I. INTRODUCTION
Anita Desai is an original and innovative writer and stands preeminent among contemporary Indian women novelists in English. She eschews social documentation and commentary and verisimilitude of characters so very much dear to the Indian novelists. On the other hand, she concentrates on exploring the submerged depths and dark recesses of woman’s consciousness, her chosen subject in fictional representation. As she states in James Vinson (ed): Contemporary Novelists, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1972.

Writing is to me a process of discovering the truth – the truth that is, nine-tenth of the iceberg that lies submerged beneath the one-tenth visible portion we call Reality. Writing is my way of plunging to the depths and exploring this underlying truth. All my writing is an effort to discover, to underline and convey the true significance of things (p.348).

In her “Replies to the Questionnaire” in Kakatiya Journal in English studies, vol.3, No.1, 1978, she explains further,

That my temperament and circumstances have combined to give me the shelter, privacy and solitude required for the
writing of such novels thereby avoiding problems, a more objective writer has to deal with since he/she depends on observation rather than a private vision (p.11).

Desai’s novels are, thus, an expression of her private vision. Her preoccupations, as a novelist, thus made it possible for her to give a new turn to the Indian novel in English, an interiority comparable to the Modernist novel as developed in the continent by authors who influenced her most – Henry James, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence and Marcel Proust. Anita Desai’s distinctively individual achievement is the novel of consciousness, the psychological novel which is, according to her, the natural expression of woman’s vision. She observes in her essay “Women Writers” in Quest 65, 1970:

... that women writers are likely to place their emphasis differently from men, that their sense of values is likely to differ and that they will deal with what may appear trivial to male readers because it appears to have less consequence than the usual male actions do, with what is less solid and tangible than the concerns of most men- that is, less with
action, experience and achievement and more with thought, emotion and sensation (p.42).

In the same essay, she goes on to elaborate that,

the subjectivity, the intensity of emotion and the fleeting, quickly responsive quality required of a poem matches a woman's habit of thought and feeling well (p.43).

For Anita Desai, the novel is more a lyrical poem than a narrative in prose.

Curiously enough, although an experimentalist through and through, Desai is anti-pathetic to narratological theory, poetics of the novel, unlike the continental masters of the Modernist novel. In her interview with Atma Ram published in *World Literature in English* 16.1 (1977), she observes,

I think theories of the novel are held by those of an academic, or critical turn of mind, not the creative. A writer does not create a novel by observing a given set of theories-he follows flashes of individual vision, and depends on a kind of instinct that tells him what to follow and what to avoid,
how to veer away from what would be destructive to his vision. It is these flashes of vision, and a kind of trained instinct, that leads him—not any theories (p.100).

Can any writing be made out of thin air, without an implicit set of principles in mind although one may not prefer to elaborate the same into a theory on the open? Despite her disclaimer, Anita Desai does theorise in the same interview referred to earlier,

I start writing without having very much of a ‘plot’ in mind or on paper—only a very hazy idea of what the pattern of the book is to be. But it seems to work itself out as I go along, quite naturally and inevitably . . . one should have a pattern and then fit the characters, the setting, and scenes into it—each piece in keeping with the others and so forming a balanced whole (p.101).

Thus, the Desai novel does not have a premeditated design: it grows organically as an autonomous object, a “verbal icon”. Hence, she stresses E.M. Forster’s “Pattern and Rhythm” because
... these imply a balance, a synthesis and proportion. One sees a novel as a certain distinct pattern and then one puts in the pieces so that they may fit. Also, like a symphony, the whole must have a rhythm, or it will have no life (p.100).

As she observes in “The Indian Writer’s Problems” in ACLALS Bulletin 4th Ser. No.2 (1975), writing for her “is not an act of deliberation, reason and choice, it is rather a matter of instinct, silence and waiting” (p.14). The creative act is for her “a secret one” and “to make it public, to scrutinize it in the cold light of reason, is to commit an act of violence, possibly murder” (p.12). Anita Desai’s ‘poetics of the novel’ is organist, Romantic-Symbolist in nature and for her “it is the image that matter, the symbol, the myth, the feat of associating them, of relating them, of constructing with them” (p.14).

