Anita Desai and Kamala Markandaya are two significant voices that have emerged from the contemporary Indian writing in English depicting a common scenario and giving expression to some of the significant concerns that emerged from this scenario. They deal with people, issues, problems and situations that are deeply rooted in a common context and try to find an answer to these situations in their own manner. Though both Anita Desai and Kamala Markandaya talk of the Indian people, their culture, tradition, socio-economic and individual concerns, yet their response to and expression of these concerns differ both in the choice of their thematic focus as well as the narrative style. The technique adopted by both these novelists is different and there is a significant variation in the use of language, symbols, metaphors employed by these novelists. Focussing on a common society, both Anita Desai and Kamala Markandaya adopt diametrically different technique in their expression of this society.

Anita Desai uses flashback and stream of consciousness technique choosing not to concern herself with action and the actual experience as with thought, emotions and sensations. She makes
liberal use of symbols, quotes from various writers and has the capacity to fuse form and content, whereas straightforward narration is Kamala Markandaya's style. She sometimes become symbolic, sometimes ironical, sometimes reflective, sometimes explorating, sometimes eleptical, sometimes lyrical to suit the occasion. Suitable manipulation of view through a variety of narrative techniques - breathless narration, vivid description, objective reportage and dramatic dialogues - all join hands to make Kamla Markandaya a skilful narrative genius. She rarely resorts to interior monologue while similies and metaphores abound in her novels.

In the works of Anita Desai there is the presence of a pervasive and the controls of imagination which fuses different parts of the fictional work into a unified vision. Her novels probe the psychic dimensions of the characters who are often multidimensional moving from cosmic to cosmos and from self to universal. She does not always follow the traditional three-fold structure of plot construction having a beginning, a middle and an end and the story often moves to a fro without following the traditional pattern involving the reader in the psychic journey of her characters. Anita Desai uses multiple ideas, thoughts and inner voices to depict the dilemma of her protagonists. She works towards a unified vision and believes that:

the purpose of my writing is to discover - for myself - and then describe and convey the truth ... the Dutch Old masters who could paint a loaf of bread so incomparably were not merely painting the meaning of that loaf, its significance to man, its
quality, even its flavour.... 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 more lucid, brilliant, explicable reflection of the visible world.¹

The thing that triggers her imagination may be very insignificant thing as a leaf that is dipping under a rain drop, a face which she sees on the bus, or a scrap of news which she reads in the papers. She does not claim to have any set theories of the novel. According to her a novel cannot be created by observing a given set of theories. She does not use the traditional plot structure with linear movement, she does not indulge in self-conscious story telling, nor does she explore any socio-political ideology. Writing to her is a process of discovering truth and she is concerned with thoughts, emotions and sensations and various levels of consciousness in the novel. So, she makes use of flashbacks and stream of consciousness techniques.

Anita Desai does not portray external reality or the truth existing outside human situation. For her the truth exists in the dreams and the wills of the people. Srinivasa Iyengar says, "Since her preoccupation is with the inner world of sensibility rather than the outer world of action, she has tried to forge a style supple and suggestive enough to convey the fever and fretfulness of the stream-
of consciousness of her principal characters.\textsuperscript{2} In the novels of Anita Desai characters and themes are so neatly organized under a compact pattern, that each novel becomes a distinctive world in miniature.

As her writing demands, Anita Desai employs "the language of the interior."\textsuperscript{3} She follows a mode which is existentialist, surrialist and which is able to fathom a character in all his/her bewildering variety and nuances. She depends more on her uniquely private vision than on subjective rendering of external reality. She writes in the symbolic note, in contrast to other women writers who usually adopt a linear mode to show the development of a story in a casual sequence. What is important for Anita Desai "is the movement of the wing one tries to capture, not the bird. That is, it is the image that matters, the symbol, the myth, the feat of associating them, of relating them, of constructing with them."\textsuperscript{4} She has not appended the symbols to her works after their completion, like a series of artistic pieces in and around a constructed building, but has woven them in the text and title so well that they become the organic parts of her works without doing any damage to the surface story. Symbolism creates parallels, as sunrise shows hope and sunset symbolizes despair. Symbol may be called a hub of a wheel around which plot, characters, setting move to evoke the central theme of the novel. According to Rene Welleck and Dastin Warren, "an image ... if it persistently recurs both as presentation and representation it becomes a symbol."\textsuperscript{5} Symbolism in the works of Anita Desai, in addition to lifting her works above mere narration of a story also provides the soul, the blood to it. Anita Desai
herself comments that she uses "certain images again and again and that although real, they acquire the significance of symbols. I imagine each writer ends by thus revealing his own mythology, a mythology that symbolizes his private morality and philosophy.""\(^6\)

Different kinds of imagery is there in the works of Anita Desai. An image is described as "one that covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience. An image does not necessarily mean a mental picture."\(^7\) She compares her characters to those of birds and animals. She regards imagery to be an effective technique for articulating her sensibility and she generously resorts to imagery. It enhances the aesthetic value of the work of art. So the novels of Anita Desai teem with various images - botanical, zoological, meteorological, nature and colour imagery. According to Ramesh Srivastava "All the stores exhibit psychological depth and complexity, and are laden with Anita Desai's rich imagery."\(^8\) Anita Desai is basically a powerful imagist. Imagery is central to her fictional strategy and spotlights her tragic vision of life.

Anita Desai chooses English, as a medium of her writings in which she can express most fluently and according to her, "I didn't pick English out, I do not think a child of seven is capable of doing so. I must have simply picked the language which came most fluently and easily to me."\(^9\) Other writers writing in English are making efforts to make English more adaptable to Indian needs. Anita Desai has raised it to lyrical heights. It is so pliant and flexible, like the soft, wet earth
under a plough, that it yields not only to the pressure of her hand and the nod of her head but rises to poetic heights to synchronize with her visions and her dreams. For Anita Desai, English is "the language of both reason and instinct, of sense and sensibility." Her sentences vary, now short, now long, now endlessly gushing forth like jets of coloured water sprouting from the syringes of Holi revellers, flowing disjointedly or in a stream. She polishes her sentences, chisels her phrases and converts the rough-hewn stone into a piece of art. The language that Anita Desai uses in her fiction has sensuousness and razor-sharp sense of sound, colour, smell, touch and taste is present in her descriptions and it "is marked by three characteristics: sensuous richness, a high-strung sensitiveness and a love for the sound of words." As English is an immigrant language which has no roots and tradition for an Indian writer, he therefore has to depend upon his intuition and individual vision. Anita Desai has the ability to use language in a uniquely individual fashion and an intensely poetic fashion to depict the status of mind of her characters. Darshan Singh Maini too observes, "Words appear to have sensuous appeal for her, and she exults in the reach and power of her rhetoric." Anita Desai makes use of several native words for food, dress, rituals, festivals, trees etc. to evoke Indian atmosphere. She uses these words because either the words are untranslatable or the words come spontaneously to the character when he is emotionally charged. She connects experiences, events with real life, to bring fiction nearer to reality. Ann Lowry Weir considers Anita
Desai's language to be more than "uniquely Indian. It is uniquely her own. She uses the normal English vocabulary for weather, food, clothing etc. but she heightens it by inventing interesting even shocking combinations of words..."13 Anita Desai uses many original words from Indian languages and many a time she translates Indian words, idioms, metaphors and similes into English. In her works, there is lyricism and repetition of words. Besides, giving a rhythmic touch here and there, Anita Desai makes use of poetry to convey the meaning effectively. She uses quotes from poems to pinpoint the mood of the situation. She uses quotes from other writers and juxtaposes contradictory situations. She declares "My novels are no reflection of Indian society, politics or character. They are part of my private effort to seize upon the raw material of life - its shapelessness, its meaninglessness."14 In addition to these, in the novels of Anita Desai, there is contrast between various situations, characters and between different stages of the same character. Another outstanding feature in the novels of Anita Desai is use of parenthesis. There are parenthetical fragments in between two commas. It is for explanation, modification, comment and reflection. She also quotes slogans in the novel and the title of her novels is often highly symbolic. In the novels of Anita Desai the ideas are bound together and form one whole. Her novel is an organic whole and even a mechanical whole in which the parts are so interrelated that together they form an intelligible picture. Anita Desai maintains a perfect balance between the story and its structure to produce a perfect novel. As in the words of Atma Ram
"The perfect novel achieves the perfect balance, with just as much, story or as much fantasy as its structure can bear, no more."\textsuperscript{15}

In the novel, \textit{Cry, the Peacock}, straight chronological order in narrating the story is missing. The narration in this novel is the mixture of the past and the present. There are number of flashbacks in the middle part of the novel and this part is in the first person narrative whereas the first and the last part of the novel is in the third person. There is only one incident that haunts the whole story. The incident of Maya's going to the temple with the ayah in her childhood and meeting an astrologer, hearing a prophecy. This is repeated time and again like a restrain in the novel. The recurrence of the memory of the incident shows Maya's preoccupation with the prophecy. As the whole novel is an organic whole, the number of episodes in the novel are unified by a single character.

The title \textit{Cry, the Peacock}, is highly symbolic too. It signifies that the peacock is an important symbol of the novel. There are hundred eyes on the feather of the peacock and Maya calls these, the eyes of wisdom, as the eye is the window to knowledge. P.K.Pandey finds peacock to be "the central symbol to feminine psyche, having religio-cultural roots that enrich the meaning by providing undertones to the symbol."\textsuperscript{16} The peacock becomes symbolic of the neurotic protagonist Maya. The repeated cries of the peacock "Lover, lover. 
\textit{Mio, mio} - I die, I die"\textsuperscript{17} are Maya's own obsession with and wish of death. B.Ramachandra also comments that it "symbolically suggests the heroine's love of life and obsession with death which lead her to
the final crack up."18 R.S.Sharma also feels that the cry of the peacock is symbolic of Maya's "life in death and death in life"19 Before mating the peacocks fight and this fight symbolizes Maya's own marital disharmony. The dance of the peacock is both the dance of life as well as the dance of death and like the peacock's dance of joy, Maya's life implies death. Maya is also aware of life and death with the help of albino astrologer's prediction as the peacocks have the knowledge of life and death. This peacock symbol has been "poetically used throughout the novel."20

Another important symbol in the novel is that of Shiva. B.Ramachandra Rao finds that Natraj is a symbol of liberation. He observes, "the Natraj reinforces Maya's love of life, she feels that she has a greater justification to live."21 Another aspect of Natraj symbolism is supreme aliveness. P.K.Pandey finds it as Maya's vision, a sense of stillness and permanence.

