CHAPTER II
REALISM

Realism as literary movement was very much present and the whole of the literary world discerned its presence. Especially prose fiction has been a potent instrument of realism. Realism had been present in works of literature in varying degrees, but had seldom controlled a whole work of art till the middle of the twentieth century.

It arose as a reaction to romanticism which over the years had lost its vitality due to its scarceness of relationship with everyday routine life. The realistic school of the mid-nineteenth century emphasized sincerity as against the liberty professed by the romantic school. The growth of science, industry and commerce also fostered the growth of realism. An accurate and detailed documentation, a deep sociological perception and an observation of the material facts of life were advocated by the realist school.

Realism, as a movement, began in France in the nineteenth century. Writers of realism painted the everyday situations and conflicts that characterize real life in an accurate manner. Works featuring realism flowed uninhibited in France. In 1855, Courbet who was a painter, organized a show entitled Du Realisme, following which, there arrived in
1857 Champfleury’s critical essays *Le Realism*, which contained the proclamation of realism. He stressed that realism should be democratic; that the people and their lives have to be documented faithfully. He emphasized that there should be no idealization. Emile Zola poineered the realistic movement in France. His *Les Rougan-Macquart* series, that appeared regularly between 1871 and 1893, is the social history of a French family. This was a series of twenty novels. Zola portrays the behaviour of the family that extends to over five generations. The behaviour of the family is portrayed as the consequence of the environmental and hereditary characteristics. The whole view of a cross-section of French life of the nineteenth century is presented in a detailed manner. Thus, Zola depicts the sordid aspects of the lives of labourers, peasants, miners and the like with minute faithfulness. Balzac’s *La Comedie Humaine* which is a collection of hundred novels is also one of the most representative works of realistic fiction. He wrote novels comprising of all sides of life. It is said that the whole of France is described in his books. His descriptions are characterized by minute descriptions of persons and things.

Italy, Spain and Portugal also witnessed development of realism under the influence of the French. Ignazio Silone’s *Fontamara*, which was an outstanding realistic novel, showed him as a brilliant writer of
realism. Along with him, Alberto Moravia can also be mentioned. With this, the new dawn of realism was seen in Italy. In Spain, Camilo Cela’s novel *La Colmena* is a reflection of the harsh and painful reality of everyday life.

In England, George Eliot was the pioneer of realism. Her *Adam Bede* gives a faithful depiction of commonplace things. In United States, Rebecca Harding Davis’ *Margaret Howth: A Story of Today* that was published in 1862 expresses the author’s aspiration to tell a homely story of the everyday drudgery and the conflict that is inherent in it. Slowly the way was being paved to explain the new experiences of civil war, industrialization and the life around in a simple and ordinary language.

William Dean Howells boldly asserted the role of European novelists in propelling realism. His own novels sought to uphold the claims of realism by depicting the life of America as it was. In turn, he always backed up American writers to write about what they saw and experienced. He glorified the commonplace. *Their Wedding Journey* and *A Traveller From Altruria* are his representative novels. Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie*, Anderson’s *Winesbury, Ohio*, Lewis’s *Main Street* and Dos Passos’s *Three Soldiers* followed.

It is essential to give a brief note on the different types of realism. Fictional realism: It is a type of realism which is a synthesis of fantasy
and realism. The writer gives a comprehensive and candid portrayal of reality which is combined with imaginativeness. The work becomes more stirring and expressive by combining fact with fantasy. Thus facts are portrayed in an artistic manner. Fictional realism becomes an effective technique in the hands of a skillful novelist. Fictional realism is not just a facsimile of the day-to-day happenings, but something different. It is shaped by the creative skill of the novelist. A skillful novelist cannot neglect the sense of plausibility. Therefore his fiction should be relevant to facts. R.K. Narayan is known for this method of combining realism with fiction. Malgudi which is R.K. Narayan’s imaginative creation, is a real village in every sense of the term. In this world, R.K. Narayan blends in his characters, their personalities and activities. Through this world the writer exemplifies his imaginative facts.