Her conception of ‘the novel as Lyric poem’ comes out clearly in her description of the origin and creative process of her novels as reported by Atma Ram in the interview with her published in World Literature in English (1977):
The original germinating idea enters the mind quite obscurely and might be no more than a leaf dipping under a rain drop, a face seen on the bus, or a scrap of news read in the papers. It enters the consciousness as silently and unobtrusively as a grain of sand enters a shell. There it grows and develops. Material drifts into the mind and begins to accumulate around that grain of sand which becomes the focal although invisible point of concentration, so that it swells, takes shape, and begins to stir to life. One finds oneself adding to that initial grain of sand snatches of conversation over heard, faces seen in passing, insomniac thoughts erupting out of the dark, an accumulation of sensations and experiences dredged up from the depths of one’s memory. Eventually this tiny grain grows into such a mass that it begins to exert a pressure. One finds that the oyster has not given birth to a pearl, pale and lustrous and decorative, but to something like a monster that one has inadvertently brought to live and that is bursting and clamouring to be let out (p.99).
This description of the composition of her novel chimes with her disclaimer about 'plot' and preference for 'pattern' or 'inscape' as discussed earlier. Anita Desai's view of the compositional process of her novels closely parallels the account of T.S. Eliot's inspirational origin and growth of poetry as set forth in his 1953 lecture to the National Book League, "Three voices of Poetry" collected in his book of essays, On Poetry and Poets (1957). The poetry of the first voice, the lyric poem, is addressed to no one and starts as an inert embryo or 'creative germ' that grows into "a burden which he (the poet) must bring to birth in order to obtain relief." The poet is, as it were, "haunted by a demon, a demon against which he feels powerless... and the words, the poem he makes, are a kind of... exorcism of this demon." The poet "is going to all that trouble, not in order to communicate with anyone, but to gain relief from acute discomfort; and when the words are finally arranged in the right way... he may experience a moment of exhaustion, of appeasement, of absolution, and of something very near annihilation, which is in itself indescribable"(p.17). Anita Desai's "monster" is Eliot's "demon" and the Catharsis experienced by the poet is very much implied in Mrs. Desai's account. David Lodge in Language of Fiction (1970) observes,
The 'modern novel', the novel of Flaubert, James, Joyce and their like, is clearly under the magnetic attraction of symbolist aesthetics, and then very largely amenable to modern poetics... it probes deep into the private, subjective world of vision and dream, and its climaxes are 'epiphanies', moments of piercing insight analogous to the images and symbols of the modern poet (p.30).

Following her continental masters of the Modernist novel Desai shares with them their symbolist aesthetics. She is, thus, a woman novelist in English with a difference from her contemporary practitioners of the art of the novel.

The central concern of Anita Desai as a novelist is exploration of the woman's consciousness in its conflict with the traditional, patriarchal family and social set up. She is directly concerned with the effect of such environment on the feminine consciousness rather than an analysis of its causes or remedy. The latter is indirectly suggested by her portrayal of the woman's consciousness in stress. In her interview with Yosodhara Dalmia published in The Times of India, April 29, 1979, Anita Desai says that she is,
“interested in characters who are not average but retreated or been driven into some extremity of despair or so turned against, or made to stand against the general current” (p.13).

The protagonists of Mrs. Desai’s novels are exceptional women who find themselves trapped in situations over which they have no control and for whom the tradition-bound, patriarchal family and society manifests as the world of absurdity. The ordeals of life threaten their independent identity and the onslaughts on their existence alienate them from others around. Their estrangement streams from a lack of companionship with which they could feel secure and their reactions range alternatively between rebellion and acceptance. All the same theirs is a quest for self-identity and self-realization. Jasbir Jain has rightly pointed out:

    The world of Anita Desai’s novels is an ambivalent one; it is a world where the central harmony is aspired to but not arrived at, and the desire to love and live clashes – at times violently – with the desire to withdraw and achieve harmony. Involvement and stillness are incompatible by their nature, yet they strive to exist together (Dhawan: ed., 1993, p.24).
Commenting on Anita Desai’s themes in her novels, N.R. Gopal observes:

Anita Desai’s themes are thus original and entirely different from those of Indo-Anglian novelists. Her novels are not political or sociological in character but are engaged in exposing the labyrinths of the human mind and in indicating the ways to psychological fulfilment (Gopal: 1999,p.7).

