. Basically, Sita's character was very tender in nature. It may confuse the readers how passionate women who fight for nipping the buds may never want to give birth to the fifth child.

This novel portrays the atmosphere of colours filled with beautiful sights. The prenatal blues would strike the heat of readers. The story finishes with the optimistic annotation that she was significantly unified with her husband and get back with the reconciliation to Mumbai. Her skilled hand made the readers understand the ecological crisis and the present women's dilemma to survive in this polluted catastrophe. Nature would always comfort the trustee and it would protect them in its entire means.

Sita saw the island with the illusion as a refuge. It would hold her baby safely unborn with some magic. Then there would be the sea – it would wash the frenzy out of her, drown it. Perhaps the tides would lull the children, too, into smoother, softer beings. The grove of trees would shade them and protect them. (WTS 91)

Thus the trust of nature portrays the atmosphere of colours filled with beautiful sights. The prenatal blues would strike the heat of readers. The story finishes with the optimistic annotation that she was significantly unified with her husband and get back with the reconciliation to Mumbai. Her skilled hand, made the readers understand the ecological crisis and the present women's dilemma to survive in this polluted catastrophe. Nature would always comfort the trustee and it would protect them in its entire means. Thus she trusts nature would be the sole protector of us. All must trust it and sustain ourselves in the hands of it means half of our crisis would solve in the lap of nature.

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