Chapter - V

The Sophistication of Desai, Lahiri and D's
The Sophistication of Desai, Lahiri and De'

Psaras, Pes'as Apsas, Drs, Sri Vapus,
Valgu, Riyas, Bhadra, Bhand, Caru, Priya,
Rups, Kayana, Subh, Citra, Darsata, Svadu.
Ranva, Vama, Yaksa, Adhuta.

P.S. Sastri, Rgvedic Aesthetics.

Beauty demands harmony regularity, unity, harmony along with the characteristic expression for sense. It is above all a creation a new individual expression in which a new feeling come to exist.

The short story is a simple and more popular form of communication then the wide-ranging and complex fiction. The stories of Anita Desai, Shobha De' and Jhumpa Lahiri are marked with pure delight in the art of living. They try to project women as the central figure and succeed in presenting the predicament of women most effectively. The emotional world of women is explored and analyzed with admirable insight and sympathetic perception by the women writers. The theme of the stories to the misery of women caused knowingly or unknowingly by men. The genius of these writers is marked by a deeper understanding of the nature of his men and women in their different relationships in the family as well as in society. Perpetual guess for meaning and value of life is the core of all the three writers.
All the three women writer narrate story with precision and directness that avoids unnecessary digressions. These three women writers have shown an admirable perception and a deep sense in portraying women characters. They also suggest the need of harmony between the inner world and the external reality women writers have displayed remarkable social consciousness in their stories.

The credit of portraying a life size picture of the contemporary woman with all her longings and aspiration, hopes and frustrations goes to women writers likes Anita Desai, Shobha De, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Nayantara are foremost in the field. The emotional world of women is explored and analyzed with admirable insight and sympathetic perception. All the stories are marked with unique single effect and are focussed on a single character in a single episode. All the three women writers give a peep into the multifaceted personality of women through there wide ranging themes.

Anita Desai breaks a new ground in the world of Indian English short stories by shifting the emphasis from the external to the internal world. She creates a world of her own, which she fills up with extraordinary sensitive beings, she paints on a small canvas but succeeds in adding a third dimension to it. Madhusudan Prasad feels “She has added to Indian English fiction an existential dimension a lyrical
splendor and a technical richness that were wither to lacking.”

(Anita Desai, The Novelist, 144)

Anita Desai has drawn the character sketches of children, men, women, valetudinarians, mothers and wives in her short stories. Her child character are very much convincing particularly from the point of view of psychosomatic delineation. Her character are full-grown men and women, who are quite convincing; but her treatment of good through these characters is more appealing than that of vice. The desire to live and love, and the desire to withdraw are in serious conflict in Anita Desai’s short stories. Living for her protagonists means keeping their identities intact. Where as love demands surrender a fusion not on the sexual level alone but deeper than that, an emotional interaction which is unifying and mutually gratifying. In a successful, balanced relationship it tends to be what Erich Fromm Calls “Interpersonal Fusion”.

(Eric Fromm, The Art of Loving, 89)

According to Harry Show the theme tells” some truth about life or human behaviour”.

(Reading the short story, 13)

The theme of Anita Desai, Shobha De’ and Jhumpa Lahiri’s short stories centres round human relationships. They place their character in milieu that demand multi-faceted relationships. Family relationship however is the fundamental part oaf life. Stories how the
depth of understanding of human situations. All the nine stories in *Interpreter of Maladies* set in America and India are united but the motifs of exclusion, loneliness and the search for fulfilment. They do not restrict themselves only to the experience of migrant and displaced individuals. Themes that interest Lahiri most are love fidelity, tradition and alienation crop up in the lives of Indian and non-Indians alike. The common theme is an inability to communicate. What makes the collection truly outstanding. The stories are narrated in a style that combines economy of expression with a charming lyricism, and one that conveys the complexities of situations and characters as much by the implied as by the stated. Sparing in words, yet extremely eloquent, she weaves visual images, for the reader in a startlingly realistic manner.

Lahiri's character too carries certain poise.