Matching the originality of her themes and characters, Anita Desai exploits an innovative narrative technique for delineation of the same—the technique of the poetic, psychological novel— a departure from the realism of narration as used by other Indian novelists in English. Ramesh Srivastava points out her singular achievement as follows:

It is not only in the subject matter, characterization and in presenting the atmosphere of mind but also in the use of narrative technique, symbols, images and the disturbed time-schemes that Anita Desai deserves to be called a psychological novelist (Srivastava: ed., 1984, p.xxvi).

The novels of Anita Desai are grouped into two in this study: those that represent the development of the protagonist from feelings of
alienation and meaninglessness of life to self-understanding and self-realization; those that are concerned with women characters contrasted with each other but drawn with equally distributed sympathy of the novelist.

Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*, even though a first novel, catapulted her name to the literary world, with its poetic language, its technique of narration and above all the character of the heroine marked by her violent instinctuality and emotionalism. The most poetic of all her works, this novel resonates with the unappeased cry for love of a young girl driven to insanity through frustration and an obsession with a childhood prophecy of death.

Here Desai raises the question of marital disharmony and disparity between the spouses in emotional, sensual and intellectual terms as well as social strata and age. Maya, brought up in luxury in an aristocratic and aesthetic ambience has an innate sense of appreciation of poetry and beauty and a passionate love of nature. Her intellectual, prosaic, self-sufficient, middle-class, much older husband, Gautama fails to fathom the same. When Maya inhabits the mental world of her fairy tale childhood, or of the highly artistic Kathakali dance, or songs of the birds, Gautama
quotes *The Gita* and preaches detachment. In frustration she recollects the fearsome prophecy made by an albino astrologer in her childhood about unnatural death of one of the spouses on the fourth year of her marriage. And her life becomes a veritable hell darkened by frustration and the foot-falls of death.

The novel abounds in symbols and images, metaphors and similes lending meaning and poignancy to the psychological turmoil of this sensitive woman. Most illustrative symbol is the representation of a wick that works as a powerful one in the novel. Like the albino astrologer who, unable to see the oil-filled lamp, only tends to the wick and kills the light, Gautama’s failure to realize and reciprocate Maya’s impassioned cry for love, kills her desire, her self-respect. The marriage of these two incompatible individuals ends in the disaster of tragedy.

*Where Shall We Go This Summer?* reiterates the theme of alienation, ennui and marital disharmony. Growing up without much parental care or proper living space, Sita vacillates like a rudderless ship between the insecure life in an out-of-the-way island in her childhood and the callous, violent but stable married life in the mainland.
Unable to attain the love, affection or reciprocation, like the couple she had once chanced upon in a garden, she dissociates herself mentally from her family. Additionally, the all-pervasive violence of the world, the callousness of her family makes her realize her lack of 'connection' with her immediate surroundings. Her fifth pregnancy at this juncture unhinges her resolve to acquiesce, to flow with the stream. She erroneously decides to reverse the process of childbirth by partaking of the magic her father had once created in an island far off from the city. But the reality of the island is more harrowing than the violence of the mainland. Cooped inside the dilapidated house in the rain-lashed island, she realizes through introspection and analysis, the shadows lurking behind of her father’s magic and the false façade of the islanders’ innocence. She sees the father as a trickster. She prefers the chaos of the mainland to the jungle-law of the island and follows her husband back home, symbolically putting footsteps on footmarks left in the sands by her husband. With this she transcends her limiting circumstances and reconciles and “connects” with the mundaneness of life.

Fire on the Mountain takes the trauma of a housewife a step further. Infidelity of the husband and insensitivity of the children drive
the ageing widow, Nanda Kaul, to withdraw herself from the busy world to live in seclusion in a lonely bungalow standing in the bare mountainous terrain of Kasauli. But duty does not desert her even at this age, and a great grand-daughter is thrust upon her. The presence of Raka, a recluse like herself makes her take a fresh perspective on life. The traumatic end of a friend’s death, makes her cave under self-castigation and own up her “life-lie”.

Clear Light of Day, the most mature and life-affirming of all Desai’s novels, charts Bim’s passage from darkness of frustration, anger and rejection to the life giving day-light of acceptance, of reality, of maturity, of love and forgiveness.