Social realism: This is a kind of realism that depicts the ugly and the sordid realities of life. In the works of social realism, poverty, sickness, disabilities, financial grievances and injustices related to caste, class, race and the like are all depicted with a photographic accuracy. Mulk Raj Anand remains the voice of the downtrodden and the poor. He is known for his graphic depiction of the misery of the poor. However, he sees to it that while portraying the social conditions of the downtrodden he does not lose sight of an artistic portrayal. Thus, he presents social problems while maintaining the aesthetic value of the novel.
The French novelist Balzac attempted to portray the French society. His *La Comedie Humaine* which is a collection of about hundred novels, provides a total portrayal of France. His *The Peasants* depicts the afflictions of the peasants who live in the post-Napoleonic period. They are caught in the conflict between the feudal lords and the merciless capitalists. Similarly, Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* provides an accurate picture of the French middle-class family. Emma Bovary’s glamorous dreams lead her to adultery and suicide. Thus, the illusions of a mediocre life are presented with precision.

Socialist realism: The novels of socialist realism deal with the working class people, who are influenced by the class-conscious point of view. This kind of novel envisions the future dominance and significance of the working class. Such people are aware of the concerns of their class. They can be motivated to revolutionary action to safeguard the interests of their class. Their burden lies in organizing the helpless workers towards unity and solidarity. Therefore, such novels focus on strikes and struggles. The ordinary worker although poor, is perceived as worthy of inspiration. Therefore, the workers’ endeavours towards progress have to be celebrated and their struggle is represented in all its revolutionary aspects. Thus, the novelist bases his work on the truth. Maxim Gorky’s *The Mother* and Nexo’s *Pele the Conquerer* are landmarks in this kind of
realism. Other similar works are Fyodor Gladkov’s *Cement*; Nikolai Ostrovsky’s two volume epic, *Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Don Flows Home to the Sea*.

Scientific realism: This pertains to the essence of scientific knowledge. It is a pragmatic approach to explain the visible and the invisible aspects of the universe or the physical matter. It holds a logical viewpoint with regard to the various speculations about matter. There is the existence of a body of ideas that regards scientific investigation of the seen and the unseen aspects of the universe. The phenomena that could be examined with or without the help of certain techniques and the phenomena that have to be perceived only with the aid of techniques. The facts that are based on scientific theories is scientific realism. Any scientific theory involves the facts of life.

Mystic realism: This realism professes to understand the very depths of the kinship between the immortal God and the finite soul of man. It insists on the sanctity of life and thrives on spirituality. When the soul’s cognizance of the presence of the Ultimate grows deeper and deeper, it grows to an awareness of the Infinite. Spirituality thus involves the depths of such an awareness. This spirituality leads man to a certain inclination which makes him strive towards the highest things in the spiritual realm, that is the contact with the Ultimate. It follows that such a
man lives in peace and gentleness that transcends all the difficulties and conflicts of life. Mystic realism focuses on this element of man’s life. The realization that God is the destination of a craving soul comes to an individual. This depends upon his endeavour towards understanding the Ultimate. This kind of an individual’s awakening to God’s presence in him is the focus of mystic realism. It implies an original personal experience with God, depending upon the individual’s sensitivity. This is followed by the soul’s realization of God’s immeasurable Love. Thus, mystic realism focuses on the individual soul’s solitary adventure in realizing God’s absolute presence.

Romantic realism: Romance treats heroic stories that portray extraordinary and sensational people. The incidents that involve such people are equally sensational. It is the description of such incidents as have never occurred or are ever likely to happen. Whereas, realistic novels give a very downright account of such incidents that happen factually in daily life. Fyodor Dostoyevsky could be said to be a romantic realist. This realism presents the ideal reality of life. In other words, it presents a rendering of life as it should ideally be.

