

Tribhuvan University

Theme of Nostalgia in *Clear Light of Day*

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in

Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in English

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August 2006

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Acknowledgements

This thesis owes its existence to Saroj Sharma Ghimire who not only supervised me throughout the work or went through every line of the manuscript but also gave me consistent encouragement and supporting materials so as to materialize it. Special thanks goes to Professor Chandra Prakash Sharma, the Head of the Department of English, for his innovative guidelines. I cannot help thanking my friends Surendra G.C. and Uttam Poudel for their necessary help in collecting materials and giving relevant suggestions. I would like to express heartfelt gratitude to my father and mother, Prem Narayan Parday and Yama Devi Parday who always encouraged me to continue my study.

Lastly, I express my thanks to Mr. Nirmal Bhusal of Oasis Computer Service, Naya Bazar, Kirtipur for computer typing, formatting and printing out the materials into the present form.

Mitra Lal Parday

Date: August 2006

Abstract

Anita Desai in her widely acclaimed novel *Clear Light of Day* has shown the theme of nostalgia by showing the feuding family harking back to the hazy past. The researcher claims that by foregrounding the childhood games and the fairy tales the novelist is highlighting the nostalgia which helps heal the wound brought about by the feud in the family.

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I. Introduction

Anita Desai, one of the brilliant and shining star in the literary sky of India who was born Anita Mazumdar on June 24,1937 in Mussoorie India to a German mother and an Indian Father, holds a prominent place among younger group of Indian-English novelists. Because of mixed blood she neither neglected German language nor Hindi language. Although she spoke both language, she adopted English language as literary language.

Anita Desai is supposed as a best writer among Indian writers in English. With more than ten novels and short stories, she has added significant dimension in Indian literature. Desai's work is part of a new style of writing to come out of Indian which is not nearly as conservative as Indian writing has been in the past thought. Her fiction is colored by her personnel views; influence of her parental heritage has been a key to the social biases in her fiction. In her novels she has depicted various changes, which have affected lives since independent. The post colonial Indian women have been radically affected by such matters as the increase of western style of education, choice of marriage partner, career expectation and the losing of the joint family. Desai, being an educated woman of half-European descent, is sensitively situated to record the crisis of Indian colonial bourgeoisie after independence. This crisis leads them to live a life of general alienation and nostalgia. Each of her novels are set in a social context and focuses on a life at a particular stage. Her characters strive and aspire to get the goals in a complicated and unsystematic world; one of her recurring themes is the struggle of women to assert their independence in a restrictive Indian society.

Desai's most of the protagonists are females and the world which they occupy is domestic. Her fiction depicts women in their traditional roles, women as granddaughter, as daughter, as wife, as mother. Her attempt is to explore the inner world of sensibility, the particular kind of Indian sensibility rather than the outer world of action by use of style which is supple and suggestive enough to convey the fever and fretfulness of her principal characters-the stream of consciousness. Her novels are peopled by women who are in perpetual quest for meaning and value of life. The 'existential struggle' of the women who refuse to float along with current form the core of Anita Desai's novels. Her characters refuse to surrender their individual selves. Their inability to compromise and surrender inevitably result in isolation and loneliness. Her women are 'hypersensitive and highly individualistic'. Though "they do not voice their protest against uncongenial surroundings and insensitive people, their bruised selves let out a silent cry. They refuse to yield and compromise and prefer death and miserable life (Bai 30). In their existential struggle they suffer intensely but refuse to be crushed.

Critics on *Clear Light of Day*

Anita Desai, one of the youngest and most promising creative writers of modern life in all its complicated aspects is noted not only in national level but also in international arena of literature. Both from national and international critics have talked much about her and her writings. In this connection Salman Rushdie admires Desai's books as "Private universes, illuminated by her perceptiveness, delicacy of language and sharp wit". Her subtle, unsentimental and serious imagery from tropical blooms to betel-

stained teeth illuminate her characters that prompted her comparisons with Virginia Woolf.

What distinguishes Anita Desai from other writers is her preoccupation with the individual and his or her world of sensibility. Unlike Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, she does not focus on the social, political economic, cultural problem, alone. Concerned exclusively with the personal tragedy of the individual, Desai brings cultural, social political and economic aspects in order to show how individual life is conditioned and above all tragic. Her aim is to "explore the interior world plunging into the limitless depths of the mind and bringing into relief the hidden contours of human psyche" (Asnani 143).

Next to the exploration of underlying truth and the use of stream of consciousness technique, it is style that she emphasizes. By style, she means the conscious effort of uniting language with symbol, and word with rhythm. Without this unity language would remain a dull and pedestrian vehicle. As Bruce King quotes in contemporary novelists, Desai says:

I search for a style that will bring it to rival, surging life story, action and drama mean little to me except insofar as they emanate directly from the personalities. I have chosen to write about, born of their dreams and wills. One must find a way to write the inner and the outer rhythms to obtain certain integrity and to impose order on chaos. (Henderson 238-39)

The study of isolation experienced by women in a male dominated society is a significant modern trend. In the Indian society women are not allowed to play any active role in decision-making. They are ignored or brushed aside.