The character of Maya is also symbolic. It symbolizes illusion. Maya's killing Gautama suggests the personification of the lop-sided view of detachment. Maya's pet dog Toto is a symbol of her desirable companion - intimate, warm, faithful, passionate, uncomplaining, unphilosophising and closely attached to her which Gautama is not. It is also a child-substitute. Maya is very much attached to Toto, whereas Gautama has no place for pets in his life. Maya feels very unhappy at the way in which the dead body of Toto is carried in a municipal truck.
Another symbol in the novel is the moon, but here the moon is not associated with beauty. It is not "the gentle moon of love ballads and fairy revels" but "a demonic creature," "the fierce dancer and the mad demon of Kathakali ballets," "a phantom gone berserk." So, here, the moon is associated with death and horror and ugliness. This ugly image of moon implies the co-existence of beauty with ugliness. The beauty of moon brings the ugly idea - pushing Gautama to his death - in Maya's mind in the same way as Queen of the Night "attracts snakes. Beauty and evil, evil, beauty."23

Dust storm, in the novel symbolizes Maya's state of mind a fierce storm waging in her sub-conscious mind, her inner struggle, her desire for warmth, love and companionship, her mental upheavals and her obsession with death. Meena Belliappa finds the use of this symbol appropriate as it "comes very near an effective definition of the nature and direction of the inner activity which has long supplanted external action."24 The image denotes Maya's desire for release for bondage, release from fate, from death and dreariness and unwanted dreams. Maya notices the dust storm as a source of agony as well as ecstacy.

The characters in Cry, the Peacock are compared to birds and animals. Gautama is compared to a horse, Maya to a cat and cobra. Maya is associated with peacocks also, whose agonised cry and knowledge of life and death become her own. She even identified herself with the dust storm in disturbed conditions. Besides these, the name Gautama is suggestive of possible mythic associations. He may be associated with Gautama Buddha, as Gautama Buddha left his
family and got absorbed in meditation, Gautama of *Cry, the Peacock* too, does not take much interest in his family and remains lost in his work - files, clients, other professional dealings. So Gautama like Gautama Buddha leads a life above family.

In *Cry, the Peacock*, there are numerous other images. Anita Desai employs these images in order to illuminate Maya's moods, obsessions and deteriorating psychic states and develop certain secondary symbolic implications. The botanical images projected in the novel are the image of sear *neem* trees and the image of the silk-cotton trees whose huge scarlet blooms were squashed into soft, yellow miasma. These images point out Maya's inner dryness - her infertility. Fifteen years have passed since she married but still is childless. So, her mental state is projected through these images. There are other botanical images - images of trees and flowers in the novel. There is the image of petunias and that of lemon blossoms. This is deployed in the novel by Anita Desai to show the difference between the sensibility of Gautama and Maya. Maya has to explain to Gautama what the blossoms of the lemon tree are like, when Gautama is unable to distinguish the smell of lemons from that of petunias. "The blossoms of the lemon tree were different, quite different; of much stronger, crisper character... Their scent, too, was more vivid ...."25 Maya's emotional as well as sexual starvation, her frustration, her dissatisfaction is expressed as:

In a damp, white handkerchief, gathered into a nest, lay a heap of white jasmine buds that the gardner had plucked from
the dawnfresh hedges that morning, for me to thread into garlands for my hair and wrists, and which, for some reason, I had forgotten... What dreams they conjured in swirls of scent, what passions, what scenes of love and farewell... having bruised them with my kisses and trembling, flung them against the mirror, at that feeling image to which they belonged, and backed out of the room which was now terrorised by the vast, purple shadows of a dreadful night.26

The zoological imagery in the novel is also quite powerful and integral to the theme of the novel. The image of the dead Toto, Maya's pet dog, at the very outset of the novel indicates the dominant death motif in the novel. "All day the body lay rotting in the sun... Crows sat in a circle around the corpse, and crows will eat anything..."27 This image of dead Toto is repeatedly used in the novel not only to indicate the death motif in the novel but also Maya's psychic disorder, her preoccupation with death - which is at its climax towards the end of the novel when she kills Gautama. The death of Toto reminds her of something darker, deeper and menacing. Maya observes many vague ideas fitting across her mind "thoughts, streaked distant and dark, haunting one's awareness."28 There are the images of many slimy creeping, crawling creatures also in the novel. These images - rats, snakes, lizards and iguanas - in addition to show Maya's deteriorating psyche, also reveal her suffocating obsessions. Maya's obsession with her barrenness is indicated through the image of rats suckling their young ones. "Rats will suckle their young most tenderly... then lashing
their tales, spreading plague."29 Maya even dreams of reptiles. She feels 'a parasite life, creeping across' when Gautama wipes her face. There is an image of caged monkeys on the railway platform. This image indicates Maya's loss of freedom, particularly after her marriage. An unforgettable organic image, the image of the albino astrologer, with his pale, opaque eyes which "gave him an appearance of morbidity"30 appears frequently in the novel. It creates confusion in Maya's consciousness and also helps greatly in developing the theme towards the climax.

In the novel, there are various dance images which are very artistically employed. As the title of the novel refers, there is the image of the dance of the peacocks. This image is remarkably significant to the theme of the novel. At the advent of the monsoon peacocks dance and their cry of Pia, Pia appears to Maya like:

Lover, Lover. Mio, mio - I die, I die... How they love the rain - these peacocks. They spread out their splendid tails and begin to dance, but, like Shiva's their dance of joy is the dance of death... Before they mate, they fight. They will rip each others' breasts to strips and fall, bleeding, with their beaks open and panting. When they have exhausted themselves in battle, they will mate.... Living, they are aware of death. Dying they are in love with life.31

For Maya the dance of the peacock merges with the image of the albino priest. It's cries merge with the sibilant whispers of the priest and its dance becomes the dance of death. There is another
significance of this image for Maya. She views her married life with Gautama as a deadly struggle in which one is destined to kill the other, just as the peacocks, madly in love, destroy each other. This image also suggests Gautama's failure to feel the innermost emotions and to listen to the pathetic cry of the anguished soul of Maya. Therefore, Maya symbolically substantiates the agonised cry of the peacocks when she commits suicide. The opposites of experience - poetry and passion, love and hatred, life and death - are identified with peacocks and its dance. Another powerful dance image occurring repeatedly in the novel is the image of Kathakali dancer. "It was the mad demon of Kathakali ballads, masked, with heavy skirts swirling, feet stamping, eyes shooting beams of fire. It was a phantom gone berserk, and, from a body of absolute white, assumed terrible colours, rose, out of realms of silence into one of thunderous drumming."\textsuperscript{32} This image, in a way, conveys Maya's sense of growing fatality. The cabaret dance is also quite relevant in the novel. This dance is followed by another image of the bear dance. Maya recollects bear dance as a childhood experience. So, the two images juxtaposed with each other transforms the phantasia of Maya's sub-conscious mind into a contemporary reality. Besides, these two images also point out the cruel exploitation in society. Another image in the novel is the image of dancing Shiva. Mythologically the dance of Shiva signifies the dance of death. But in the novel it has a new meaning. It is "a symbol of liberation"\textsuperscript{33} - a way out of the confusing predicament in which Maya finds herself trapped.
Stellar imagery - is also quite relevant in the novel. These images point out Maya's obsessions. One such image lays stress on Maya's deep obsession with death. "Death lurked in those spaces, the darkness spoke of distance, separation, loneliness..." This image, also points out the loneliness of Maya and the temperamental distance between her and her elderly husband, Gautama.

There is a lunar image also. The image appears a little before the death of Gautama at the hands of Maya, in a moon-lit night when Maya pushes Gautama off the roof. The image also shows the reason for immediate provocation - Gautama came between her and the worshipped moon

... behind the lines of trees that marked the horizon, the pale, hushed glow of the rising moon. I held him there, while I gazed at it watching the rim of it climb swiftly above the trees... And then Gautama made a mistake - his last, decisive one. In talking, gesturing, he moved in front of me. 'Gautama'! I screamed in fury and thrust out my arms towards him, out at him, into him and past him, saw him fall then, pass through an immensity of air, down to the very bottom

This lunar image indirectly suggests the death of Gautama and the moon in the sky is "not the gentle moon of ballads and fairy tales" but "a demoniac creature, the fierce dancer that had all day been trying to lead the threshold of my mind and home."

There is also a minor image, an image of rushing train "leaving the small signalman waving a pointless flag, lonely and sad at the door.
of his white washed hut in the middle of the desert."37 This image evokes an atmosphere of loneliness and signifies the loneliness of Maya. The mysterious memory that frightens Maya is described as 'indefinable unease' and this indefinable unease is described as a grain of sand that irked and itched, and was meaningless and yet the presence is very real. Fear is just like the giant shadows cast by the trees. Fear is also a serpent which rustles through the grass and moves with a horrifying swiftness towards Maya. Maya feels the sensation of snakes coiling and uncoiling their moist lengths all about her. She is so obsessed with death that, the cabaret, the bear dancing, the monkeys in the cage, the orchids kept in a basket in the verandha of the Lal's - all remind her of death.

Anita Desai makes use of certain native words. In Cry, the Peacock, she uses words such as paimana, tamanna, attar, sindoor, kumkum, sanyasi, yogi, raga, maidan, gulmohar, sola-topies and loo. She too writes, "Pia, pia they say. Lover, lover. Mio, mio - I die, I die."38 The imagery in the novel is Indian as Anita Desai describes its fauna and flora - Maya watches "faunt mauve petunias - sentimental irresolute flowers."39 Gautama is compared with a horse which signifies his animal blindness to the beauty of nature.