As the topic of the present study is “Realism in Anita Desai’s Novels”, the researcher attempts to analyse the definitions of realism and explain how it is portrayed in the novels of Anita Desai.
The term realism is always found to take another word for support. This tendency expresses the perennial fluctuations in the meaning of the word. Here are a few illustrations of its tendency to take a qualifying word: social realism, subjective realism, objective realism, psychological realism, quotidian realism etc. The variance in the significance of the concept of realism could be seen in these terms. Therefore, Damian Grant expresses it like this: “The word is in fact delinquent, and writers have indicated their mistrust of its behaviour…….sending it out under escort….“¹ In other words, the term should be ‘under escort’. It has to be modified by tagging it with any other word as noted above. The term is adopted from philosophy. It became popular in the nineteenth century. But during the eighteenth century, the term had gathered a different meaning. It was that the objects are the things that are comprehended, and that they possess a strong entity even outside of the mind. Thus, the term assumed the meaning of the idea of an intrinsic and physical entity, which is quite apart from the mind. Later, the term identified itself with idealism. It believed that such aspects as justice or goodness hold a real existence and are unattached to the things in which they are found. Therefore, the term has always generated a conflict over its exact meaning.

The above said assumption that realism denotes an external entity irrespective of the mind is ambiguous because as Damian Grant says, “The concept of reality……has exploded in the modern mind”.² This
shows that artists cannot reckon with it because as Philip Rahv says, “It is no longer possible to use this method without taking reality for granted…..it is reality itself which they bring into question.”\(^3\) Therefore, one observes that there is equivocation seen in the term. So it seems to be undependable. As Damian Grant says, “We do not believe in there being one reality……”\(^4\) So there is the necessity to turn inward for a subjective explanation of realism. Therefore, one understands that reality cannot be assumed or presupposed. But it has to be reached at. It is actually what an individual comprehends and discerns in his most poignant experiences. The individual holds on to this poignant vision even after the experience has ceased. The novelist thus generates a world with the help of the material provided by life itself. It is not just the situations or occurrences that compose realism. It is the expression of the profound impact that the situations have made on the mind of the writer. To illustrate this effect in Indian fiction, Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us* could be used. This novel colours the crucial years of Emergency in the years between 1975-77. This is the background against which the story enfolds. The tangles in human relationships, their fluid experiences are also seen in the political backdrop.

Fernand Desnoyers opines: “Realism is the true depiction of objects”.\(^5\) He says that the word ‘realist’ has been used to distinguish the
artist who is sincere and clear-sighted from the one, who obstinately looks at things through colored glasses. Therefore, realism is what one discerns and apprehends at certain powerful junctures and stages of great intensity. A work of art, a painting or a sculpture or even a piece of writing is associated in a very cardinal way to its model in real life.

Edmund Gosse’s idea also throws light on realism. He opines that realism should be contemporary. It is to be founded on and limited by actual experience and that men have to be painted as they are and not as one thinks they should be. He further asserts that realism has to be a faithful representation of life. Gosse’s statements reveal that there has to be a marked resemblance to the model and this resemblance has to be discernible and purposeful. Therefore, one sees that realism implies a truthful depiction of the incidents and the writer can be realistic only when he is earnest and candid in depicting his material.

A realist chooses a matter that is plausible. Everything that he deals with has to be verified in terms of actual experience. The writer depicts the issues as truthfully as possible. In other words, the writer’s principle is to depict life. He does not deal with anything that is obscure or which cannot be communicated.

Damian Grant refers to the correspondence theory and the coherence theory of realism. He refers to this as “……..scientific or
poetic; discovered by the process of knowing or created by the process of making”⁷ respectively. The correspondence theory of reality conforms to a simple belief “in the reality of the external world”.⁸ This could be known by a simple observation of the phenomena of the external details. As this reality could be documented by observance, it is objective. It does not seek to vilify the external truth. Whereas, the coherence theory conforms to the idea that reality is located “by the very act of perception.”⁹

The correspondence theory of realism expresses the very ‘conscience of literature.’¹⁰ By this one would understand that the external physical world could be comprehended by a detailed examination. The language that is used is graphic and clear. But as Becker argues that this conscience is anterior to a work of art.¹¹ Grant says that the coherence theory of realism is the ‘consciousness of literature’¹² and it has to be achieved by inventing it or by creating it. The invention or the creation of realism is achieved by operating with the data which life affords. This is justified with the writer’s imaginative sensibility and perceptive insight. Thus, for the conscious realist, reality does not exist before, but it has to be created. Therefore, reality exists in the mind and so there need not be a reference to anything that is outside. So a work of art can remain clear of the external reality and this has to be
treated in a subjective way. The present study is based on this principle of reality. Realism therefore, represents a candid and complete expression of the singularities of individuals.