In such a situation Anita Desai tries to focus on the predicament of women in the society. As Ramesh Kumar Gupta says:

Any attempt to analyze Anita Desai feminine consciousness in her fiction should naturally consider her concerns and perspective. Looking at the sensitive portrayal of characters, it can be concluded that she cares for the individual human beings irrespective of their being male or female. Her characters appear to be exceptionally talented but constantly disturbed by family ties. As a result, they experience discomfort and feel trapped in an oppressive environment. In most cases the hostile environment frustrates the aspirations of the individuals either leading them to their annihilation or a humiliating compromise. The process of her character construction includes soul-searching; self-exploration may be male or may be female, a struggle for realization and an exposure to agony. (159)

As regards the autobiographical element in her novels, Desai believes to be inevitable. But she knows the clear line of demarcation between the material drawn from real life and the one from imagination:

In countless small ways the scores and settings certainly belongs to my life. Many of the minor characters and incidents are also based on real life. But the major characters and the major events are either entirely imaginary or an amalgamation of several characters and happenings. One can use the raw material of life only very selectively. (*The Indian* 225)

Since Anita Desai is a very careful and meticulous artist and since she can speak German, Bengali and Hindi, besides English quite fluently, the choice of medium is very important for her. An idea or an image, according to her, is seldom vital enough to set anyone fire to write – there must be a passion for language as well, a familiarity and ease with words and also a conception of them as perpetually growing, changing, renewing themselves and appearing in fresh and delightful forms. Her comments as to why she writes in English is:

My language (of the novels) in English and I find answers all my needs. It is rich and flexible supple and adaptable, varied and vital. I think it is even capable of reflecting, the Indian character and situation. I think I have learnt how to live with the English language, how to deal with the problems it creates – mainly by ignoring them. (Indian 226)

In her novel, Desai achieves the difficult task of molding the English language and idiom to her purpose without a self-conscious attempt of sounding Indian. Thus, known for her sensitivity in the structuring of the patterns of her novels, integrity of artistic vision, imaginative mind, keen observation, sharp awareness and competent craftsmanship; she has become a much sought after by writer, publishers and readers.

Clear Light of Day (1980) by Anita Desai has been interpreted diversely by numerous critics since its publication. In this connection, one of the feminist critics Sangeeta Ray says that this novel highlights the ambiguities and contingencies of woman's identity due to an aporia in nationalist discourse. The inclusion of woman's issue under the nationalist

umbrella is so ambiguous that even in the "era of independence, females are not able to enjoy the freedom as different unseen pressures circumscribe them" (128). Another feminist critic Vrinda Nabar also focuses on the feminist overtones in the novel:

Clear Light of Day cannot be anything other than Indian novel. This is merely not because it is set in Delhi or because its characters are all Indian but its situations, images as well as its central conflicts can satisfactorily be explained only in an Indian context...like most of the Indian woman Bim is conditioned by her India environment, it is this environment which posits her as the moral and physical caretaker of Das house after her parents die. (104)

Similarly, Mohan Rajeswari says that the novel is about victimization of a woman by deceptive education, which does not emancipate and empower them but simply, "helps to prop up the patriarchal order"(48). Likewise, a male critic Shantha Krisnaswami asserts that the novel is about the striving of woman "to be whole, to be sane amidst all decay, destruction and death" (279).

By valorizing the calmness, love and forgiveness of female protagonist Bim Shyam M. Asnani says about the novel:

The excellence of *Clear Light of Day* is essentially in the psychological insight and in the poetic tone by means of which even when the emotional strains for Bim are numerous, the author never allows us to forget the spirit of tolerance, fortitude

and self-sacrifice or doubt whether Bim really has within the titanic strength of tragic purification. (151)

Similarly, S. P. Swain and P. M. Nayak say that the novel is about the discovery of an identity that emerges out of the seemingly rootless and meaningless life in a small Hindu family...besides, the novel also highlights that "love, understanding, forgiveness and mutual acceptance are true factors to bring harmony in life"(15).

Another great critic Ramesh Kumar Gupta views that the novel is about two types of women hailing from the same family-"the women who do not act but surrender and so the tradition alive and next the women who choose not to surrender...and take up a new road where no one can dictate to them" (153).

Similarly, viewing *Clear Light of Day*, the novel about the renewal of self-identity amidst the sense of alienation and emotional estrangement into another mould and pattern Dr. S. P. Swain says:

In this novel alienation leads to identification which is symbolized by the "clear light of day". The novel nevertheless ends in a positive note. Like the other novels of Desai, here, alienation does not lead to the annihilation and immolation of the self but to its rejuvenation and re-identification with the milieu. Ultimately, all opposing needs and discords seemed to mingle at the very roots and Bim could see the clear light of day. (6)

Similarly, Sudhakar Ratnakar Jamkhandi views that *Clear Light of Day* is a true Indian novel, which shows the extreme sense of joy while all the family

members, remain together. Giving emphasis to family bond and its rejuvenating influence he says:

Tara, Raja and Bim had shared Joyous moment together, even though Tara fact left out of the adventures of Bim and Raja. When together, they had experienced a pure and elemental joy that shot upward and stood straight and right above the surrounding dreariness. (247)

The novel is about a family chronicle and its ups and downs with great upheavals. In the same way, another female critics H. Kalpana views that this is the novel about the restriction imposed on women. As she says:

Restriction imposed on women are shed light on through Bim who in her naïveté, fails to realize that, "the Hindu social code sees external ambition in women as detrimental and unnatural" and that "sociological factors regard Bim's high ideals of services as only "sacrifices for the family" judged by this conventional social matrix her sublime ambition is reduced to a pathetic search. (38)

The novel traces the tensions of a Hindu family reunited in the family name, where one sister, Bim who has stayed there caring for Baba, represents Indian culture, while the other sister, Tara, represents more western value, both struggling to understand one another's narratives.

There are several views found about this novel, most of the critics have reviewed it as typical Indian novel capturing Indian culture and tradition, however, none of the critics has highlighted the novel as having nostalgic theme. The researcher is going to plug this critical gap hypothesizing that by

foregrounding the childhood games, fairy tales, the novel emphasizes nostalgia which helps heal the wound brought about by the feud in the family at present.

