Prologue
Anita Desai is one of the most important Indo-Anglian novelists today. Her novels - 'Cry, The Peacock' (1963), 'Voices In The City' (1965), 'Bye-Bye, Blackbird' (1971), 'Where Shall We Go This Summer?' (1975), 'Fire On The Mountain' (1977), 'Clear Light of Day' (1980), 'Village By The Sea' (1982) and 'In Custody' - have brought world fame for her. She has won Indian Sahitya Academy Award for the first novel 'Cry, The Peacock' (1963) and Bookers Prize of 1984 for In Custody. Fire On The Mountain (1977) won the Royal Society of literature's Winifred Holtby Memorial Prize and the National Academy of Letters Award for 1978. She has incontrovertibly added a few rich dimensions to the thematic range of Indian English fiction. Her novels are deeply moving stories of individuals on the horns of a socio-cultural, political, psychological and existential dilemma. Her novels also constitute an artistic success formally through deft deployment of images symbols and other devices. We agree with Meenakshi Mukherje's statement about Anita Desai's style when she says, "Her language is marked by three characteristics : sensuous richness, a high strung sensitiveness and a love for the sound of words."

Anita Desai has tried to look at things essen-
tially from women's point of view. To be alienated from self and society is one of the greatest tragedies of modern man and woman. Desai presents this problem of alienation being faced by most of her protagonists. She is more concerned with thought, emotion and sensation than with action, experience and achievement. The present study is mainly concerned with her symbolistic technique and style of expression. I have tried to explore the symbolic approach to her novels. I have focused attention on important symbols. Such a study has not been attempted so far.

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. The introductory chapter attempts a brief survey of the novels of Anita Desai with a special emphasis on her technique and style. This chapter also attempts the scope of the work of Desai.

The Second chapter on symbolism shows how language, symbol and art are interrelated and the usefulness of symbols in study of language and art. It also attempts to analyse how symbol is used in language and art and points out the art symbols.

The third chapter presents the symbols in Anita
Desai and the classification of symbols as depicted in the novels of Anita Desai. It also points out the significant symbols in the novels of Anita Desai.

The fourth chapter deals with sound symbolism. It tries to explore the various sounds used by Anita Desai in her novels. Different sounds such as 'Polite', 'Tersc', 'Gener­ous', 'Aggressive', 'Courtesy', 'Rustic', 'Elegant', 'Sophisticated' and 'Sarcastic' etc. have been dealt very skilfully by Anita Desai.

The fifth chapter traces the word symbolism. It discusses how one word is used in different symbols, different words in one symbol and how one word is symbolised?

The sixth chapter studies the semiotics of, symbolism, the different types of symbolism such as 'Psychic', 'Situational', 'Socio-Cultural', 'Emotional', 'Vocative', 'Referential' 'Imagery' and how these have been used in the novels of Anita Desai.

The seventh chapter analyses the discourse symbols in the form of dialogues and situations in the novels of Anita Desai.

At last the discussion is concluded with obser-
vation of style, technique and the mode of expression used by Anita Desai in her novels. It also comments on different symbols used in different novels of Anita Desai.

All the notes and references to the sources of information are acknowledged at the end of each chapter. However all references have been listed alphabetically at the end of the thesis and in making this, the MLA style sheet is followed.

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