The stories of *Diamond Dust* add to the beauty and richness of the genre of Indian English short story. Her stories this presents a miniature universe of experience, artistic recollection and reflections. They are considered as “Absolutely first rate” and “Delicately composed stories”.

Jhumpa Lahiri seems to write her stories with an Indian heart and American mind. It is in the conflict lies the strength and weakness of her stories. Lahiri uses metaphors containing wonderful emotive
potential. For example mound of a belly; bronze leaves; penciled instructions; full grapetoned lips; silver-haired men; Mannish legs; bulbous lids; white pillared building; pickled mangoes; cupped fish; stocky fingers; zigzag trail; horizontal eyebrows; silver bodies.

The metaphors have woven a delicate beet colourful density of thoughts. They have added power to expression driving thoughts with much speed and pleasure.

The stories by Shobha De' contains more of psychological conflict than social. The stories represent life in its true colours. 'Voice', 'Late-Arrival', 'The Transfer' stories which depicts the sufferings of female characters at the hand of their mother. 'The Motorcycle', 'The Bindi' has a more complex theme of inter-caste marriage. Nevertheless the stories do give us a feel of conscientious efforts to produce a work of marvel therefore precision, economy, and design are meticulously achieved.

O'Connor Wrote:

Story telling is the nearest thing one can get to the quality of a pure lyric poem. It does not have solution to offer; it just states the human situation.

(Nair N. Gopalkrishnan. The Short Stories of Manjeri Isvaran: A Study in Theme and Technique. 20)
Marked with perceptible beginning and end the stories contain variegated aspects of human life. Uncovering the whole gamut of human passion and emotion she reveals the range of suffering in mind and body. Each story stands the test of unity for every incident and detail of the action bears a direct relation to the conflict.

“In Diamond Dust” the make believe world is the world of people sharing warmth, oneness of thoughts and at times the same flow of blood. The world of words contain dominant traits of real world structuring the blood relationship. Anita Desai skillfully creates such a world where adjustment, compromise, respect in judgement of the elders, adherence to social norms and the traditional social set find interpretation in the light of the encounters depicted or at times introspected. The narrative method yields a desirable results in recording the reactions and interactions of the protagonist along with his ‘foils’. With spontaneity the world of relationship appear as slots that suggest the play of the mind at times chaotic and at times disconnected.

Shobha De’ uses grammatical and syntactical features like heavy epithets, strange metaphors and similes along with verbless structure to add distinctive newness to her language. To substantiate the above a list of features from books under study a provided.
Similes -

(a) fox like yellow green eyes (The Bar Man)
(b) padding softly like a sure footed cat (The Decision)
(c) check bones like priceless calcium deposits (The Trip)

Metaphors -

(a) scotch-soaked brain (The Fern Lady)
(b) emerald hued sensuality (The Fern Lady)
(c) sultry wife (The Bar Man)
(d) dangerous beauty (The Bar Man)
(e) rivulets of sweats (The Trip)
(f) plucked, penciled eyebrows (The Transfer)
(g) expressive “fish eyes” (The Transfer)

The New Coinage -

(a) floaty, flimsy, flowered (The Fair One)
(b) cold, cunning, calculating and merciless (The Fern Lady)
(c) celestial conjunction (The Trip)
(d) concentration creasing (The Fair One)
(e) balding bespectacled man (The Fair One)

The above examples are alliterative in nature phonetically
to repetition of consonants in the cited examples reveal how musical is her prose.
**Diamond Dust**

**Simile -**

1. legs like ancient tree roots (Royalty)
2. hair like a nest of serpents (Royalty)
3. buffalo's innards had hung like curtain (Royalty)
4. big bluish pouches, like bruise (Winterscape)
5. face swung in the dark like a cow's (Topoztlan Tomorrow)
6. Sang like a nightingale (Royalty)
7. Silence like snow (Winter Scape)

**Metaphors -**

1. blinding heat (Royalty)
2. silvery hair (Royalty)
3. dreamy hair (Royalty)
4. green dusk (Winterscape)

**Collection of Epithets -**

(a)ripest, sweetest, best banana (Royalty)

(b)shriveled by the piercing sweetness of the mangoes

**Reduplication -**

(a)wound down, wound up (Royalty)

(b)restrain herself, only tremulously managed to restrain herself (Royalty)

(c)unsuitable so unsuitable (Royalty)
(d) Raja Pranced actually pranced (Winterscape)
(e) Disappointment, disappointment (Winterscape)
(f) Strand upon strand upon strand (Winterscape)

**Alliteration through consonance**
(a) frilly flounced flowered dresses (Winterscape)
(b) honked the horn (Underground)

The coinage of metaphors and similes and reduplication do add a musical touch to the Anita Desai language.