II. Multiculturalism and Nostalgia

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a public policy approach for managing cultural diversity in a multi ethnic society, officially stressing mutual respect and tolerate for cultural differences within a country's borders. As a policy multiculturalism emphasizes the unique characteristics of different cultures, especially as they relate to one another in receiving nations. The word was first used in 1957 to describe Switzerland, but came into common currency in Canada in the late 1960s. it quickly spread to other English-speaking countries. Broadly, the term "multiculturalism" is often used to describe societies which have many distinct cultural groups, usually as a result of immigration. This can lead to anxiety about the stability of national identity, yet can also lead to cultural exchanges that benefit the cultural groups. Such exchanges range from major accomplishments in literature, art and philosophy to relatively token appreciation of variations in music, dress and new foods. However, there is more to culture than physical products or traits. For example, supporters promote the idea that improving interethnic relations will ultimately require new modes of perception, characterized by fluid, flexible and cooperative modes of relating to one another as unique individuals and as members of cultural subgroups and as constituents of a common humanity.

On a smaller scale the term "multiculturalism" can also be used to refer to specific districts in cities where people of different cultures co- exist. The actions of city planners can result in some areas remaining monoculture, often

due to pressure groups active in the local political arena. Monocultural districts can often be referred to positively or negatively as ghettos.

Within one nation multiculturalism is a policy that immigrants and others should preserve their cultures with the different cultures interacting peacefully within one nation. Today this is the official policy of Canada, Australia India, . In summery multiculturalism preserves a ‘cultural mosaic’ of separate ethnic groups. It can also be defined as the “Salad bowl” model.

Multicultural Ethos

Multiculturalism became incorporated into official policies in several nations in the 1970s . First of all multiculturalism was adopted in 1971 following the Royal commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in Canada. Since its launch in the 1970s, the movement known as multiculturalism has taken to distinct directions. On the one hand, multiculturalism celebrates the diversity of cultural groups. Sometimes called ethnic revitalization, this multiculturalism seeks to preserve the cultural practices of specific groups and to resist the homogeneity of assimilation. While on the other, it sees the identities of individuals as primary cultural, determined by their membership in a group, and not as the expression of a unique self-consciousness. Oriented by identity politics, this multiculturalism rejects the individualistic model of personhood and instead stresses the analysis of communal expressive traditions. Hall writes:

There are many different kinds of metaphors in which our thinking about cultural change takes place. These metaphors themselves change. Those which grip our imagination and, or

time, govern our thinking about scenarios and possibilities of cultural transformation, give way to new metaphors, which makes us think about these difficult questions in new terms.

(For Allon 287)

Multiculturalism celebrates differences between the cultures, race, and caste rituals and in other social activities. The multicultural or cross-cultural ethos shows a distinct and a deep awareness of the social, economic and cultural realities. It forms the multiplicity in thematic patterns and represents the multicultural ethos. A multicultural perspective that widens and enlarges the frontiers of thought and which is therefore considered a very important literary characteristic by most critics and thinkers. 'Multicultural' forces reconsideration of many issues that were presumed to be settled.

'Multicultural' forces reconsideration of many issues that were presumed to be settled under enlightenment or post-enlightenment auspices. In important ways, this consideration inserts itself in to the contemporary questioning of the 'Modernity'.

Multiculturalism that is, to the tension between liberal-western universalism and cultural loyalties in a worldwide setting. The tension is clearly evident in many of the developing societies with the tradition and cultural beliefs. Thus, one common factor that emerges here is that of the multicultural ethos. The main thematic concerns are the questions of a distinct identity.

All societies today are culturally heterogeneous in different degrees. The influence on their language, aspirations, and patterns of consumption, life-styles, self-understanding and innermost fears is often so subtle and

systematic that they do not even notice it. A culturally homogeneous society whose members share and mechanically follows an identical body of beliefs and practices is today no more than an anthropological fiction. In some societies cultural heterogeneity is not a result of contingent external influences but communally grounded. These societies include several more or less well-organized cultural communities, each held together by a distinct body of ideas concerning the best ways to organize significant social relations and lead individual and collective lives. Such societies are called multicultural ranging "from domestic contacts to global interactions", and "between hegemonic western culture and developing nonwestern societies" (Dallmayr 14).

Cultures derive their authority from different sources, of which two are currently the most important. Some cultures are based on and derive their authority from religion, and demand respect deemed to be due to religion. Some others are ethnically based, and demand respect because they are bound up with the life and history of specific ethnic groups. In yet others ethnicity and religion are integrally connected and provide a complex source of legitimacy. This means that multicultural societies could be multi-ethnic or multireligious or both. Since ethnicity and religion are different in nature, multi-ethnically constituted multicultural societies raise different kinds of problems to those raised by multi-religiously constituted multicultural societies. As Graff and Bruce writes, within cultural studies, "the aim of cultural criticism is something more than preserving, transmitting and interpreting culture or cultures. Rather, the aim is to bring together, in a common democratic space of discussion, diversities that had remained

unequal largely because they had remained apart" (434-35). However since they are both multicultural, albeit in their own different ways, some of the basic problems they raise are broadly similar in nature.

Multiculturalism is not new to our age, for many pre-modern societies such as the Roman Empire, medieval India and Europe, and the Ottoman Empire included several different cultural communities and coped with the diversity in their own different ways. Contemporary multiculturalism is both wider and deeper. It is wider because cultural diversity covers a much larger area of human existence than before, and deeper because it is grounded in profound differences about the conceptions of the good life. Whatever their differences, most pre-modern societies were religious, and shared in common many of their important moral beliefs and social practices. This is not the case today.

Contemporary multiculturalism occurs in the context of the increasing economic and cultural globalization. Globalization is a paradoxical phenomenon. On the one hand, it leads to homogenization of ideas, institutions, ideals, moral and social practices, and forms of life. On the other hand it also encourages heterogeneity. It encourages migrations of individuals and even whole communities, and diversifies every society. It arouses fears about the loss of society's identity, provokes cultural resistance, and stimulates the rediscovery or invention of indigenous traditions to underpin and legitimize its sense of difference. Since a society is more likely to succeed in global competition if it has something distinctive to offer, globalization also encourages it to devise new ways of defining and distinguishing itself. Contemporary multiculturalism is thus embedded in an

immensely complex dialectical process, and heavily bound up with global economic and political forces. During argues that "One of the way in the area of multiculturalism is to be very alert to what is happening with the various immigrant groups in terms of cultural politics" (Dallmayr 198-99).