The novel is lyrical at places for when Anita Desai describes the oppressive odour of Toto, she writes like a lyric poet. "Once sweet, once loved, then suddenly, rotten and repulsive."40 To Maya the hand of Gautama appears "as cool and dry as the bark of an old shady tree."41 His words cut "my thoughts away like a surgeon,
expertly removing a boil."\textsuperscript{42} In another strong image Gautama drew away from her "thoughts of anguish which rose, every now and then, like birds that awake from dreams and rise out of their trees admist great commotion, circle a while, then settle again, on their branches."\textsuperscript{43} At another time, Maya feels that "the light in the verandah" is just like "an inward glow as of marble at sunset."\textsuperscript{44} Flowers seem to her stars "that had been pink and red in day light" and at night "white and strongly scented."\textsuperscript{45} Maya herself is described as a creature of song, dance and flower. There is also repetition of words in the novel and the repetition of words adds a rhythmic beauty of a lyric to the novel making Darshan Singh Maini call \textit{Cry, the Peacock} "a poetic novel."\textsuperscript{46} and "an extended ode in prose."\textsuperscript{47}

Anita Desai uses contrast for highlighting individual characters, moments and theme of the novel. The character of Gautama and Maya is depicted through their contrasting natures - where Gautama is rational, practical and believes in \textit{Bhagwad Gita} and even quotes it while Maya is sensitive and refined. In contrast with Maya, Gautama is prosaic in nature ignoring Maya's sexuality or sensitivity because when she proposes to go to some hill station in summer Gautama puts it down by calling it a luxury of the rich. Gautama is in no way romantic. When Maya tells Gautama to have their dinner in the dining room with the lights switched off, Gautama grumbles and says that he hoped that the light would be bright enough for him to spot a fly if it falls into his dinner.
In *Voices in the City*, though there are three voices in the novel— that of Monisha, Nirode and Amla, yet these voices are dominated by the voice of the city of Calcutta. In this novel, Anita Desai describes people and events by conceptualizing dreaming. Nirode dreams, not to escape from reality but to face the memory of his father and the past. He also dreams of a harmonious present while in actual reality he leads an unhappy life and hates his mother, does not open her letters, nor asks money from her and constantly dreams of forbidding her to carry on her affair with Major Chadha.

The title *Voices in the City*, itself is an example of technique. There is a confusion whether the city is more important or Nirode. "Thus although one may be tempted to consider Nirode as the hero of the novel, the city of Calcutta is indeed the invisible protagonist of the novel."\(^{48}\) No one can deny the importance of the city in the novel. The city has been described as an oppressive city, a dying city but all the same exercising a powerful influence on all the major characters. The novel is divided into sections - "Nirode", "Monisha", "Amla" and "Mother". The city does have influence on Nirode, Monisha and Amla but it does not have much influence on the mother, as she lives far away, far from the crowd at Kalimpong.

Symbolism in the novel is there in the form of the city of Calcutta - the hero, the invisible protagonist of the novel. The city combines beauty with ugliness and life with death. It is identified with a domineering mother, a dancer and the goddess Kali. It is both creative and destructive, divine and demonic. According to
A.V.Krishna Rao it "... conceived as a force of creation, preservation and destruction is ultimately identified as a symbol for the goddess Kali."\textsuperscript{49} The city of Calcutta has been described as a 'monster city'. It acts as a trap and also a bed of fertile soil for the artist which "Like Shelley's West Wind could become both his destroyer and preserver."\textsuperscript{50} Calcutta is the city without conscience which looks down at its inhabitants. Monisha finds living in Calcutta an ordeal. Dharma considers the city to be dead and feels that it is a poisoned city which kills its inhabitants.

As Nirode focusses obstruction, his personality becomes an obstructed one. He is sensitive and follows non-involvement - giving up worldly duties, is opposed to a career and is ready to face poverty, but would not accept other's money. He does not intend to lose his individuality and self-respect and wants to escape - escape this ugly world.

Amla symbolises an artist who lacks the right kind of sensibility. She drifts towards commercialism but afterwards starts appreciating the value of art even if it does not mean commercial gain and becomes "another Amla, a flowering Amla, translucent with joy and overflowing with a sense of love and reward."\textsuperscript{51} Dharma on the other hand is a symbol of "an ideal artist who does not believe in complete escape from the society but who creates his own world of animated nature to which to escape."\textsuperscript{52} He neither hates the society nor becomes bitter. He withdraws only "to create a new world of his own out of the seldom seen aspects of nature and to be happy"\textsuperscript{53} and
he finds nature refreshing. He also realizes the importance of human beings. David is a symbol of an artist who has faith in human beings but he keeps certain distance from others.

Anita Desai uses nature symbols to elucidate states of mind of her characters, for example there is a decaying nature in Monisha's house garden which externalises the mental state of Monisha as though she has been sucked out of vitality while the garden shows negative aspects of nature. Everything is chaotic in the garden like in the life of Monisha and here with depressing effect, nature instead of being life giving and refreshing is as though sucking the blood of human beings.

In *Voices in the City* there are meteorological images - the images of fog, mist and air are reflecting the inner confusion, suffocation and frustration of Nirode. His emotions are reflected through these images.

In that muddy river air he caught a whiff of the stench of that office going bus, the stench of hair freshly and sweetly oiled, of shoes newly blackened, and then that office odour of thick white glue and soiled paper. Revulsion held him, so huge a distaste and horror filled him that he felt empowered by it. So here the 'muddy river air' conveys deep disgust in Nirode. The images of filth, ugliness, decay and disintegration depicting the seamy side of Calcutta with,

... rain steaming down, washing over him evenly, lushly... the crowds had melted away and only a solitary rickshaw -
heroically mobile amidst all the waterlogged vehicles - churned and splashed nobly through, it was easy to leave in Dharma's prophecy, to see in the annual monsoon the shape and design of the final dissolution.\textsuperscript{55}

reflect Nirode's situation.

There is a beautiful synaesthetic imagery that Anita Desai uses to portray the crowds, cacophony, maddening hubub and uproar of Calcutta. All these images suggest restlessness in creatures living in the metropolitan city and facing its problems. Light and dark hues - a part of colour imagery, suggest the emotional imbalance of Monisha and Nirode. This imagery also suggests their futile desire for solitude in the crowded city of Calcutta. Nirode's defeatist mentality and his dread of future failures is also revealed through this very imagery.

Nirode ... only saw the tedious stability of this one light amidst all the uneven glare that issued from the tea shops... He remained in the half-dark - and each light on that street served to show up an expanse of wall, a doorway, a balcony that was darkly shadowed - and bled with longing to go.\textsuperscript{56}

There are certain other images of darkness. A particular image in the part II of the novel suggests Monisha's inner struggle against the forces of life. It also suggests her surrender to the forces of life. Besides, it denotes the loneliness and frustration of Monisha "I'll have only the darkness. Only the dark spaces between the stars, for they are the only things on earth that can comfort me... This, this empty
darkness, has not so much as a dream. It is one until waste, a desert
to which my heart truly belongs."57

In *Voices in the City,* Anita Desai evokes the image of an
animal seeking its prey, like a predator. In an evocative scene, a horse
falls on the ground while running and is hurt. A flock of birds come to
peck on it, torturing the animal. In the same manner Calcutta swoops
down on its hapless victims and tortures them - its inhabitants become
its preys. Nirode, Monisha and Amla - groan and gasp for life in
Calcutta. Monisha is intuitively aware of this and calls Calcutta the
"devil city"58 and "the unrelenting city."59 So much so that she gets
annihilated by this monster city. Amla though a very cheerful, career
conscious girl, feels Calcutta to be "the monster city that lived no
normal, healthy, red-blooded life but one that was subterranean,
underlit, stealthy and odorous of mortality."60 She also calls Calcutta
"this hash city"61 and "this incidious city."62 She repents a lot for
coming to Calcutta from Bombay. She complains that "this city...
conspires against all who wish to enjoy it..."63 She feels badly
dejected. Though Amla and Nirode are not killed by this 'monster city',
the city treats them no better making them experience emotional and
spiritual sterility which symbolically is a state of mental deadness.
They are left emotionally mauld and shattered and therefore, the three
- Nirode, Monisha and Amla are preys and victims of this 'devil city'
Calcutta.

The other images in the novel are the images of Goddess Kali
and the street singer. The image of the street singer is merged with
the Eternal Mother, the Mother Earth image in Monisha's vision. This merger suggests the merger of the realistic - the street singer, with the symbolic - the Goddess Kali.

... the face was that of the Eternal Mother, the Earth Mother, a face ravaged by the most unbearable emotions of woman, darkened and flayed and scarred by them, giving that large mouth a tortured and pitiful down-thrust... Monisha, shrinking away, felt certain that a glance of those enormous and brilliant black eyes would dissolve disintegrate her into meaningless shadow.

The whole encounter of Monisha with the street dancer clears in a flash the true nature of her existences to Monisha. She realizes the futility of her life, her captivity in the big traditional house and suddenly urges for freedom and tranquility that the mother earth symbolizes and this catharsis leads her to her tragic end.

Other images in the novel are - the image of the river, the bird and the kite. All these images suggest release from the cruelty of the city, which all the three - Nirode, Monisha and Amla yearn for. Nirode craving for freedom from the dread of Calcutta thinks that, "One must be a king kite wheeling so far away in the glazing empty sky as to be merely a dot, almost invisible to the urchins..."

In the novel, Anita Desai makes use of Indian words and expressions as loongi, dhoti, pan, pulaos, tandoori chicken, carrot halwa, mohalla, patrika, vina, guru, yogi, Calcutta-wallah, box-wallah, sandesh. Though the imagery in the novel, that evokes Indian
atmosphere, is not much, there are a few images in which women are 'tender as April mangoes' and young boys 'bright as banana trunks' and the sky is 'blue as a marriage shawl'. Women in the house of Monisha look towards Amla, when she visits Monisha "with faces like freshly baked bread."66 The city - Calcutta, is described as "a stagnant aquarium"67 and the people in the city of Calcutta are compared to "gutter rats" and "apparitions seen in delirium tremens."68 The inclination for the sound of words is also present in Voices in the City. As Monisha writes in her diary "But Nirode was clever, he came when he knew Giban was away at the office,... Rumble rumble creak jolt and tumble. Down the street and down the street we go. Where to, Sir? Leave us on the Maidan."659 providing a musical, rhythmic quality to the prose.