**Games At Twilight**

**Simile**

(a) cold or slimy like a snake (Games at Twilight)
(b) sounds as soft and comfortable as sleepy pigeon (Private Tution by Mr. Bose)
(c) moustache lifted like a pair of wings (Private Tution by Mr. Bose)
(d) voices came out of his nose like that whistle of punctual train (Studies in Park)
(e) rippling their muscles like snakes (Studies in Park)

**Epithets**

(a) small dimly lit kitchen (Private Tution by Mr. Bose)
(b) pale narrow face (Private Tution by Mr. Bose)

**Alteration - Consonance**

(a) frigid and friend less woman
(b) she was pretty - really pretty in a plump pudding way
(c) suddenly hushed, covered up and hustled

(d) voices clash, clatter and break (Studies in Park)

"Art is an order to form", that the characters are somewhat more consistent and organized than in real life. The three women writers understudy have their limitation as they present a segment of life, but literature is meant to cover the whole of human life. Thus short-story calls for a certain emotional fervour, however mute and intellectualized it may be. These collections of short-stories are not merely aimed at entertainment or at profundity of thought, but an exploration of man in his relation with society and his understanding of his own self.

Lahiri's art seem to be simple but patient, arduous observation reflecting in between lines. The heart and the soul are the tools with which the layers of reality are introduced, irony pathos are its resultant by products with stream of thoughts stimulating a probe into trials behind. Uncomplicated plot, characters and styles further add to easy accessibility to ideas. The universal appeal of the stories rests in these out and out 'Lahiri traits' Shobha De has tried her best to expose the moral and spiritual breakdown of modern society.

Some of the stories of Jhumpa Lahiri deal either with the revelation of the essential features of the personalities of their characters or their evolution. In language Jhumpa Lahiri follows the American tradition.
of spellings favouring color to colour and so on. Interestingly she makes use of Indian words/phrases ‘Astachala-Surya’, ‘Hanuman’, ‘Nagamithunas’, ‘Villa’. Thus Lahiri’s Interpreter of Maladies makes a masterly attempt to delineate and define various moods, subtle vicissitudes in human relationships. Jhumpa Lahiri has the rare gift of being able to convey human emotions of tenderness and loneliness without extravagance. Like a best humanist artist, she has the gift of erasing boundaries. She is able to translate the thoughts and words of characters immersed in specific culture and situation themes that universally resonate. According to Gauri Ramnaraya;

The sophistication of Jhumpa Lahiri’s narrative art is perhaps best revealed in her subtle exposure of the deep structure of her meaning through uncomplicated plots, characters and style; the extraordinariness of experience... evoked, by the ordinariness of expression.

(The Hindu, Literary Review, April 16, 2000. 9)

The plot of Anita Desai, Shobha De’ and Jhumpa Lahiri’s stories are not repetitive. The mechanisms they employ lend the work a unique harmony where incidents, people, situation combine to produce an artistic whole. Nearly all stories contain internal conflict, a very small room is provided for external conflict. Like Anita Desai, Shobha De’ also has the gift of exploring the subdued depth of women psychology.
Though in some of her stories Shobha De has openly discussed sex but they cannot be termed as pornographic. It has some fine images and symbols, words and phrases, which make it attractive to the connoisseur of art. All the trio-writer has given greater importance to female characters but less emphasis is given to male characters.

These writers have cultivated the qualities of brevity, economy and signification in their works.
Works Cited


REFERENCES

I- PRIMARY SOURCES.


II- SECONDARY SOURCES.