Multiculturalism begins in identity politics-in the conflation of personal and cultural identity-it should not end there. Taking multiculturalism personally is a way to move in, through, and beyond identity politics, while respective the conditions that make those politics a recurrent necessity. We may want to challenge the centrality of "identity" itself in arguments about culture, for example, by considering the difference between "having" an identity and "living" by an ethos. Living by an ethos implies an important degree of agency, freedom, and responsibility in the way a person responds to the various claims of multiple and contradictory identities. While the notion of having an identity tends to reinforce deterministic scenarios, in which persons become prescribed categories, the notion of ethos holds open the future of persons. In this way, the relationship between person and cultural identity becomes more effective in the future.

Now we are in the platform of multiculturalism in which every identities are submerged ,in such a way that a person in such a society is striving to create his/her identity. In multicultural society there is conflict among different people from different backgrounds. Due to the conflict between among different people a person has to take recourse to nostalgia for his /her distinct identity in multicultural society. Thus, in multicultural society we find the percolation of nostalgic experience to maintain one's own cultural identity one is submerged in nostalgia.

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is the central theme of Cultural Studies. An identity builds on what we think we are now in the light of our past and present circumstances. We live our lives in the context of social relationship with others. This social relationship is commonly understood as socialization or acculturation. Without acculturation we would not be persons as we understand that notion in our everyday lives. In Balibar's words "Identity is never a peaceful acquisition: it is claimed as a guarantee against a threat of annihilations that can be figured by another identity or by an erasing of identities" (186). Identity is meant the idea that is not fixed but created and built on, always in process, a moving towards rather than an arrival. But cultural identity reflects towards the social position. Identities are wholly social constructions and cannot exist outside of cultural representations and acculturation. There is no known culture that does not use the concept of cultural identity. But identity is a matter not only of self description but also of social ascription. Giddens argues:

Social identities are associated with normative rights, obligations and sanctions which, within specific collectives, form roles. The use of standardized markets, especially to do with the bodily attributes of age and gender, is fundamental in all societies, not withstanding large cross-cultural variations which can be noted. (282- 83)

There is no essence of identity to be discovered; rather, cultural identity is continually being produced within the similarity and differences. Cultural identity is not an essence but a continually shifting position, and the points

of difference around which cultural identities could form are multiple. They include identifications of class, gender sexuality, age, ethnicity, nationality, politics position, morality, religion etc. and each of this discursive position is itself unstable.

The meanings of different aspects are changing but never finished or completed. According to Hall:

Persons are composed not of one but of several, sometimes contradictory identities. The subject assumes different identities as different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent self. Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identification from birth to death, it is only because we construct a confronting story or "narrative of the self" about ourselves. (The Question 277)

Thus, identities are wholly social constructions and can not exist outside of cultural representations. Identities are constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. Cultural identities, thus, are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or future, which are made, within the discourse of history and culture. After colonialism, there emerged a new transformation of social consciousness, which exceed the rectified identities and rigid boundaries invoked by national consciousness. This national consciousness strikes the person who is in the whirlpool of contact zone, which is the fusion of different people from different culture.

Contact Zone

The idea of contact zones was first developed by Mary Louise Pratt in her seminal book *Imperial Eyes*. Contact zone is a social space marked by the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjuncture and whose trajectories now intersect. "Contact zones", *Pratt writes*, "are the social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination -like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (4). A contact perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizer and colonized self and other, native and the non-native, not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understanding and practices, often with asymmetrical relations of power.

In such spaces people historically and geographically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, racial inequality, and intractable conflict. Numbers of other vocabularies are closely related to the idea of 'contact zone' like 'transculturation' 'autoethnography' and 'safe houses.'. Along with 'transculturation' and 'autoethnography', 'afe houses' are the phenomenon of the contact zone. The term refers to the 'Social and intellectual spaces" *Pratt writes*, "where groups can constitute themselves as horizontal, homogeneous, sovereign communities with high degree of trust, shared understandings, temporary protection from legacies of oppression" (*Mass Culture 71*). Where there is a legacy of subordination, groups need places for healing and mutual

recognition, safe houses in which to construct shared understandings, Knowledge's, claims on the world that they can bring in to the contact zone. Contact zones include identifying with the ideas, interests, and histories of the other. It involves transculturation and collaborative work, comparison between elite and vernacular culture forms.

In contact zone there are different cultures. These different cultures have their own identity when one culture mixes with another culture, one culture wants to create own identity and people are full of nostalgic because they remember past culture. Present culture is different for them. Thus in the contact zone people have the sense of nostalgia remembering about their past culture.

Myth

I have already discussed that in multicultural society , there are different kinds of cultures . These different types of cultures have different myths. One culture regards his myth as a form of his cultural wealth such as, native American people glorifies their myth although American society is multicultural society. Myth has been generally under attack at least since Xenophobes (565 - 470BC) criticized the activities of gods as related by the Homeric tradition and Hesoid. More recently Ivan Strenski has argued that myth is in fact non existent and that the only real products of the academic "myth factory" are theories and applied writings: "Myth" is such a general term and its etymology and early applications are so unspecific that one is compelled to take some note of contemporary usage... "most people" assume that myths are a special kind of traditional tale and that the qualities that make them special are those that distinguish them as profound, imaginative other worldly, universal or larger than life. (Bryan 25)

The features of myth are that it has narrative force power or character. It explains some important phenomenon or custom. Myth records and establishes a useful institution. Emotion is included in myth in which a religious feeling is reenforced. Ritual or cult practice is established in myth. Every myth shows how a reality came into existence whether it be the total reality the cosmos or only a fragment an island a species of plant a human institution.