The novel Bye-Bye Blackbird is divided into three parts. The first part is without heading and the second and third are entitled 'Discovery and Recognition' 'Departure' respectively. This division is related to the thematic content of the novel. Anita Desai has divided it to express her theme more systematically and effectively. In Bye-Bye Blackbird, England, just as Calcutta in Voices in the City, attracts and repels. It is symbolic of a golden world, on the surface and hard and cold world underneath. Both Dev and Adit are the prey. Though initially Dev is repelled by its coldness as he is humiliated and discriminated against for not being an English, he reconciles to it later. On the other hand, Adit is initially charmed by its glamour and is unconcerned towards its coldness, but once he realises reality, he leaves for India.
Thus, England "appears as a siren and a temptress that draws the excolonials with" its golden fingers and "treates them like lovers who are desired and then abandoned." Thus, England "appears as a siren and a temptress that draws the excolonials with" its golden fingers and "treates them like lovers who are desired and then abandoned."70 *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, in other words indicates the protagonist (Dev's) discovery of England as the black bird and his final good bye to it.

Though *Bye-Bye Blackbird* is weak in imagery, there are a few images of certain importance. One is the image of Clapham tube station. This image depicts the claustrophobia in Dev.

Dev ventures into the city. He descends, deeper and deeper, into the white-tiled bowels of Clapham tube station. Down into the stark caverns artificially lit... Dev is swamped inkily with a great dread of being caught, struck in the underground by some accident, some collapse, and being slowly suffocated to a worm's death, never to emerge into freshness and light.71

Another image is of Bettersea power station, which is described as "the massive great temple of power, pouring vast billows of dark smooth into an empty, breathless slay."72 Dev feels greatly impressed by this 'temple of power'. He feels "the pooja being conducted" in it and hears "the clanging of great gongs and the blowing of long horns and the singing of sweet hymns."73

In the novel, there are a few lunar images also. One such lunar image points to Dev's wavering mind as to whether or not he should stay on in England: "In the night, Dev lay on his back, smoking a cigarette and watching the moon fill the pool of the ceiling with its thin
polar light in which the long weeds and fronds of garden shadows langurously swayed and danced..."75

In this novel also, music in words persists and there is also a touch of echo: "the drum, the trombone and the electric guitar assaulted them with its persistent beat - thrum, thrum, thrum."76 At another place, the Indians eat, "'ahh, roti and dal' said someone on the carpet, slurp, slurp."77

Besides, Anita Desai makes use of poetry, uses quotes from poems to convey the mood. The title of the novel Bye-Bye Blackbird itself is an extract from a poem quoted more than once in this novel and it refers to Dev's farewell to immigrant Asians in England. In the novel, the poem is quoted at many places and it conveys different moods at different places. When, for the first time the poem is quoted in the novel, it is in quite carefree atmosphere. At a second place, the atmosphere is of maladjustment and sorrow - Adit being restless in the alien country where people do not understand him. The poem suggests the change, which is gradual, in Adit. At first, Adit feels quite satisfied in England but gradually realises his hollow existence and feels dissatisfied and decides to leave England for good. The poem once again appears at the end of the novel quite significantly. "Make my bed - light the light, I will arrive late tonight. Blackbird, Bye-Bye."78

The poem describes different stages of Adit's character and also the change in his perception of England. Another poem in chapter II gives the message to live life ungrudgingly. In chapter IV there is a German song also. Anita Desai also uses the technique of contrast to focus on
and highlight the difference of attitudes, behaviour patterns, responses and cultures through her protagonists, who also become symbols of the culture they represent. Similarly, some of the colloquial expressions are used by the novelist to give immediacy to the narrative.

Another novel Where Shall We Go This Summer? is divided into three parts. These are 'Monsoon ('67)', 'Winter ('47)' and 'Monsoon ('67)'. This refers to the present and the past of the novel and also to the childhood and youth of the protagonist Sita. Monsoon refers to the deluge of her emotions, winter refers to the emotional sterility, barrenness and 'cold' alienation she faces, whereas monsoon of the third part refers to the purging - the washing away of her fear - reconciliation and return to reality. Bombay represents reality and the Island of Manori a world of fantasy. T.S.Anand observes: "Her desire to bear the child and return with Raman to the land signifies her return to life, community and society inspite of the debased dullness of life..." So, the division of the novel refers to the world of reality, the world of fantasy and the world of reality again. The novel forms one whole as the plot revolves around Sita.

Sita's going to the island of Manori symbolizes her attempt to revive fantasy, magic, innocence and childhood. Her very name Sita connotes exile which stands for estrangement and detachment. Thus Sita goes to the island, away from society with her two children like the mythic Sita who went in the jungles with her husband and brother-in-law. The city, in the novel, is symbolic of secure and rational life though bore, dull and infested with class distinctions. The island, on
the other hand, symbolises reality, simplicity and individuality. The sea is symbolic of mystery - tempting, unfathomable and dreadful. According to M.K.Naik, the island is "an evocative symbol of a lost paradise." But "this quest for a lost beauty and innocence (by Sita) is doomed to fail because it never existed." Smoking can be injurious to the foetus. So, Sita’s habit of smoking is symbolic of her desire not to give birth to the baby. There is also bird imagery in the novel. So, the crows attack on an eagle and its killing is symbolic of Sita’s plight amid violence prevalent in the society. As for Maya in *Cry, the Peacock*, the dance of peacock is the symbol of love and death, Sita considers herself as a wounded eagle. The crows that kill an eagle represent the callous society around her.

In *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* Sita and Raman may be associated with Sita and Rama of the *Ramayana*. Sita of the novel is pregnant, when she goes to the island of Manori, just as the legendary Sita is pregnant when she is given the second exile, when her chastity is suspected. Anita Desai herself connected that to her the name Sita conjured up exile and loneliness, though Sita and Raman lack marital harmony of Sita and Rama.

Violence is a recurring motif in the novel used to indicate the state of mind or emotional reactions of Sita to a given situation. For instance, she feels concerned at the sight of crows attacking the wounded eagle. With the help of pop-gun she tries in vain to "keep away the crows that were attacking a wounded eagle on a neighbouring rooftop." This image of violence is the most memorable...
There is the pursuit of the prey by the predator which is very ghastly and unendurable. Another prey and predator image depicts an important aspect of an over-crowded city like Bombay where cannibalism is common and the crows are symbolic of this everyday cannibalism. They form a sort of ‘shadow civilization’:

Crows formed the shadow civilization in that city of flats and alleys. She watched them from the balcony, hopping clownishly about the rocks... There was always much black drama in this crow theatre - murder infanticide, incest, theft and robbery, all were much practiced by these rough, raucous, rasping, tatter-demalions.\(^8\)\(^3\)

There is another zoological image in the novel, an image of a dead jellyfish. This image depicts Sita's psychic state. Besides, it reveals her futile quest for 'the miracle' of keeping her fifth baby unborn. Sita, at a later stage in the novel rightly understands that "life must be continued, and all its business - Maneka’s admission to medical college gained, wife led to hospital, new child safely brought forth, the children reared, the factory seen to, a salary earned, a salary spent."\(^8\)\(^4\)

Another image of an island depicts the conflicting demands of protection and independence. Sita, who feels insecure in her surroundings, looks towards the island for protection, but gets nothing except the coldness of the islanders who do not want to talk to her and the palms "hissing and clattering their dry leaves together harshly, like some disturbed, vigilant animals,"\(^8\)\(^5\) and the house that looks like "a waste of ashes" and the "cold remains of the bonfire her father had
lived here to the blaze." Sita's futility of visiting Manori island is conveyed through the image of darkness. "So they stood despairing in deep veranda, the white doors of the house all swinging outwards, revealing the crowded darkness inside..." Sita visited Manori island "for the miracle of keeping her baby unborn," but her visit proved quite futile.

There are images of sea and sunshine, flowers and butterflies which reveal Sita's cheerful moods as well as a sense of regeneration in nature.

Besides these, Anita Desai uses the house image to emphasize Sita's living in an illusory world. In Bombay, she lives in a flat on a height. In Manori island she comes to live in a house built by her father. She had her childhood memories and expected the house to be well maintained but when she visits the house she "... saw what had become the house in twenty years of absence - a waste of ashes... Ashes, white and waste. Dust lay as casually... The odour was of bats and mildew and silence boomed..." Afterwards, she realizes the futility of living in the illusory world, recognises the hard realities of life and she returns to Bombay. Sita's living in a house - whether in Bombay on a height or on Manori island, also reflects Sita's conception of her self, her ego.

Indian words like chelas, burka, sari, mantra, bhajan, raga, tanpura, dervishes, swaraj, lota appear in Where Shall We Go This Summer? In this novel, her ideas are translated into English, the Indian way as "you have broken all the buds!" and "slapped cakes of mud
flat on the sand." She quotes serious poems which perform the task of revelation to Sita. Sita realizes that her husband - Raman, has the courage to face the realities of life and she has "... the courage of being a coward. He who refuses does not repent. Should he be asked again, he would say No again..." In another poem Anita Desai suggests that one has to make compromises to live in this world. A poem by Lawrence in the novel inspires Sita to lead her life properly, to accept reality - to face the responsibilities and discharge her duties, to go back to Bombay and let the things happen naturally without obstruction - deliver the baby.