So when reality exists in the mind, then it is subjected to the peculiarities and the feelings of that mind. Thus, artists should be thought of as concentrating on the internal aspect of the reality, or the subjective element of reality. One sees that the reality has to be arrived at, and not just imagined or assumed. Reality has to be unearthed and perceived. Therefore, truth can be acquired not only by documentation, but also by forming and conceiving it. This forming or the conceiving of reality is a continuous process. It does not settle or stabilize. As reality is subject to the peculiarities of the mind, it inflates or diminishes with the state of the sensitivity of that mind. The word is used to qualify the shifting state of consciousness. Thus, “……reality runs before the mind,”\textsuperscript{13} and therefore the writer of reality should not surpass it but he has to follow it, “on the slower steps of truth”.\textsuperscript{14}

In the context of the subjective meaning of realism, the following statement is also relevant. “……there has been a vigorous exploration……of the ‘underground man’. This might be termed a vertical extension of realism……Necessary to the complete representation which is the realist’s goal, it is nonetheless essentially subjective, incapable of direct
documentation, and verifiable in the last analysis only in the consciousness of the reader. However, it need not be invented, and it does add a needed dimension to the representation of total reality.”\textsuperscript{15} On the basis of these statements, it is clear that the term realism can be seen as describing “human behaviour and human motives.”\textsuperscript{16} Therefore, the personal experiences of human beings can be graphically depicted. Thus realism denotes an “honest, clear-eyed examination of life….”\textsuperscript{17}

Therefore, based on this statement, the subjective element of reality and the personal experiences demand a realistic depiction. Thus, it can be perceived that thought and emotion are the significant aspects of human experience and the writer who overlooks these can be said to have relinquished a part of his responsibility. So apart from depicting the garnered external details and the daily minutiae of life, there arises a necessity of depicting the thoughts and emotions which complete the pattern of experiences. Therefore, the complexity of the human psyche needs to be portrayed. Literature tends to extend widely to depict human experiences. Besides depicting the facts, the writer portrays the issues that are beyond these facts and that is the feeling element. Such a realistic work plunges deeply into life. Therefore, it can commence in the middle. “….. the neat denouement in which everything is tied up in a tinsel…. package,”\textsuperscript{18} is avoided. Life has to be presented as it is.

A realistic work is built on the thought of the plausibility of the aspects that it depicts. The fidelity to life enhances the value of the work.
The work guides the readers’ attention towards the significant aspects of life. Thus, the readers’ response towards life expands along with his perception, sympathy, sensitivity and the experience of life. Therefore, the response of the perceptive reader after reading a realistic novel would be the acceptance that life is either joyless, lonely or empty. The reader acknowledges that the sort of thing depicted in the novel is real and that the individuals do behave in a similar manner.

Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations* depicts a far-fetched and an implausible situation, where a poor boy is made rich by an unknown patron. Finally, the patron turns out to be a criminal. But, George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* contains aspects that represent real life. The incidents that are portrayed in the novel are characteristic of life and the people who are depicted are the people whom one meets in everyday life. The reader can very well acknowledge that this is real life or that, this is what life is like. The significance and meaning of the work abides in the author’s or reader’s own sense of the real.

The researcher therefore, infers that although the human pursuits and other external aspects are depicted thoroughly well, there does remain the domain of the interior perspective to be adequately portrayed. A realistic writer states the facts without any pre-meditated standpoint of how things should be. The writer has to dispense with the surmises or
presumptions regarding the matter he wishes to depict. Social and economic life are exposed to fluctuations. The social or even the psychological environment undergoes transformation. The powerful psychological stamina of individuals has not remained the same in modern days because the forces which drive the society or the individual may not remain the same.