Bim, the most intelligent, dynamic and progressive, loving and caring, among all the four children of Das family is ironically the one left behind to nurse her wound over her seclusion and rejection. The harrowing experience of partition of India is re-enacted in the severance of the umbilical ties of the Das family. Bim, the most dynamic of all four siblings is haunted by these memories that stunt her emotional growth and she stagnates in the old house in the old city. Ironicaly Tara, the clinging, dependent sister has married and moved away to fulfil her
childhood ambition of becoming a mother. The most admired and loved brother has seceded from the family to create a niche for himself by marrying the only daughter of his childhood ideal, Hyder Ali, their landlord.

Tara’s fateful visit that summer opens the old wounds by forcing them to revisit their past. But Bim’s natural ebullient self and her dynamic, forceful character is revealed through her willing reconciliation and acceptance of the truth of familial relationship. In her act of forgiving her escapist brother, she attains complete self-actualization.

Thus there is a gradual development in representation of the protagonists through these four novels. All these women achieve self-actualization of varying degrees and in each case the woman exhibits fortitude and tolerance, an abundance of love and intelligence to overcome her restrictive situation in which life has placed her.

In the next group of novels *Voices in The City*, *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, *In Custody*, Baumgartner’s *Bombay*, *Journey to Ithaca*, *Fasting, Feasting* and *The Zigzag Way* Anita Desai represents women’s psyche through
diametrically opposite women characters. But the intensity of narration is equally distributed among them to bring out their salient traits.

Though *Voices in the City* is primarily the story of Nirode, his sister Monisha and Amla occupy a lot of his mental space as does his mother. All their lives converge at Calcutta “the city of death” and find its culmination in Monisha’s suicide. In Monisha’s tragedy we again see the theme of intellectual incompatibility and marital disharmony. Intellectually alert and sensitive, she finds no reciprocation of her feelings from her ‘rotund’ husband. Further, an oppressive lack of privacy and apathy in a large joint family lead her to escape from her torturous existence.

In an interesting twist to the structural design of the novel the city takes up colossal importance in the psychic life of the siblings, shaping and directing their emotional response to things. The city’s sinister persona corrodes the core of human existence. The putrid drains and rows of ferocious black-barred windows of the city houses tell upon the spirit of a person.
Monisha's encaged soul cries for release from the deceit and hypocrisy through suicide. In Monisha's death, her sister Amla, contrasted with her, realizes the darker aspects of non-involvement and isolation and decides to 'connect', to make life worth living. Monisha's death and Amla's acquiescence underline the need of love and involvement to succeed in life.

Through Sarah of *Bye- Bye Blackbird* the novelist presents the alienation, the confusion and submissiveness of a woman caught in cultural conflict. Sarah, an English woman is married to Adit an Indian immigrant and suffers from identity crisis. Growing up in the English ethos she is shocked at her own rebellion and separation from that background. She stoically suffers the ignominy of dual alienation: from her own race and also from her husband's. Ultimately she resigns to her fate and follows her husband back to India.

*In Custody* is the story of Deven and has very sketchy female characters. Deven's wife Sarla, a frustrated, high strung woman, lacking in intellectual depth is constantly in war against the neglect of her husband, and her lot. But ultimately she accepts her 'encaged' existence and compromises.
The contrasted female characters are Sufia Begum and Imtiaz Begum, the two wives of the poet Nur. They do not hesitate to utilise their husband for their selfish interest.

*Baumgartner’s Bombay* explores the theme of diaspora in the life of two persons caught between two cultures and two drastically different societies. It resonates with the theme of *The Old man and the Sea*: of man’s indefatigable spirit in the face of insurmountable situation. The stoic resignation and nonchalance in the face of rejection, alienation and isolation of Baumgartner and Lotte are made worse by their abject poverty and Baumgartner’s constant hankering for treacle toffee that kindles a keen longing for his long dead mother. The story depicts the travails of Baumgartner, a German migrant to Bombay and his fortitude and forbearance in the face to all odds. He is sustained by the positive, supportive presence of Lotte in the background. Both from Germany, they veer into each other’s ambit through their common inherence of culture. Their friendship sustains them through their distressing existence in India. Though it is the story of Baumgartner, it is Lotte who comes out the stronger of the two. It is she who consoles him in spite of her troubles and torture by her step children after the death of her Indian husband.
*Journey to Ithaca* is a departure from Anita Desai’s canon, though thematically it does not depart from the problem of human relationship. It is the story of two contrasted women unrelated to each other but entwined through the saga of Matteo’s (Sophie’s husband) spiritual quest. Matteo tries to transcend worldly limitations through spiritual quest at the feet of the ‘Mother’. The Mother is Laila, who from a dancing girl transcends her limiting human situation through an arduous spiritual journey. She comes to be known as the ‘Mother’ in India and becomes the spiritual guide for many including Matteo but remains unhappy at her failure to unite the spiritual with the demands of the physical existence. Wrecked by doubt and jealousy, Sophie tries to destabilize the Mother – but ultimately comes to realise that spiritual search and responsibilities of human existence cannot be separated. The theme echoing the journey of Homer’s Odysseus reveals the unending quest of man for the unattainable.