Myth is always related to a creation... but myths are a vague and uncertain category and one man's myth is another man's legend or folk tale or oral tradition. It is the popular narrative which other myths either uncritically or with references to is held to be true.

Paradoxically myth tends to re-establish itself as a fable, an illusion. Perhaps the paradox can be resolved in the recognition that the myth is a true representation of reality in the sense that it is honesty and has integrity and excellence but it is not a reiteration of reality itself.

The emphases of myth have changed drastically as has so much else of human life since the industrially revolution. So radical is the change that it is of ten difficult to recognize the connection of modern myths with archaic ones. The mythic importance of the narrative form has been much reduced. Stories are now in enormously grater supply. This has resulted in a general demythologization of narrative and the occasional surrendering of myth from its familiar narrative setting.

Traditionally myth is an anonymous tale relating heroic adventures including encounters with the supernatural, which explain the word in allegorical form and thus ratify a society's beliefs and customs. 'Classical' myths, as one such set of stories, have continued to shape literary and other contemporary narratives in the West and have come to comprise a general

cultural knowledge. Though this knowledge has receded in the present century, some names (Diana, Hercules, Bacchus) and stories from this tradition have continuing currency. Derived from the Greek dramatist Sophocles and employed by Sigmund Freud to name the Oedipal Complex is a prominent example of this. Meanwhile, in what might be seen as a reaction to the centrality of Greco Roman mythologies, other additional myths, from Irish, Caribbean, African-American and Indian cultures, have been newly mobilized in the twentieth century in the affirmation of re-marking of national identities.

In some popular uses the term has a very broad application, as in references to 'the Orient'. In such cases, myth can imply a romanticized, distorted or false set of attitudes and is therefore close to the sense of 'stereotype' or, in a sometimes lighter vein, suggests a superstition or make-believe story. The 'myths' of black male 'sexuality' or of female passivity would be examples of the first type while the 'myth of the Loch Ness monster' would be an example of the second.

In culture theory, myth was given importance through the work principally of the structural anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908) and the literary critic and semiotician Roland Barthes (1915-80). Lévi-Strauss saw myths as setting basic, universal themes in narratives which themselves follow.

Universal structure and can be differently articulated in individual myths. Structural anthropology in this tradition reads myths as the expressions of a narrative system and sees this as having the function not simply of reflecting a society back to itself but of resolving a society back to itself but

of resolving a dilemma or contradiction endemic to that society. The term 'mythology' is used to describe the system of such myths. Levi-Strauss was led to contradiction endemic to that society. The term 'mythology' is used to describe the system of such myths. Levi-Strauss was led to conclude that myths were structured or coded in this systematic way and as answering a collective human need . However, the term 'mythology' has also been used to describe an individual and esoteric system of coded symbols or symbolic narratives-as in descriptions, for example, thought of William Butler Yeats.

In the work of Roland Barthes, myth is virtually synonymous with ideology and designates a label of symbolic or cultural connotation, active in a visual image or social narrative. Barthes developed this understanding of the term especially in the essays entitle mythologies, study of the activities and events of contemporary French cultural life such as wrestling, striptease, new citroen motor car, films and advertising. This has proved an influential model for the study of popular culture. Though the term 'myth' might not itself be used in this connection, the task of the cultural critic, following Barthes, is thought to be to 'de-mythologies' the embedded meanings activities and representations as they shape and structure daily life, showing how their implicit class and cultural attitude have become naturalized.

In modern time myth has been developed as nostalgia. connecting myth with nostalgia Bryan writes "Given the preceding observations the foundationalism characteristics of much of modern thought since Descartes can itself be seen as a form of "nostalgia for paradise"(14). The prevalent mythology of pre modern society was not seriously challenged ones firm location within a particular culture would ensure a certitude a reality, a scarcity to the mores of that culture. Now a days however with

the entry of the orient into history and propagation of mass media the "sacred" standard of the traditional religion of the west are challenged. i.e. "not simply the doctrines of Christianity but all the heirs of our culture's positive valorization" (87).

Thus myth is related with past memories and past memories are source of nostalgia. One man's myth is another man's legend. One man's myth is source of his nostalgia. For example Native American people remember their past cultures and they want to revive their myth with the help of nostalgia. When their culture is seduced by another culture they feel a kind of cultural pain. Of course the myth is connected with past. To remember myth means to glorify past or to focus toward the past .When we remember the past, our memories are dear to us. These memories come as form of nostalgia so myth is also created as the form of nostalgia.

Fairy tales and Nostalgia

For those of us who love the fairly tale there is always the temptation and the desire to create these marvelous works on our own. This work is a warning that this desire is a temptation that should be resisted. The stories in this collection are well written, but most fail in their primary objective, the creation of "modern" fairy tales. The nature of that failure is tells us, think, something very important about the nature of fairy tales.

The traditional fairy tale is flawed as a literature because many of the tales of the classical canon may have dubious messages when it comes to the depiction of gender roles, violence and democracy. It suggests that the modern fairy tale, as represented here, has and should represent more contemporary social views. It suggests that the function of the fairy tale is a response to a utopian urge.No matter what their style or perspectives, the author of these innovative fairy tales share a common utopian urge that remains at the heart of the fairy-tale genre. Long before

they were written down, oral fairy tales were used to provide a sense of community and endow listeners with hope that their world could be made a better place in which to live. This is still the major purpose of literary fairy tales.