Thus, the portrayal of the subjective element of the life of a human being is also a manifestation of realism. A realistic novel exemplifies life and immerses itself into its truth. Inner realism portrays the delicate fluctuations of the mind, attitudes and sensitivity. The tender and the sensitive aspect of life is at the very heart of the portrayal. Thus, the reader involves himself with the profundity of the issue that is depicted. The present study is based on this element of realism. The researcher analyses the elements of subjective realism found in the novels of Anita Desai. This is done by resorting to appropriate literature in Psychology. Thus, the researcher attests that the elements studied in her novels are manifestations of realism. Anita Desai has given a new dimension to the Indian English novel by turning from the outer reality to the inner reality. Thus, she has revealed an immeasurable poetic potential of the human psyche. The portrayal of inner realism and the employment of the language of the interior provides insights towards understanding humanity in general.
The evaluation of human experiences and the inner reality of man endowes literature with richness in content. The emphasis on inner realism mitigates the heaviness of the documentation of mere external details. This probe into the inner reality demands a novelty of technique. The method enables the facts to speak for themselves. Psychological or inner realism is unique and distinctive. It is universal in its prospects. However, it does not swerve from depicting the experiences of human sufferings.

The thought processes and the psychological reverberations of the character composes internal realism. Internal realism dwells upon the development of the character. As such a novel delves deep into the psyche of the character, the plot is considered secondary in importance. The plot emerges out of the character’s responses to his/her predicament. Anita Desai says that she prefers the word ‘pattern’ to plot. She says that it “sounds arbitrary, heavy-handed and artificial, all that I wish to avoid”19. Therefore, such a novel begins in the middle as quoted earlier and the ‘tinsel package’ is avoided. The psychic process, struggles and conflicts are presented in the manner in which it occurs. The empirical findings of psychologists can be of great assistance for the development of the novel that deals with inner realism. The method of moving deeper into the psyche of the character and describing the mental processes was
influenced by Freud. A novel portraying the inner realism is an effective mechanism to lay bare the complexities of the human personality in such a way that it is even more acute than the medical literature of psychology or psychiatry. The stream of consciousness is an expedient technique which accomplishes even more than mere narration. Therefore, Anita Desai uses the method effectively which helps her to present her individual in a realistic way.

It is found that the reality that the author portrays through her characters is akin to their models in factual life. Especially when the reality that is depicted is the inner reality, there has to be a consideration about how best this inner reality can be expressed, so that it reflects the factual reality. The reality should be a plausible reflection of the one that is seen in real life. Many a time, in real life the cause and effect chain of events do not occur. In the same way, real life does not offer well structured plots. Therefore, Anita Desai opines that she prefers the word ‘pattern’ to plot.

She marks a new era in the development of Indian English fiction, in that, she pioneered the novel of psychological realism. Thereby, she has imparted a unique mission and solidarity to the Indian English novel. Writing for Anita Desai is a matter of instinct. So her style allows the story to unfold on its own. The emotional turmoil, individual sensitivity
and the confusion of the character is recorded with utmost fidelity. A novel that depicts internal realism is a powerful way to empathize with the suffering humans and their bitter experiences.

It is essential to explain how Anita Desai depicts reality in all her twelve novels. The present study reveals that Anita Desai’s fiction embodies the complexities of the protagonists’ experience which should be considered as realism. The present study assumes that the exploration of the complexities of the female experience is realism.

Thus, her novels can be studied as an analysis of human nature. The reader gains a vital interest in the study of human nature than that gained from human circumstances. In Anita Desai, realism is never interface or exterior. With her, realism is a design to conceive an explanatory space. The analysis of character can be seen as a great strength of imaginative creativity in Anita Desai. By using this method of delving deep into the character, she ceases from mere dealing with the external appearances. Therefore, she is regarded as a significant milestone in the development of the Indian English fiction. She describes the cryptic springs of behaviour and the enigma of the human consciousness. The action in her novels is evolved by the influence of the mind, thereby subordinating the material circumstances to the presentation of mental experiences. Anita Desai is noteworthy in that, she
does not indulge in a superficial characterization, but provides a thorough analysis of the motives and thoughts of her protagonists. Certain critics contend the efficacy of analysis of the character as a technique, that it is not preferable and that it is like dissecting the human mind. They also opine that none of the so-called psychological qualities which the analyser enumerates, really exist in themselves, but are only abstractions. But the researcher opines that the psychological qualities which the analyser records cannot be only abstractions. But they should be recognized as the realistic truth. The researcher studies the psychological elements found in the novels of Anita Desai by basing them on the evidence that is provided by the appropriate psychological literature.