In *Fire on the Mountain* flashback technique is used in narrating the story. The story revolves around Nanda Kaul, who by choice and circumstances is forced to lead a life of seclusion. Symbolism comes with the forest fire which is "symbolic of an impending tragedy that occurs in the end of the novel." Nanda Kaul's withdrawal from Kasauli to deserted Carignano is symbolic of her fourth stage of life - sanyas. Therefore, Carignano becomes sanyas ashram. "It was the place, and the time of life, that she had wanted and prepared for all her life." She does not want any intrusion or interference. She fancies herself to be detached like a charred tree. Her possession of the statue of Buddha symbolizes her desires to be detached like Buddha but she cannot remain detached completely. The postman brings letters to her and becomes symbolic of vicarious association with the stages of grihastya and vanprastha - the stages
Fire on the Mountain is quite rich in imagery. It is uniquely significant as far as imagery is concerned. There are several images - botanical, zoological, atmospheric, nature and colour images in the novel. These images render the text quite rich, exhibits Desai's artistic skill and prepares the atmosphere for the tragedy that occurs in the end. The first botanical image, that occurs in the beginning of the novel, is the image of pine trees. This image clearly shows Nanda Kaul's desire to merge with the trees in order to avoid the intrusion of others in her life and to enjoy the privacy. "She stepped backwards into the garden and the wind suddenly billowed up and threw the pine branches about as though to curtain her ... she fancied she could merge with the pine trees and be mistaken for one. To be a tree, no more and no less, was all she was prepared to undertake."95 But Nanda Kaul finds her "privacy achieved only at the very end of her life"96 threatened, when she gets the news of the visit of her great-grand-daughter Raka to Carignano. She feels very disappointed. Nanda Kaul finds it difficult to maintain her hard earned privacy and isolation. To Raka too, Nanda Kaul looks like "another pine tree, and grey sari a rock."97 Another image the image of 'yellow rose creeper' depicts the withering of her hope to maintain privacy, isolation. The "yellow rose creeper (that) had blossomed so youthfully last month but was now reduced to an exhausted mass of grey creaks and groans again."98
In the novel, zoological imagery is quite significant. Prey and predator imagery, which shows her tragic vision of life is repeatedly used in the novel. Apart from the examples from animal world, Anita Desai employs the examples from the human world. Just as in our society one human being preys upon his fellow being for mean, selfish motives. A significant example of prey-and-predator imagery is, when Preet Singh, first, assaults and then rapes and murders old Ila Das. He murders Ila Das only because, as a Welfare Officer, she dissuades him from marrying his seven-year-old daughter to an old widower having six children, a quarter of an acre of land and two goats. Another image depicts a horde of mischievous school boys who surround Ila Das and insultingly assault her on her way to Carignano. This image is just an extension of the prey-and-predator imagery used in the novel. Besides, it serves as a prelude to the main tragedy to which Ila Das falls an easy prey.

Various zoological images are there to characterise Raka. Raka is compared to various objects. She is described as "one of those dark crickets that leap up in fright but do not sing or a mosquito flown up from the plains to tease and worry,"99 "lizard-like,"100 "she were a thousand black mosquitoes; a stilly humming conglomerate of them,"101 "an insect browsing through the sandy loam and pine-needles of the hill sides,"102 "a pet insect,"103 "higher than the eagles"104 and "an uninvited mouse or cricket."105
Several images of birds and beasts are also used in the novel to show the moods of Nanda Kaul. One such image that shows Nanda Kaul’s inner uneasiness is:

... she stooped now to pick up a bright apricot from the short, dry grass. It had been squashed by its fall and she flung it away. Immediately, a bright hoopee, seeing its flight and flash, struck down at it and tore at its bright flesh, then flew off with a lump in its beak...¹⁰⁶

There are a few images of destruction also, in the novel. The most significant is the image of forest fire. There is also an image of burnt house at the top of the hill. It reflects the wild nature of Raka who feels irresistibly drawn towards the ravaged, destroyed and barren spaces in Kasauli. There are the images of langoors with their destructive habits also. These images signify Raka’s taste and Nanda Kaul’s distaste and fear as well. There is nature imagery in the novel in the context of Raka’s character. Raka is attracted towards the unpleasant aspects of nature like, the barren spaces of the valley. As she is deprived of parental love, she finds solace and interest in nature in her wilder mood instead of family or society. The barren nature that attracts her is suggestive of emotionally barren family background from which she comes.

There are images of light and dark also. Among them one example is "cattle browsed homewards to small hidden hamlets in the valleys, all grew safer and greyer till it was quite dark and lights come out where she had not. There was any habitation at all - single lamps
here and there in Kasauli... In the novel various sound images are also displayed. There is rustles and flutters of leaves and twigs, flowers and wings and the chirps and cries of birds and animals.

Just like Where Shall We Go This Summer?, in this novel also, there is a house imagery which illuminates the life of Nanda Kaul. Like Sita, Nanda Kaul too, lives in a house, Carignano, which is situated on a height but unlike Sita, she lives there under compulsion, after being deserted by her sons and daughters after the death of her husband. Carignano defines Nanda Kaul's life as it used to be quite lively before independence, Nanda Kaul too led a terribly busy life before this freedom which she achieved in her old age. In her youth she remained busy ordering servants, entertaining guests and tending to children. Thus, there is a symbolic similarity between Carignano and Nanda Kaul.

There is a remarkable meteorological image of chill in the novel. It occurs just before Ila is raped and strangulated to death. It prefigures Ila's stagnation.

Although it had been hot all day, now there was a chill like a white mist beginning to creep out... and set Ila Das, in her frayed, worn laces and silks, shivering. The day gone, the light gone, the warmth of life gone, it was like wandering lost in Chinese landscape...

In this novel, in the words of Shiv K. Kumar, there are words in tangled sentence structures. There are images of "a charred tree trunk
in the forest, a broken pillar of marble in the desert, a lizard on the stone wall.”

In the novel Anita Desai uses poetry as well. There is a poem in the novel which shows the character of Nanda Kaul. Nanda Kaul does not want to lead a busy, worrisome life, always performing the duties. She wants to be away from such a life and lead a carefree, calm life in some secluded area in the lap of nature. This desire is significantly displayed in the poem. The colour of the bruised thigh of Nanda Kaul is described as "the putrid colours of old meat." The embrace of Nanda Kaul and her great-grand-daughter Raka is described as "there was sound of bones colliding. Each felt how bony, angular and unaccommodating the other was."

Value reversal is another device used in the novel. Nanda Kaul wants to enjoy her loneliness and desolation without any intrusions from the world outside but later in the novel she permits intrusions to destroy her quiet desolation. In the novel absurd and noncontexual elements are used to create surrealistic effects. As in the novel, the last scene with Nanda Kaul’s bent head, the telephone hanging and the telephone cord dangling as Raka announces about the forest fire, is a good example of such an effect. Fantasy is also there in the novel. This is an important aspect of the novel. "It develops the theme of adventure, the attraction of the unusual... fantasy lies here in the narrative technique which combines the realistic and the romantic moods. It is not character which is important but incident or situation." In the novel, it is Nanda Kaul, a grown up person who
goes into the world of fantasy. In order to engage attention of Raka, Nanda Kaul spins several fantastic tales about her father, whereas, it is interesting that the child - Raka, does not go in the world of fantasy. She is an unnatural child, who is emotionally deprived and keeps her to herself. She shows no interest in the fantastic tales of Nanda Kaul.

In Clear Light of Day, Anita Desai makes use of flashback technique which is appropriate, since the novel covers a long period of time, a generation. She has very skilfully woven the past with the present. Brijraj Singh appropriately compares the novel to "an extended piece of music, subtle, sensitive, sensuous in its line and melody but also complex and richly integrated in its total effect." The plot is woven around Bim and Tara.

The title Clear Light of Day too is appropriate which refers to Bim's awakening in clear light of the day. The title refers to Bim's revelation that removes clouds of grudge, dissatisfaction and depression because of Raja's trecherous behaviour. The dust storm in the novel is symbolic of the destructive power of nature while Bim and the koel symbolize the creative force. Both please everyone and displease none. Bim in her attempt to take care of everyone, ignoring her humiliations and others ingratitude becomes "symbolic of mother India herself who accommodates all, rejects none." Bim's act of clearing away all old papers becomes symbolic of her clearing away of all barriers before readjustment and reconciliation can take place.

Anita Desai uses the house image in the novel to vivify the moods of Tara, to shed light on the character of Bim and evoke the
sense of desolation and desertion. It also signifies silence. Tara's dullness and boredom are prominently shown through this imagery. She returns to an old house in Old Delhi and experiences the same feelings of dullness and boredom which she had in the early part of her life in the same house. "It seemed to her that the dullness and the boredom of her childhood, her youth, were stored here in the room under the worn dusty red rugs... still preserved here as if this were the storeroom of some dull, uninviting provincial museum."115

The old well connotes the dark unfathomable depths of life from which escape is not possible. The drowning of the cow symbolizing the impossibility of escape from the well off life for Bim. Similarly, the bees that attack Bim indicate the problems that surround and attack her in life and from which Tara, by marrying, has escaped. Bim's encounter, at the time when Tara requests Bim to attend the marriage ceremony of Raja's eldest daughter, too, are depicted through two zoological images: "Bim said nothing. In the small silence a flock of mynahs suddenly burst out of the green domes of the trees and in a loud commotion of yellow beaks and brown wings, disappeared into the sun. While their shrieks and crakles still rang in the air..."116 There is also an image of pigeon's cooing, which conveys Tara's restlessness and irritation caused by the confusion in the house and the heat of summer in Delhi. There are other images of 'snail' and 'sisyphus' and Bim is compared to these. She sacrifices all the pleasures of her life and remains single to look after her mentally retarded brother, Baba, and widowed aunt Mira, just like a 'snail' or a 'sisyphus' for it implies
the endless effort involved for Bim and the unfinished/unrewarded nature of work that she will need to do continually without any respite.

In *Clear Light of Day*, Anita Desai uses music and responses to it as a test of the protagonists sensitivity and maturity. In the novel music becomes symbolic of the intuitive understanding of oneself and of the reality that lies submerged under appearances. Music provides a structure to the plot. The HMV gramophone, blunt needles, old records with scratches, the mysterious silence of the listener and his ghastly long arms fit the atmosphere of the decaying old Delhi. All these emphasize the loneliness and desolation of Bim, too. In the novel, Anita Desai uses music as a background to reinforce the situation in the novel. The novel opens with the music of koels and closes with a master singer's voice singing the poetry of Iqbal. In between we have scratches and squeaks of old records. In the novel there are lines of Emily Dickinson 'Memory is a strange bell - Jubilee and Knell'. These lines make clear the fact that memories of the past have a significant place in the novel. Past and present are juxtaposed. In the case of mentally retarded Baba, memory is all the more significant as in his mind certain impressions keep recurring. Another important poet quoted in the novel is Iqbal and it shows Raja's intense interest in Urdu poetry. The poem by T.S.Eliot in the novel describes that as time passes nothing really change, only the pattern of things change. In an interview in 1980, Anita Desai said "... Basically my pre-occupation was with recording the passage of time. I was trying to write a four dimensional piece on how a family's life moves backwards and
forwards in a period of time. My novel is about time as a destroyer, as preserver...“\textsuperscript{117}

The title of another novel \textit{Baumgartner’s Bombay} is straightforward. Anita Desai portrays the mind of Baumgartner, his confusion and maladjustment in his own country and in his adopted country and also the pathos of his life - that how he wanted to be accepted, but is never accepted in his own country Germany or in his adopted country India. The novel has an epigraph from T.S.Eliot which states that in his beginning is his end. This is quite significant in the sense that Baumgartner’s life, except for his short happy childhood is full of frustrations and misery. Since after leaving Germany he led a tough life.