There may be major misunderstanding of the nature of the traditional fairy tale is not reflect a utopian urge; it doubtful that they were used in any meaningful sense to provide "a sense of community". This is so clear that one has to ask the question: How could such a misreading occur? There are many interpretations of fairy tales. In general sense fairy tales are folk lore, quite literally folk lore, tales created by people who are not literary. As such they are originally, primary. The literacy work is always secondary and derivatives, a product of an author's desire to tell anew tales like those already enjoyed.

Folklore, however, is not the expression of an individual; it is the expression of the folk who have evolved it. Fairy tales may be interpreted by literacy adults with using political theory or psychoanalytic theory. However these interpretations are secondary. Fairy tales are apolitical. That is not to say that there is no implicit political message; all narratives have political interpretations. However fairy tales, real fairy tales, are not informed by a political sense, by political interpretation as a mode of perceiving the world.

Many tales in the fairy tales are the reconciliation of the child and the adult; they fail as fairy tales in the course of doing so. They fail in various ways: they introduce inappropriate incongruity, they use adult literacy irony and they are politicized. Children can be quite savage in their demand for consistency even when accepting fantasy. The mixing of the archaic symbols of the fairy tale with modern technology creates structural incongruities. The adult reader appreciates these incongruities as irony.

The fairy tale demands more than Tolkien's "willing suspension of belief" which is a conspiracy between the author and reader. It demands that the reader accept and revert to the child. Irony is an acid that cuts away the connection between the adult and the child. True folk lore has no authors; to create a true fairy tale the author must surrender his/ her auctorial personae and her adult intellectual theories; he/she must resurrect the sense of the child and the folk.

The answer lies in the conflict between the child and the adult, between the world and that children live in and the world that adults live in. As children, if we are fortunate, we learn and love fairy tales. As adults they are dear to us as part of our nostalgia for our childhood. But as adults we have different values, a different way of understanding the world than we did when we were children. We are tempted to try to preserve our nostalgia while honoring our adult values at one and the same time by reconstructing the fairy tale.

Trauma and Nostalgia

Much contemporary works that seek to understand what is now called trauma stems from this period and from an attempt to understand why traumatic events are relieved time and time again by surveyors. By the Second World War it was no longer only service personal who were intimately affected by state organized violence. Arial bombing campaigns drew civilian population into the conflict. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was horrific and overwhelming in its brutality and the genocidal policies of the Nazi regime in Germany led to the deaths of millions in concentration camps open air shootings and ghettos.

Symptoms of trauma generally involve force and violence. Of course this is a threat to those people involved, their lives and integrity as in rape torture or child abuse sometimes it also involves witnessing the horrific deaths of others for example

in wartime combat or in concentration camps. The victim of trauma feel helpless in their enforced encounter with deaths, violence and brutality. For example in 1947 in India Muslims and Hindus were greatly suffered because of violence. In most cases in India Muslims and in Pakistan Hindus were perpetrators of violence. In that critical condition these people had to search their identity. Most suffered people used to remember the glorified past.

Indeed trauma can be devastating because who we are or who we think we may depend varies closely on the social context in which we place and find ourselves. Our existence relies not only on our personal survives as individuals beings but also in a very profound sense on the continence of the social order that gives our existence meaning and dignity, family friends political community beliefs. If that order betrays us in some way we may survive in the sense of continuity to live as physical beings but the meanings of our existence is changed commonplace solutions to do with who and what we are and what life might be provided by culture religious belief, patriotic sentiment and close family relationships are overwhelmed. Any illusion of safety or security is broken. Events seen as traumatic seem to reflect a particular form of intimate bond between personhood and community and most importantly they expose the part played by relations of power. For the child abuse involves betrayal by the person the child should most be able to trust. War is dangerous because of war people want to forget the difficult situation that is caused by war. Trauma leads people to remember the glorified past. To forget their pain caused by trauma, people always have the nostalgic experience remembering their past time.

Nostalgia describes a longing for the past often idealized and unrealistic. The term "Nostalgia" was originally coined by Johannes Hofer, a medical student in 1678. The word has been coined from two words, Nostos and Algos. Nostos means

returning home and *Algos* means pain or longing. At first a medical student Johannes Hofer coined this word to refer to the pain a sick person feels because he wishes to return to his native land and fears never to see it again (Davis15). This neologism was so successful that people forgets origin. Moreover its original meaning referring to a serious medical disorder has been lost as the word nostalgia entered everyday language.

During the period from the late 17th century to the late 19th century doctors diagnosed and treated nostalgia. The word nostalgia had other names in various languages. For example *maladie du pays*(country's sickness) in french , *Heimweh* (homepain) in German and *el malde corazon*(heart pain) in Spanish.

By the 1850s Nostalgia was losing its status as a particular disease and coming to be seen rather as a symptom or stage of a pathological process. It was considered as a form of melancholia and a predisposing condition among suicides. Nostalgia was however still diagnosed among soldiers as late as the American civil war.

By the 1870s interest in nostalgia as a medical category had all but vanished. Most saw the decline of this serious disease as a good thing, the result of progress. Nonetheless some lamented what they saw as the loss of the feeling for home that gave rise to the illness. Of course the phenomenon of nostalgia did not disappear with its demedicalization.

Nostalgia in the general sense is more commonly referred to not as a medical condition or a field of study but as a feeling that any normal person can have. Nostalgia can often be associated with a fond childhood memory, a certain game or a treasured personal object.

Most studies about nostalgia show that many people believe hat years or decades past people were better than they are now and that there had been a higher

standard of living then even if this is not always the case . This belief can be very characteristic of nostalgia of the "good old days" Items in pop culture can often trigger a strong feeling of nostalgia. Of course nostalgia may not refer a medical condition anymore however it can still carry with its symptoms that are very much real and physical in nature. These symptoms can include, but are not limited to, tightening of chest and/or throat, pain in the pit of the stomach, and nostalgia been known to lead to despair.