Anita Desai’s novels are concerned with the day-to-day realities in human relationships, society, domestic life and emotional experiences. It is also true that the comprehensive account of everyday life and surroundings create sense. In the course of interpersonal relationships, there is an ample space for a lot of contentions and conflicts. The present study evaluates and represents the experience of these relationships as realism. Therefore, realism communicates facts over and above the writing, as the experiences are authenticated only in the readers’ sensitivity. A realistic approach is expedient, in that, the details can be familiar even to different cultures; the repercussions and reactions may be
different, but at least, the minimum commonality is ensured. Experience is rendered factual by the language of the writer. It functions in the different standpoints to which the writer is familiar with, such as the place and setting, cities, area, customs and traditions etc. Sometimes the significance is implicit in the writer’s experiences.

The issue of lonely women, who are disillusioned in their search for fulfillment in life, through love and through varied relationships is a fact in the modern world. Unrequited love and the resultant loneliness is not a new fact of life. The values of love and care are regarded as the woman’s jurisdiction, a very secondary value when viewed by men. Anita Desai throws light on the texture of the emotional lives of women. She has rejuvenated and redefined the realistic novel by fashioning it to explore women’s experiences and obsessions. The present study is based on the hypothesis that the observation of the internal aspects of woman’s life is realism as much as is the observation of the external aspects of life and society. Women have been posited in literature as paragons of virtue and as docile creatures. This portrait of a woman has been conditioned by culture and society. Such images of women as quintessence of feminine virtue and rectitude do not present the woman in all her complexity and fullness, and as a complete human being, in all its realism. Therefore, this study presumes that, the presentation of the female experiences, agonies and an appreciation of the woman’s internal aspect is realism. It echoes
and represents life, because it presents the female emotional fervour, passion and human relationships which make the warp and woof of life itself. The portrayal of this realism is extremely factual and bonafide. The idealization of feminine tolerance is authentic, but even more authentic is the exploration of her agonies which are specific to an emotional being that a woman is. The study assumes that the reader recognizes the aspects of life when she encounters her own frustrations and agonies being depicted in the novels of Anita Desai. The readers find their own emotions, circumstances, frustrations and desires are shared and shaped into a literary form. The reader encounters the fact that her own thoughts and feelings are authentic enough. The daily, mundane preoccupations, interactions and their attendant feelings, being voiced in these novels, is as much realism. The daily commonplace life of grievous conflicts of life, involvement and expectations with their discontentment–all these aspects which are an integral part of daily life, when they are depicted, it is realism. The stress on feelings, relationships of every kind, maternal love, childlessness, conflicts–the significant as well as the most insignificant aspects of daily life. These are the aspects of perennial and persistent reality which every human being encounters.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the subtle tensions of the well-educated modern women as they struggle to distinguish themselves in a male world, the social inequities and the necessity for justice for the
lives of women, which is voiced very delicately in the novels. The fact that women are responsible for their own situations is what one observes. The study reveals that Anita Desai sets her novels in the realm of psychological realism— that of a woman’s emotions and she renders the frustrations of the educated and sensitive woman.

The characters in fiction take birth in the writer’s imagination, but they imitate individuality and reality in actual life. Therefore, women in Anita Desai’s novels represent the actual women in real life. Patriarchy, the ruler, which is universal, assigns the woman’s place as the home and the hearth. This kind of a limitation ascribed to woman and her roles is not only restricted to India, but it is held even in other nations. Literature presents women characters as fulfilling their roles. However, all over the world, there exists a tradition who have broken through the patriarchal bastions and a representation of such female characters in fiction endows literature with remarkable characters. In a realistic novel, one sees characters who appear real and the reader visualizes so many things through the characters’ eyes. Anita Desai portrays the life of a woman in totality. It is not just a slice of life, but the whole life itself. She depicts woman’s life in all its vicissitudes, social, emotional, moral and intellectual aspects. Through all her novels one can recognize the intuition she possesses about women’s conditions. She exhibits the
knowledge of psychology and psychiatry. She renders ordinary happenings of life, men and women as they are, and according to their authentic and bonafide expression. The things that happen in the lives of people, whatever happens to them both externally and internally is graphically presented.