In the novel, Anita Desai uses a variety of English. Baumgartner, in the novel comes across different kinds of English. Even the Indian pronunciation of English in Bombay - through transcription - is used to give a realistic touch. "Ex-pawt. Of course, ex-pawt. Germany, Europe, shipping, timber - I know, I know."\textsuperscript{118} Another variety of English is spoken by the two British soldiers in the compartment of the train, from Bombay to Calcutta. Their English is foreign to Baumgartner. "... Baumgartner could not understand a word, was not certain even that it was English." It seemed to him that "They rolled their words in their mouths, like potatoes...“\textsuperscript{119} Another kind of English is spoken by prostitutes, standing on the street in Calcutta. "Hoo-hoo, To-mmy, .. less have drink, come awn."\textsuperscript{120} Still another variety of English is spoken by the British soldiers, when Baumgartner
tries to convince them that he is not a Nazi German but a refugee in India. The officer does not listen to him and says "Stop that whining and show me your passport, will you? That's all yer asked for - yer passport, hear?"121 "What om I to do then..."122

The title of the novel In Custody is also fully appropriate. It indicates the captivity of its protagonists either in their desire or in the influence that the others excercise over their lives. Deven is the true disciple of Nur and that he would keep his poetry in safe custody. There is another implication of the title also. Deven makes much effort to interview the poet. And when the interview does take place it is just a fiasco because the tape recorder is not operated properly. But Nur and his wife keep pestering Deven for money. So, it seems that Deven's life is in custody of Nur and his family. There are references to poetry also, in the novel. The poets quoted in the novel are the famous romantics - Byron, Shelley and Keats and the lines are from the poems - Ode to the Westwind, Ode to a Nightingale and La Belle Dame Sans Merci, indicating Deven's romantic, poetic, human nature and his love for aesthetics as opposed to his wife's materialism.

Thus Anita Desai is a prolific writer who uses different fictional techniques according to the demands of the story. She successfully narrates the story, portrays the characters, conveys the moods, evokes the atmosphere, probes the psyche of her characters by using flashback technique, stream of consciousness technique, contrasting characters, symbolism and effective use of language to create the realistic effect.
Kamala Markandaya is also a first rate teller of tales. The different narrative techniques have rendered her novels highly gripping. These novels capture the undivided attention of the readers throughout their narration revealing her dramatic power, her remarkable capacity for aesthetic control and selection. She is a fine craftsman and her novels have well made plots without any secondary plots. There is nothing immaterial in her works. We cannot eliminate anything from her works without causing serious damage to the structural harmony. In her novels, "the plot is unfolded step by step there is rapid denouement after the climax." Kamala Markandaya is not concerned with psychological characterization and she takes more interest in the story and social comment. Therefore, her fiction is largely sociological in its focus and her novels give a faithful account of contemporary Indian reality. "What distinguishes her most incisively from other Indian novelists is her acute awareness of a gradual shift in values that has been taking place in this subcontinent during the past two decades or so." Therefore, Kamala Markandaya is concerned with the contemporary Indian society, the changing ethos of post-independence India, particularly the rural areas in the South and she records very efficiently the changes that are taking place and to convey this social awareness she uses the techniques corresponding to this. Uma Parmeswaran comments on the structural qualities common to the first five novels.

"The plots unweave at a sure and swift pace. There are no secondary plots, no political or philosophical digressions, no
lyrical descriptions, or extraneous characterizations. The narratives are continuous and the lapses of time between incidents are often dismissed in a phase. This gives forward surging motion to the stories."125

The stories have usually a circular pattern. The beginning and end of the novel are closely connected creating a circular structure. In most of her novels, the narrative thread is almost invariable woven of three things a personal story, a social background and a wider conflict. All novels have a straight chronological narrative.

Kamala Markandaya, in her novels, employs some significant symbols and images, which depict the motifs and the complex mental workings of her characters and also evoke her tragic vision of life. These symbols and imagery add to the aesthetic value and also increases the interpretation scope. The parallels are effective, powerful and eloquent. They help in perceiving and articulating reality effectively. In the novels of Kamala Markandaya, images arise out of the physical abnormality of characters, the dispossessed and of racial prejudice and cruelty to animals. Various kinds of imagery employed in the fiction of Kamala Markandaya is house imagery, tannery imagery, city imagery, jungle imagery, insect imagery, colour imagery. Kamala Markandaya uses symbolism and imagery just like Anita Desai, but not to the extent as Anita Desai uses symbols and images.

Kamala Markandaya manipulates traditional elements of the novel to suit her artistic purpose. She does not use such narrative techniques as confessional mode, diary mode and symbolistic mode as
used by Anita Desai. However, occasionally she resorts to flashback, interior monologue and stream of consciousness technique. But normally, she follows straightforward narration with great efficiency, dexterity and effectiveness.

The remarkable feature about the plots in the novels of Kamala Markandaya is that the stories are inconclusive. The end points to the ever-moving wheel of life. K.S. Narayana Rao writes aptly "The stories do not end in the spirit of 'And they lived happily ever after.' It is as though they suggest the seeming endlessness of life cycle... A narrative unit might be over but the life's narrative does not end. The novels conclude but they are not quite conclusive, obviously for an intended artistic effect."126

A variety of other narrative techniques as continuous narration, clear description and dramatic dialogues, make her a skilful narrative genius. In the novels, she gives description of senses or situation and narration of events in sequential order with the emphasis on causality. She is good at description, whether it be of scene or setting. "She is careful in choosing appropriate details which cumulatively present the picture before the reader."127 In her novels, the description of rains and storms, villages and cities, men and women are so good that they can be compared with pictures. The descriptions are immediately brought to a halt and followed by short, crisp and racy dialogues.

Language is also quite important, as its function is to convey in words which the painter does through colour - the impression of
reality in its various shades and dimensions. Kamala Markandaya exhibits a superb command over the English language in which she narrates her stories. She handles the language with remarkable ease and naturalness and she uses it with grace and pliability, now fast, now slow, now standing still. The long and short sentences, even sentence fragments make her style alive and breathing. At times her style is rich, sparkling with luxurious details. At other times, her style is reflective and philosophical. She uses flawless and chaste English.

Her narratives run forward without any barriers, free from unnecessary adornments. There is no commentary or criticism on character. She handles the medium with the touch of a consummate artist. In fact, "the most prominent feature of her early writing is her simple and effective language ... her language flows, even and beautiful, like the Ganga in the plains."128 Her language is not a translated language. She never blends it with the flavour of any regional dialect. She does not indulge in literal translations of Indian words and expressions. She articulates her feelings and thoughts, very intensely without paying any heed to taboo words or unnecessary Indianisms. Her expressions are forceful and lively and her idioms and phrases are precise and controlled to the last detail: "Kamala Markandaya's is not a translated language. She does not attempt to adopt vernacular idiom or tone; the language of her earlier work is always unobtrusively pure. Yet she succeeds in bringing out the texture of the social classes by varying the degree of simplicity and articulation."129 Markandaya's style:
...is totally devoid of rhetorical raptures and lyrical effusions, as may be seen in Anita Desai; it is free from philosophical reflections and metaphysical abstractions as witnessed in Raja Rao, B.Rajan and Arun Joshi. Although it admits of the ardent social considerations of Mulk Raj Anand, Bhawani Bhattacharya and Ruth Prawar Jhabvala, it is not committed to any particular ideology of doctrine. And though it is wedded to wit and irony, at least on appropriate occasions, it does not show its propensity for the sense of humour that one usually encounters in the enlivening comic style of R.K.Narayan and Ruth Jhabvala.130

Only occasionally she uses symbolic, ironical, reflective language. Her style achieves poetic heights when she describes nature. She is much concerned for accuracy and effectiveness. She handles the dialogues in the novels excellently. Dialogues seem to be realistic encompassing almost the entire gamut of human emotions and she solves the problem of direct realism by practically doing away with straight dialogue between Indians. There are very few between her Indian characters, and here she uses some rather standard Indianisms - rather needlessly - such as the omission of articles and the transformation of a statement into a question by adding a questionmark (the voice would be suitably inflected) at the end... Kamala Markandaya is obviously more at home with the conversational style of
Autobiographical mode of narration is also used by Kamala Markandaya. Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* has a circular pattern. It is circular in the sense that it ends where it begins. Rukmani narrates the harrowing tale of her life after she has returned to her village bereft of her husband. Rukmani’s recollection ends where it begins. The opening paragraph of the novel begins: "Sometimes at night I think that my husband is with me again, coming through the mists and we are tranquil together..." The novel ends as "The days went by, Nathan no longer beside me; no more Ashes and dust, scattered to winds, moistened by the rain, unrecognisable I picked up the fragments of my life and put them together, all but the missing place..."

The story has a straight narrative, which may be divided into two parts. One part deals with Rukmani’s life as a wife of the peasant and the problems of such a life. The second part deals with the wandering of Nathan and Rukmani in the old age, in search of their son and the misfortune and:

In a detached and yet not wholly unemotional manner, Rukmani recalls the events of her life in a chronological manner. The dream like quality of her recollection is particularly impressive. Rukmani recaptures the tragic intonation of her life in a clear, lyrical manner. She misses
nothing, not a detail. Divided into short chapters, which have psychological advantage of keeping the reader's interest, the story purports to be a narrative of events in the life of narrator.\textsuperscript{134}

The whole thing is cleverly contrived to capture the readers' sympathy for the poor and the destitute, such as Rukmani. Prof. R.S.Singh writes "The writer has probably exaggerated the circumstantial pressures on the narrator to create tragic effects... the whole thing is engineered, contrived a little too cleverly, rather than developed on chance events alone."\textsuperscript{135} In the novel, action is subordinated to an individual's thoughts and feelings. The narrative highlights Rukmani's reactions to the events of her life and not so much to the happenings themselves.