*Fasting, Feasting* presents a double narrative and a dual locale. The story moves from India to America following Arun who leaves home for higher studies. It presents Uma’s isolation in her own house and subjugation by her own parents. Born inferior in intelligence and beauty
to her sister Aruna, she fails to gain parental care and attention. Worse she fails in her study and is made to drop out of school. She is also cheated twice by dowry-mongers in marriage. Brought back from back-breaking work from her in-laws house to the spirit-breaking existence of her parent's home, she lives the life of a beast of burden, fulfilling the needs and demands of her parents. Denied even the privacy to read a book, or the freedom to hold a job, she suffers ignominy in her claustrophobic existence. Her widowed aunt Mira-masi shows her the path for inner peace and freedom through religion.

Her counterpart Melanie suffers from bulimia through neglect and isolation amidst the abundance of her home in America and has to be hospitalized. Thus, in both the cases, help and sustenance comes from outside the home and both show failure to revolt against the stifling, non-reciprocative family environment.

The story of Ziggzag Way, the latest of Desai's novels, depicts the novelist's love for the Mexican countryside, its scenic beauty, and its culture. It bears the journey motif both literally and metaphorically. Though it is the adventure of Eric, a Harvard scholar, a drifter, it in reality is the story of Betty Jennings and Dona Vera and their metamorphosis in
the cross-cultural currents. As of the second part of Fasting, Feasting, the locale here is non-Indian, and as of Voices in the City – the locale triumphs over the human beings, and shapes their attitude and their lives. Thus in these contrasted characters, Desai brings out the attitude of compromise, of surrender to the family bondage.

Another famous novel, Village by the Sea, being a children’s novel and as it does not have any woman character is not included in this study.

The existing studies of Anita Desai’s novels mostly confine to analysis and commentary on her themes and the few that deal with her narratology describe the form and art of her novels in general terms. Representation of the woman’s consciousness, the central preoccupation of her as a novelist, has received scant attention. Hence, the present study sets out to make a comprehensive analysis of such representation drawing on the insights of relevant theorists of narratology particularly Dorrit Cohn’s Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction (1978). All Anita Desai’s novels included in this study are third-person narratives except ‘Part Two’ of Cry, the Peacock and the part of Voices in the City designated as ‘II. Monisha’s Diary’ which are first-person narratives. Dorrit Cohn enumerates three types of
presentation of Consciousness in third-person narratives: "1. psycho-narration: the narrator’s discourse about a character’s consciousness; 2. quoted monologue: a character’s mental discourse; 3. narrated monologue: a character’s mental discourse in the guise of the narrator’s discourse" (p.14).

In psychological novels, psycho-narration varies between two types: dissonant and consonant. Dorrit Cohn specifies that

These variations range between two principal types: one is dominated by a prominent narrator who, even as he focuses intently on an individual psyche, remains emphatically distanced from the consciousness he narrates (dissonant); the other is mediated by a narrator who remains effaced and who readily fuses with the consciousness he narrates (consonant) (p.28).

Anita Desai seems to favour the consonant type of psycho-narration merging the narrator’s voice into the figural one. This mode of presentation of consciousness helps to engage the sympathy of readers for the women represented in Anita Desai’s novels. The advantage of
psycho-narration is its temporal flexibility: it can summarize an inner development over a long period of time as it can expand and elaborate the mental instant. Further, because of its verbal independence from self-articulation it can order and explain a character’s thoughts better than the character itself. It can also effectively express a psychic life that is beyond verbalization and is obscure. Psycho-narration is used to great effect in narrating hallucinatory visions and dreams of the characters and may as well be regarded as the most direct and unique pathway to the sub-verbal depth of the human mind.