The researcher emphatically believes that a writer cannot be said to adhere to realism unless he/she knows his/her subject very well. Anita Desai presents the reverberations of the female mind which she knows intimately well. The contemplation of the psychic turmoils of the protagonists has contemporary significance. Every individual is a distinct personality with his doubts, fears, suffering and loneliness. Urban life experiences several changes. One of them is the change in the woman’s status and education. The spread of education registers a well-read woman with new modes of thought. Consequently her intellectual needs change. She becomes more expressive, requires more understanding from her partner. When the partner lacks the same qualities, it gives rise to tension in the relationship. In order to create the real people, the novelist understands the subjective eccentricities and singularities of thinking processes. The writer creates real life situations, but without distorting the contemporary reality. This study aims at exploring all these aspects of reality.
With the rise of educated and career-oriented women, the growth of individualism and liberty is equally noticed in society. Women have gained a relative autonomy which had earlier governed the lives of men. This kind of strain between women and the patriarchal attitudes of society did and does exist. During the twentieth century, it acquired intensity. If there was no transformation, amelioration of the plight of women in terms of education, then women would have been confined to assume their limited space and the patriarchal structure, the question of women thinking of herself as a partner to man and trying to expect love and understanding from him would not have risen. Therefore, the amelioration of the plight of women in terms of education has led them to visualize themselves as men’s equals. This realization has structured in them the need for love and understanding from their spouses. The present study assumes that these pangs of quest and discontent as aspects of realism.

R.S.Pathak says: ‘Her (Anita Desai’s) forte is the exploration of sensibility, and her writings reveal inner realities and psychic reverberations of her female characters.’\(^{20}\) Shyam.M.Asnnani quotes Anita Desai:

“My writing is an effort to discover, underline and convey the significance of things. I must seize upon that
incomplete and seemingly meaningless mass of reality around me and try and discover its significance by plunging below the surface and plumbing the depths, then illuminating those depths till they become a more lucid, brilliant and explicable reflection of the visible world.”

Thus Anita Desai disapproves of the writers’ exclusive concern with the external truth and not with the internal truth. Therefore, Anita Desai asserts in an interview with Jasbir Jain, that she delineates peculiar and eccentric characters. Therefore, the present study presumes that the inner nature of the protagonist, which Anita Desai depicts, is realism. So, for this purpose she sidesteps social aspects of life and prefers to use the language of the interior and follows the language of her own spirit—asserts Ranu Uniyal. She quotes from an interview with Anita Desai as asserting: “An intimate world is exposed in the process of simply pouring out what I accumulated inside me by way of experience all through my childhood and youth....”

It is clear from these words that Anita Desai has grappled with her own experiences which are real and authentic to the core of her heart. Therefore this study presumes the elements which she depicts are nothing but the inner reality of human predicament. Anita Desai fathoms the deepest settlings of the protagonist’s psyche and the present study
presumes to demonstrate this aspect as realism. The researcher would like
to assert her point further on the basis of the following lines: “Anita Desai
believes that......the unconscious is the bottomless source of all reality” 25
says S.L.Paul. Anita Desai recreates reality and this study assumes that,
for her, this recreation is an act of concern and regard. As a novelist she is
an intrinsic master and explorer. She lays bare the realities of modern life,
the perplexities, the disquietudes, quandary and the spiritual paradoxes
and confusions. All these aspects surface in her novels. This study
assumes that her novels recreate realism.
Notes

1
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Grant, 4

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Grant, 5

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Edmund Gosse, “The Limits of Realism in Fiction”, Documents of Modern Literary Realism, ed. George J. Becker, 386

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Atma Ram, “An Interview with Anita Desai”, *World Literature Written in English*, Vol.16, (No.1, April 1977), 96


22  Jasbir Jain, *Stairs to the Attic: The Novels of Anita Desai*; (Jaipur:Printwell, 1987), 10


24  Uniyal, 145