The novel is in the first person narrative, narrated by the woman in nostalgic mood and "Every time the story begins when the narrator gets into the mood of recollection, and ends when the experiences of a whole conscious life lead to a moment of decision to shake off her ambivalent attitude."\textsuperscript{136} Rukmani - a woman - narrates the story. She tells her actual experience and ends after learning the lesson for her remaining life. Therefore, the point of view presented in it is that of a woman, and Kamala Markandaya by "choosing the central character as the narrator, solves the problem of 'point of view' a problem which Henry James discussed variously in terms of the 'large lucid reflector' and the 'central consciousness'!"\textsuperscript{137} In this novel, Kamala Markandaya freely develops the point of view of a woman. This narrative technique encourages the reader to identify himself with
the thought process of narrator. It also helps her achieve her fictional aim of projecting tradition versus modernity as watched by a sensitive woman brought up in a tradition-bound ethos who accepts everything with a remarkable degree of courage and spiritual stamina.

Kamala Markandaya uses the house imagery to depict Rukmani’s life because her hopes of grand wedding are shattered when she has to marry a landless farmer Nathan, the house of Nathan images her withered future with "... a garland of mango leaves... dry now and rattling in the breeze." The image prefigures the farmer couple’s life and labour growing to bits of withered leaves blown by the cold wind of calamities of life. "Nathan no longer beside me... Ashes and dust scattered to the wind." Nathan and Rukmani go together in a futile search of their son, Murugan because Rukmani has to come back alone in the village like a dried leaf about to be claimed by the jaws of death. The dried garland of mango leaves too, symbolizes the futility of farmers' labour. It indicates that the nectar of his labour cannot be enjoyed but it flows through the sieve. The image of God is also there. It provides them with food and shelter, but takes away the meagre wealth from Rukmani and life from Nathan.

In this novel, the tannery becomes symbolic of the possessive quality which possesses Kunti’s eldest son "whom the tannery had claimed." and:

... certain nouns are used in connection with the tannery to indicate the destructive role it is going to play in the life of Rukmani: its clatter and clamour and din, its stench of skins,
its brews and liquors, its kites and crows, replace the 'clear soft greens that had once coloured our village ... cleaving its cool silences with clamour.'

and "... the tannery (also) represents a world of immorality, greed and corruption invading another which is moral, happy and pure." In the novel, there is animal imagery also, connected with the images from nature. Rukmani says, "Nature is like a wild animal that you have trained to work for you ... look away for an instant, be heedless or forgetful, and it has you by the throat." The images of light and dark also "fall into the areas of home and not home concepts. The light refers to life, hope, happiness, rich harvest and prosperity, hence home: the dark to disease and death, gloom, misery, frustration, hence not home." The light and dark imagery is also linked up with colour and atmospheric imagery. The yellow glare on the temple images deceit. Rukmani and Nathan enter the temple "helped by the yellow glare," only to loose their possession. This yellow glare is quite significant at the time of their entry into the temple and later on, when Nathan dies and Rukmani is left all alone. After the death of Nathan, the yellow flare is "quenched," symbolically imaging the end of deceits in her life. In the novel, brown colour images death and green colour images life. "Before long the shoots of the paddy were dipped with brown; even as we watched the stain spread like some terrible disease, choking out the green that meant life to us." Kamala Markandaya describes nature quite poetically. In the novel, she describes the scene of flood and drought quite effectively.
Since the novel is autobiographical first person, with Rukmani providing the point of view, her narrative is filled with personal emotion and the urgency and immediacy of actual experience, but Rukmani is not Kamala Markandaya. Instead of identifying herself with her heroine, the novelist makes use of Kenny as commentator on the Indian scene and mouthpiece for her views. Rukmani is sometimes commentator and Kenny always. It is he who indicates the gap between what ought to be and what is. Therefore, though autobiographical method of narration is used, there is a distance between the author and the narrative and this constitutes the tragic irony.

Just like *Nectar in a Sieve*, in *Some Inner Fury* also the narration is circular in the sense that it ends where it begins. A sudden discovery of the little silver box and the material kept in it leads Mira to recollect her past tragedy that took place ten years ago. The novel is in first person narrative, narrated by a woman Mirabai, belonging to the westernised upper class society of the pre-independence era. The silver box discovered by her contained torn pieces of her lover's shirt. Seeing this she starts recounting the past. The East-West encounter is structurally well dramatized through political agitation as well as cultural incompatibility. The title of the novel bears a deep symbolic significance. In the novel the words - prison, walls, blanket, clouds, storm, fury and external darkness are reportedly used. These words connotes suppression. The word storm implies internal and external fury. Margaret P.Joseph writes, "Thus language expressing
claustrophobia is repeatedly found symbolically indicating the larger issue of suppression of freedom by the English and the Indian's urge to fight for liberty, as one fights for breath."148

Irony, too lies in the novel. It is situational. It lies in Govind's unwilling destruction of all he holds dear. There are scenes of hill and natural beauty also described by Kamala Markandaya.

The novel is narrated in the autobiographical mode. Mira, slips into the flashback, thus moving into the actual story. She is the central character and hers is the point of view. She is accustomed to the dual life-style, the two worlds of upper class women in British India and adjusts easily to either English or Indian ways. She is no one else than the author herself. Prof. R.S. Singh writes, "Their dates of birth, interest in creative writing, birth in the Brahmin family and visits to England in connection with publications and their infatuation with some Englishman lead one to believe that they are one and the same."149

The plot of another novel Possession, too, is circular. In the novel, in addition to the main plot there is also secondary plot dealing with the Swamy. In this novel, the technique of non-omniscient third person narration is used. The central character, in this novel, is a British woman and the story is to be told from a predominantly Indian view point. So, the narrator is Anasuya, a minor character and a friend of Caroline - the protagonist, who comes to India and takes Valmiki - a young talented Indian - with her to England.
In the novel, the house imagery shows the psychic traits of Valmiki, Caroline and cook, who occupy a three storied house. Valmiki's room "the one above" and he lives in the world of imagination. Caroline possesses the room on the first floor which implies her acquisitive urge. The cook lives in the lowest room, ponders to the animal needs and Valmiki and Caroline. In all, the three stories represent the imaginative, the worldly and the animal nature of Val. The empty room signifies Val's smothered imagination under the alien sky, and the painted desert on the wall symbolises his dried up talents.

In the novel, images of animals are there and "Caroline's possessiveness is duplicated in Val's attitude to the monkey. Val is treated almost like an animal for Caroline "tugs" on his halter to remind him that he serves under a charter." The monkey symbolizes Val and Caroline possessing each other. "Caroline, came first, all in her shining whiteness, leading by the hand. Valmiki also in dazzling white and he leading by its chain tiny monkey wearing a scarlet hip length jacket and gilt leather collar." The monkey also symbolizes Caroline-Val possessiveness. It also symbolizes Britisher's cannibalistic attitude. She writes false letters to Val in order to encourage him to paint. Val feels shocked to know this, at the arrival of the Swamy to England. His psychic disturbances are evoked in the monkey's discomfort. The monkey also stands as a symbol of Val's sex. Just like the monkey Val has left his natural habitat, his animal instincts predominate his painter's sensibility: "exiled from its climate for
life..." One parallels the others predicament. Even the physical needs of Val objectify those of the monkey "... he was little better equipped than Mino. Both had grown unfit for poverty." The monkey also symbolizes a curse on Val's capability as a painter and the death of the monkey symbolizes his release - release from Caroline as well as the curse. The monkey, also stands for obscenity and horror that Ellie experiences in the camp. When Ellie relates her experiences to Val monkey gives a sudden wailing cry symbolizing her agonies. Soldiers used to come to her every night and she wishes to be killed by them. In another event, the monkey's silver chain is caught in the door jamb and Val releases him from the door jamb. Val's act of releasing the monkey symbolizes his effort to release Ellie from the servitude of Caroline and finally from the agonies of the world by suicide.

Kamala Markandaya uses white and dark antithesis to evoke Caroline's psychic traits. Her possessive urge is imaged in her mangolia white colour. Her house is silver town with its "street door, painted ... green outside, a black and white interior... sycamore" brings out the jungle savagery in her. Dark and light imagery is also connected with Val's separation and union with Ellie. Night separates them and day unites them. Val Caroline relationship is fated to end in sorrow is prefigured in grey colour of the boys and Caroline's eyes. The letters of Caroline to Val's mother are on "the greying paper." Caroline's passion for Val is represented through crimson colour and an animal like passion for possessing a thing is depicted through green colour. "The carpet had been green, I remembered."
In the novel, image from nature are also used. It is connected with trees and appears in the novel when Val shows unwillingness to accompany Caroline. His unwillingness is imaged through the tree "... rooted there like one of those sturdy thorn-trees that seem able to ride that worst storm." 158 About the imagery in the novel Joseph says that "Images are not left to work on their own merits, but are sometimes explained quite unnecessarily." 159

Another novel *A Handful of Rice* has also a harmonious structure. The beginning and the end of the novel are quite compatible with the change in the character of Ravi, who turns from bad to good in this novel. The author uses the method of third person narration. She maintains just sufficient distance from him to analyse his motives and conduct, keeping at the same time close enough to identify herself with him in the flow of thought and event.