Nostalgia is also a term for a radio format playing pop music from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, primarily before rock roll era. The format is also known as "adult standard", "easy listening" " beautiful music, or "middle of the road" This type of radio station sometimes also plays a mix of classic country and news and talk along with "nostalgia" music.

Nostalgia has attracted critical attention in relation to post-modernism and the supposed loss of a sense of authentic history. Fredric Jameson has introduced the category of the 'nostalgia mode' (a rendering of the French *la mode retro*) to describe the way 'contemporary postmodern culture pastiches the past, re-presenting it at the level of cultural style'. He cites the work of the American historical novelist, E.L. Doctorow as evidence of how "real history" can only be presented now " by way of our own pop images and simulacra of the history"(Jameson 60). Films such as *American Graffiti*, *Star Wars*, and *Baby Heat*, Jameson sees as exhibiting three types of the nostalgia in the 1950; the one evokes an earlier experience of teenage movi-going while the third presents the past so selectively that it blurs all contemporary of specific historical reference, as if 'it were set in some eternal 1993s, beyond real historical time'. Linda Hutchinson in particular

has responded to Jameson on this theme. She argues that postmodern texts, including films, represent the past in a self-conscious, parodic and critical way, revealing its construction as narrative rather than a self-evident 'History' or unmediated 'truth'.

Elsewhere, nostalgia is related to the theme of memory and reminiscence. The African-American cultural critic, bell hooks, writes of nostalgia as "the longing for something to be as once it was, a kind of useless act"(hooks 35). And as such to be distinguished, hooks says, from 'that remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present'. Elizabeth Wilson argues that nostalgia can aid what hooks calls this 'politicization of memory'. She points to its complexity and ambivalence; neither the 'pure sense of loss, nor the emotional self-indulgence of mere sentimentality' of standard descriptions. The sense of loss, as suggested, can help us "measure the distance we have come" and appreciate 'the reality of change'(Wilson 25), for nostalgia is itself a rather passive emotion, yet it can lead us toward a more active responsibility both of the past and for the future.

III. Nostalgia in *Clear Light of Day*

Clear Light of Day allows the reader to penetrate a family, which has its own unique problems. Tara, one of the important female characters frequently visits old Delhi, her ancestral hometown. As she has to go in different countries with her husband. She is often nostalgic in nature. When she comes in old Delhi with her husband they remained there, Bakul feels quite bore but for Tara that boring environment has its own significant. The Das home, the “solid ground” that Tara, Raja, Bim, and Baba cherish has a strange effect on them. At first in their adolescence, Bim prefers being at school rather than at home Raja prefers poring to the musty volumes and precious manuscripts in Hyder Ali’s library. Only Tara would remain at home than any where else. In adulthood Raja who now owns the Das home as he inherits Hyder Ali’s property upon marrying Benazir little need to return to it. Tara returns every three or five years to the house and to Bim as the two are inseparable.

The Das home has seen much childhood drama and it is there that are mixed up in the collective memory of Tara and Bim until upon their completion. Bim and Tara realize the sense of the worth of their sibling relationship. Tara seeks continuity from her frequent trips home and achieves a sense of permanence only when Bim too realizes the reason for her return home. The Das house, Bim realizes, is “stolid ground,”. “That was what the house had been –the lawn, the rose walk the guava trees, the veranda ...” (153). And all of this is Bim’s domain from which she is inseparable.

As children, Raja, Bim and Tara spend most of their leisure hours within their house or in the garden venturing beyond the compound to play along the banks of the Jamuna and they walked across it to watermelons from the farm beyond. Their childhood dramas seemed not so much to make cracks in the dull metal band that held them all down into a world of an age, of unbearable, total inactivity eventless ness and sympathy as to emphasize them by hitting them with a hammer so that they changed and the clangs resounded and echoed.

Three children – Tara , Raja , and Bim had shared joyous moments together , even though Tara left out of the adventures of Bim and Raja .When together ,they had experienced “a pure and elemental joy that shot upward and stood straight and night above the surrounding dreaminess”(121). As children they comprehended the world about them quite accurately. Inactivity eventless, boredom had been distastefully to them so they had sought personal escapes. They had felt the atmosphere of the house keenly catching all the movies, all the insinuation in the air noting those details that escapes the elders whose senses were atrophied. This is why, upon recalling their childhood and youth, Tara and Bim feel similarly about not wanting to be young anymore. Bim and Tara are glad that their childhood is already spent because they had not known “how to cope, how to deal with that first terrible flood of life” (30). As Bim says “One just goes under .It sweeps one along and how many years and years it is before one can stand up to it ,make a stand against it. She would not be young again for anything” (41).

Among the female characters, Tara submerged in nostalgia as she has been displaced by her own country on the one hand and she finds a sense of rejuvenation in the Das family which captures their family's history.

The novel does not have a tangible story in the true sense of the term. There are some sharp interlinked, episodic splinters of a disrupted family life discussed or recollected after a long lapse of time by two leading characters Bim and Tara. Their recollection forms a new patterns, a transformed design within the world and common and unusual and the familiar, thereby revealing a producing scenario of passions and personal traumas of love and sacrifice, death and betrayal, anger and accusation. Most of the characters in the novel are getting submerged in nostalgia because they are undergoing with harsh realities of the present. Present is not so good for them. They are trying to escape from present situation. The partition of the country and violence brought out by it is very suggestively described in the novel. This novel also has captures cold blooded violence during the period of partition. The entire novel is set in Delhi of 1940's where "Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were living quite in a harmonious manner" (Butalia 9). But after the bloody partition, everything goes ups and down creating many upheavals in the society. This upheaval is reinforced in the novel by the despair and isolated life of Bim in Hindu Das Family within gloomy atmosphere. So as to get rid of the horror and brutality of the time, Tara and Bim often take recourse to nostalgia. They recall the period of childhood as an "age of love and intimacy with each other, the four of them (Raja, Bim Tara and Baba) forming a complete whole"(51) . But cracks begin to appear as they grow up and acquire more individual personalities. The partition of