In the quoted monologue in third-person narratives, the voice of the monologist gets subordinated to that of the narrator and the reader evaluates the character’s monologue following the perspective into which the narrator places the character: empathic or ironic, friendly or hostile. Like the quoted monologue, the narrator of third-person narrative can quote dialogues between characters. Quoted monologues and dialogues are bound to the norms of psychological realism in so far as they create the illusion of what characters really think or say. The technique of narrated monologue transforms the figural thought-language into the language of the third-person narrator preserving the basic tense of
narration. The representation of women in Anita Desai's novels has been studied in the light of the techniques of narration as theorized by Dorrit Cohn.

Of the two portions of Anita Desai's novels that are presented as first-person narratives, the one in Cry, the Peacock is in the form of a memoir and the other one in Voices in the City takes the form of a diary. Desai uses the technique of Consonant Self-narration in the two cases: the narrating self is neither ignorant nor deluded about the past self that it writes of and, therefore, does not maintain a distance between the two selves, rather the narrating self is merged into the experiencing self. Both the diarist and the memoir-writer may resort to self-quoted monologue and dialogue along with self-narration as Anita Desai's protagonists do. Both exploit retrospection and write the remembered event and experience not at the moment of occurrence but at a later stage. The reason for using the consonant self-narration in both cases is to effect suspension of disbelief of the reader regarding the truth and reality of the experiences recounted and call for his/ her sympathy and understanding for the protagonists.
In studying Anita Desai’s representation of women in the novels, modes of presentation other than the technique of narration have been resorted to also. One way of ascertaining the character-traits distinctive of people in novels is to set in contrast or parallelism the particular character with others in the narrative. For this purpose, close analysis of the character’s speech, action and behaviour needs to be done. In the present study of Desai’s novels, the character of the central figure or heroine of the narrative is compared or contrasted with other characters to bring out her distinctive traits as a person. As in a poetic psychological novel, characters are drawn using imagery and symbols, analysis of leit-motifs, images and symbols used in the narrative has been done to foreground the character-traits of the protagonists. Thus, through the study of three different modes of presentation – technique of narration; comparison and contrast of characters; and analysis of images, symbols and leit-motifs used in the narratives- a comprehensive study of the representation of women in Anita Desai’s novels is made in the dissertation.

The plan of the present study is as follows: Chapter-I. Introduction analyses the poetics of Anita Desai’s novels at first. Although Desai is not
a theorist of novel like Henry James, James Joyce or Virginia Woolf who have influenced her profoundly, yet she holds certain principles for designing her novels and the same has been discussed by citing her statements in her essays and interviews on different occasions. It shows that Desai’s novels are constructed as poetic-psychological novels and though those do not develop well-designed plots, yet all the elements of those-story, character, action, speech, description and the like- do fall into a neat organic pattern. The second part of the Introduction is devoted to the modes of analysis followed in the study-technique of narration, character presentation and discussion of the images and symbols used to represent women in the novels.

Chapter II–V discuss the four woman-centred novels of Desai – *Cry, the Peacock*, *Where Shall We Go This Summer?*, *Fire on the Mountain* and *Clear Light of Day*—to bring out the author’s characteristic representation of the central consciousness, the heroines, in their travails with existence. Chapter VI is devoted to a discussion of seven other novels in which men constitute the centre of Desai’s attention and women are comparatively subordinate in the scheme of action of those. These novels are: *Voices in the City*, *Bye Bye Blackbird*, *In Custody*,
Baumgartner's Bombay, Journey to Ithaca, Fasting, Feasting, and The Zigzag Way. The women characters in each of these novels are represented as contrasted figures and hence the mode of analysis followed for studying these novels is the art of character-presentation. However, where called for other modes of analyses are resorted to identify the character-traits of the women represented in the novels. Chapter VII. Conclusion devotes itself to a summarization of the findings of the study and discusses Anita Desai's vision of life in general and the woman in particular in support of the claim that Desai is not a Feminist in the Western sense of rebellion against patriarchal social values. Desai is a practical rather than an ideological Feminist who visualizes man-woman relationship in the context of Indian social values that call forth mutual love and adjustment in the common pursuit of familial happiness and joy of life.