House imagery is also present in the novel. Ravi breaks open the grille of Apu's house and enters it. It symbolizes Ravi's deflowering Apu's daughter, Nalini. He symbolically asks for a bed too. "A bed, I am staying the night." 160 After getting married to Nalini, Ravi takes her to a "box like" room 161 which prefigures his circumscribed world. The "roof top shelter" 162 of Ravi images his superiority over other members of the family. It also indicates his desire to possess the worldly things which remain a mirage. Ravi's sharing half room with Thangam images his sad life and a life of sacrifice. Ravi's old freedom is imaged in the free for all station "wooden bench." 163
In the novel, there is image of the city also symbolizing savagery as civilization. There is jungle imagery also, in the novel. It is situational. It illuminates the situation in which Ravi - the unemployed - are caught. The way of living, too is depicted through this imagery. Struggle for existence is shown, as the other tailors may possibly snatch away Ravi's livelihood - "those brash new men who hung around the big houses hour after hour hoping to steal his customers. It was the way life was a Jungle..."\(^{164}\)

Animal imagery, in the novel, is shown through Ravi's sexual frustration and animal lust which is depicted as he calls his mother-in-law a bitch, a sow, an old cow, a manny goat. The atmosphere imagery, in this novel, is used in prefigurative pattern, where Ravi's married life going awry to seed is imaged through the stems and leaves. "The plaintain stems dropped, and even the mango leaves and marigolds had begun to wilt."\(^{165}\) An image of self-imposed imprisonment is brought forward through Ravi's circle "... no old friends, no new ones. The family completed his circle."\(^{166}\) Ravi thinks of earning a living for the family in place of Apu when Apu loses consciousness. "The painful cycle began again."\(^{167}\) For Ravi, the members of the family image a curse around his neck. On the arrival of Thangam's third baby Ravi thinks "the ring of living grew tighter round them..."\(^{168}\)

In *A Handful of Rice* there are a few symbols also. The prominent symbol repeated again and again in the novel is rice - a symbol of poverty in urban life. There is a scene of Ravi being in the
house of Apu, he wakes up and discovers that his body has been tied up with a cycle chain and his hands and feet with a woman's sari. This scene is symbolic of Ravi's lost freedom and his struggle in the bondage of family after being married to Nalini. The concluding scene of the novel is a symbolic scene too. In this scene, Ravi joins an angry mob trying to loot a granary. Ravi too picks up a stone to pelt but he does not pelt the stone. This scene symbolically resolves his dilemma and brings his wavering morality to stability.

_The Nowhere Man_ is also a tightly structured novel. Not only thematically but structurally also it comes closest to 'literary tragedy'. In the novel, an essential of tragedy - the poetic justice - has been worked into the very structure of the novel. Fred dies in the very flame kindled by him for Srinivas. There is no domineering women character in the novel. Third person narrative is used and the third person narrative is omniscient and omnipresent in order to be able to know each happening and detail concerning the plot.

In the novel, there is house imagery. For Srinivas, house is an image of 'brick and mortar' bondage and just an imprisonment. He feels that "we have chained ourselves to four walls and a roof." The building of a house is just a death of freedom for Srinivas. Near his house, when a patch of grass is built over, it is "like seeing a grave filled in..." Srinivas assembles different races under one roof and he, himself, stays in the attic. This act raises him spiritually. His attempt to bridge the East-West gap and get united with the British race is symbolized in the house and it ends up in smoke when his house is set on fire.
on fire by Fred. The house symbol embraces the whole of humanity when Srinivas gives it on rent to the white, the brown and the black.

Images from jungle, too, are used in the novel. The South London suburb symbolizes the jungle and the Britons are the cannibals. Fred serves a food for the British cannibals when he sets Srinivas's house on fire. In the novel, fog image is also used which stands for mental confusion. Srinivas feels confused over racial problems. He feels suffocated at the news of the Egyptians being killed for the British, and goes out to get "some fresh air" saying "It is stuffy here." He also feels disturbed at the slogans like "Blacks go home" and also at the image of "a dangling man." This is depicted through the climate of nature also. "...the hostile climate that was wearing him down." The animal imagery in the novel is most insistent and "The word 'howled' carries associations of a bleak wilderness, of wild beasts - a waste land." When Narayan's house is being searched for suspected subversive activities, his household appears "jellyfish." Srinivas identifies himself with the fate of "lady birds" testing for flight and flying away to safety. Srinivas suffering with disease appears to Mrs. Radcliff "like a crawling caterpiller." This image reduces Srinivas to the level of obnoxious insect. Indians in England are considered destructive pests on land. The image of Indians is connected with the rat image for the Indians. "We had rats once," said Joe. "We had to smoke them out once you get rats on the premises." This image prefigures the attempt of Fred to set the
house of Srinivas on fire. The animal imagery is also noted when Mrs. Fletcher calls her husband "stranded grey whale" and her son "a gorilla." The image of blue-bottle is used in the novel to represent the decaying life of Srinivas after the death of his wife. "Blue bottles buzzed around dust-bins..."180

In the novel, colour imagery is seen in black and white colours. The imagery is in the white colour of the spiritually diseased Englishmen and the black colour of the non-English people. "Ironically therefore, while the whites avoid Srinivas who has leprosy, it is they who look like lepers to the coloureds." Srinivas is the figure of a christ, in the novel. He does not divide and separate people on the basis of religion, colour or race. On the contrary, he preaches that each particular part is the member of all other parts, and all is the one in the divine. Mrs. Pickering sybolizes Mary: "... a salt Madonna, clutching a salt in front and hanging on to the oak newelpost with the other."182

Symbolism, in the novel appears in the form of words. The words, 'burning', 'ashes', 'molten', 'charred', 'ignited', 'smoke' and 'explode' occur time and again. These words denote the fire that kills Fred and Srinivas. The problem of leprosy from which Srinivas suffers is symbolic of the spiritual leprosy that corrodes the values of England.

In Two Virgins also an omniscient third person narration is employed. It depicts the assault of modernity upon tradition. The story has been seen through consciousness of Saroja, the younger sister of Lalitha.
Animal imagery appears in the novel, where a little monkey prefigures Lalitha’s failure of adventure. Lalitha and her sister save a little monkey but the monkey does not survive as "its heart did not want to go on." This symbolizes Lalitha’s broken heart and her failure to accomplish her heart’s desire. Lalitha’s cleft self is imaged through the cracks in the water bed of the river.

In the novel, there is a flower symbolism. Lalitha is described as 'slender and tall like a lily', 'flower fresh', 'a mangled flower in the darkness'. There is a symbolic scene when Gupta visits the house of Lalitha, she draws a white and saffron pattern representing a dove. As Gupta leaves, he unknowingly shuffles his feet and the dove gets blurred. Lalitha draws another pattern, 'a golden eagle soaring over the plains'. This is symbolic of dove like Lalitha losing purity and becoming ambitious like an eagle.

In A Silence of Desire also the novelist adopts the method of third person narration but it presents Dandekar’s point of view and not that of a dominant woman character for "A Silence of Desire, dares the invisible and the writing is competent enough to forge here and there coils of intricate suggestion that almost seem to bridge the chasm between matter and spirit, doubt and faith." 

In the novel, there is house imagery and in different situations, it implies different emotions. It implies Damodar’s happiness when he comes back from office and his wife is preparing a meal for him. It involves intense sorrow when she has gone to see the Swamy. "... the place seemed pale and chill, like an unlit lamp."
Colour imagery, too, is there in the novel. Dandekar vacillates in his life - from a life of pleasure and family happiness to a tortured life. This is symbolized by red colour. Like *Nectar in a Sieve*, in this novel also yellow colour images deceit. The dwarf’s eyes are "yellowish eyes glittering in his squashed face." Sarojni loses her wealth by the glare of the dwarf’s eyes just like Rukmani who lost her wealth in the temple attracted by the yellow light.

The plant - *tulsi* in the novel, symbolically shows Sarojni’s religious faith. The plant, in the beginning of the novel, is a fresh, green plant. Sarojni worships this plant but, later on the plant is a neglected one, with its leaves shrivelled from lack of water. This signifies Sarojni’s religious faith and its shrivelling in the latter part of the novel. The final encounter between Dandekar and dwarf is also symbolic. Dwarf accuses Dandekar of being responsible for driving away the *Swamy*. So, symbolically Dandekar becomes dwarf in the moral sense. When dwarf returns silver and gold to Dandekar, he kicks them aside gently and goes away. This signifies Dandekar’s attitude that he values happiness emanating from family bonds rather than from the material. Dr. A.V. Krishna Rao finds in the dwarf a symbol of "the spiritual cripples and the puny defenders of the source of their spiritual sustenance." Irony in the novel is verbal, a deliberate emphasis on the difference between things as they seem to be and as they actually are.

In *The Coffer Dams* a third person mode of narration is used to deal with a rather complicated human experience. Markandaya gives
the reader an insight into the stupendous task of dam construction - its frustrations, tragedies and triumph and a taste of its excitement. The point of view is more British than Indian. Sometimes the point of view is of Clinton, sometimes it is of Mackendrick, Helen, Rawlings or Bashiam. In the novel, Kamala Markandaya uses third person method of narration, but she does not identify herself with any one character. Instead, she stands well away from the people and looks through the eyes of different characters in turn.

In *The Coffer Dams* there is a symbol of fear presented by the suffocation experienced by Jackson and Clinton. The drums used repeatedly in the novel signifies impending troubles and tragedy. There is a symbolic scene of Helen watching the birds being trapped to be put in cages. It symbolizes Bashiam's getting trapped inside the crane's cage and getting seriously wounded, much to the shock of Helen. In this novel, Kamala Markandaya uses colour symbolism also. White and black colours are used again and again in the novel. White is symbolic of callousness and cruelty, black implies impending trouble or violence. These are also symbolic of racial discrimination and conflict.

In the novel jungle image recurs time and again. Helen's desire to walk in darkness symbolizes her desire to go native. As her husband rapes her she feels that she is freed from the marriage tie. "Some restraining line had been severed." Descriptions of events are such that these are immediately brought to a halt and followed by short, crisp and racy dialogues. As a descriptive passage: "In the valley sirens were blaring, modern muezzins announcing the end of the working
day... After the daily pounding, blasting and drilling the air seemed strangely still... In the mounting silence the purl of the river grew stronger"¹⁸⁹ is followed by the conversation between Clinton and his wife Helen. In the novel, the sights of hills and jungles are also described but dialogues occupy more space. In *The Coffer Dams* irony comes into being when Helen runs in panic into the same jungle she dreads, and has to be rescued in a state of hysteria by the 'blacks' she detests.

Uma Parmeswaran comments on the overall contribution of Kamala Markandaya to the Indian novel in English "She has artistic instinct enough to know where the roots are but not the artistic care to keep in constant touch with her subject. Her chief merit lies in that she presents Indian ways of life without authorial commentry."¹⁹⁰ Thus Kamala Markandaya may not focus intensively on her art of characterization as Anita Desai and Arun Joshi and her techniques may be devoid of the complexities of Raja Rao and G.V.Desani, but she has admirably succeeded in evolving her own mild - natured technique and vision of life and her novels tend to be an index of the current time in all its manifestations - sociological, political, economic, cultural and communal.
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