India creates a kind of difficulties in their feeling of estrangement. The partition brought barriers between people “who had lived together for centuries in an atmosphere of social and cultural understanding” (Butalia 15). Tara, Bim and Raja face a severe identity crisis. In present situation They are experiencing bitter realities of partition .They are unable to relate their present to the past, their adulthood to child hood . As Ramesh kumar Gupta observes:

The period that lies in between the growing consciousness and search for individuality of adolescence –fails to provide continuity from the early period of child hood to the later stage of adulthood causing deep psychological trauma and stress.(122)

The vision of childhood dominates the novel. The adult world of the characters is seen as projection of the childhood identity. The contrast between time past and time present is crucial to the aesthetic get up of the novel. The moon light dream of the world of childhood is seen against the passage of time .Because during the partition of India many people were the extreme sufferer from killing, rape, and many other anti social activities .This novel gives the horror picture of the Indian society during the partition of the country. Wailing sound of cricket, barking sound of dogs and bitter music has reinforced the gloomy environment of that time. In that horror kind of atmosphere their is no supporter boredom alienation bitter reality of partition all these are pictured in the family of Das family. To get rid of for a while they enter into the past because for them past was glorious, past was sound for them and past was peaceful rather than present is dark not bright

for Das family. Thus the adult life of the character is beclouded and bedimmed by their childhood identity. The novelist visualizes the reality of childhood famine and poetic sensibility. The violent world of adults is contrasted with the boisterous and carefree world of children the image of sickness, disease and violence suggest the adult world of India during the partition when as the image of joy enthusiasm, curiosity and carelessness characterizes childhood or the pre partition era where Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs lived together in relative peace and harmony. The novel describes the emotional affinity between the two main characters Bim and her younger sister Tara who are haunted by the memory of the past. The two epigraphs .one by Emily Dickinson:

Memory is a strange bell-

Jubilee and knell.

And other by T.S. Eliot:

See, now they vanish,

The faces and places, with the self which, as

it could ,loved them

To become renewed transfigured, in another pattern.

Which preface the novel highlight the theme of the effect of the remembrance of things past on the chief protagonist while to Tara, the memories are a “jubilee” a source of wishful joy, to Bim , they strike the “Knell” of sorrow .Thus suggesting their temperamental alienation the former wants to retain and cling to her past identity and enjoy it while the latter is wearied of it and is in search of a new identity. Hence the meeting of these two chief characters implies a clash of identities the past and the

present. By delineating their present, Anita Desai links it with their past and shows the inherent tie between the two. Here again, she comes back to the polarization and temperamental disaffiliation. The two sisters differ in their attitudes to memories of childhood. The circumstances of their lives differ. The identity of each enacts and articulates the past in its own pattern. Tara, wife of Bakhul, a diplomat posted abroad is in home after many years. Her home coming is totally guided by her longing for her root. “Physically smaller and weaker than Bim, she lacks Bim’s vigour, her stamen “(123). Bim has an ambition to shape herself in the image of Florence Nightingale and Joan of Arc. Tara rejoices in the sheltered and cloistered life of her home in the company of Aunt Mira. In fact, Aunt Mira is her other identity. The marriage with Bakhul and her stay abroad bring about a great change in the identity of Tara. Her life turns over a new path. When Tara returns to old Delhi, her old love for home revives and she wishes to fade away to dissolve in the reminiscences of the past and to lose herself in order to recover her past identity. She feels “a part of her was sinking languidly down into the passive pleasure of having returned to the familiar (2). “The old rose walk is steel here” (2) the sight of the snail. The writer submerges own angle in this way:

She (Tara) saw it was her childhood snail slowly, resignedly making its way from under the flower up a clod of earth only to tumble off the top onto its side – an eternal in a clap and miniature Sisyphus. She brought her hands together cried “look, a snail!” (2)

Which kindle her memory ablaze. But “I had not meant to go anywhere” She explains, when her husband invites her to his uncle’s house, “I only wanted to stay at home” (13). Tara opts for a home bound life. As she has to go different alien places of foreign land, she frequently suffers from the home sickness. There fore she likes to be attached with Indian culture and tradition, so she says that she and her husband should come to India time and again. Though her husband seems to be oblivious about the Indian society but Tara often seems nostalgic about her home town .As she says with Bim in the course of the conversation:

But we like to come, Bim .We must come –if we are not to lose touch, I with all of you, with home, and he with the country. He’s been planning this trip for months. When the girls arrive, and we go to Hyderabad for the wedding, Bakul wants to go from there and do a tour of the whole country. He did it ten years ago and(37)

Here Tara’s nostalgia is of two kinds. One is that she is nostalgic about the India when she is in foreign land with her husband and when she is in India she becomes nostalgic about old Delhi where there is her family . Family bond and culture of one’s own nations in the novel becomes binding forces. Both sisters Tara and Bim becomes afraid of their present identity so they frequently submerged in nostalgia ,a nostalgia of cheerful, chaotic yet very romantic child hood days when they were in joint family. While talking about happiness in Indian joint family an European may laugh at it, western culture may tease at it, and who do not understand the meaning of joint family may not take seriously but in oriental culture it has its own value who

valorizes Bim's separation from her brothers and sisters accelerates in her feeling of her fragmentation and incompleteness, of the disintegration of her self. She feels isolated from domestic union and she is unable to coordinate and relate herself with others. Bim who had felt herself to be the center and had "stayed and became part of the pattern, inseparable" (56). Now she has the feeling of isolation and boredom. Even when her own self is concerned, Bim relates it with its past which gives her relief and mental solace. The novel is set in old Delhi of 1940s, the time of India being independence. During the partition of India violence was percolated in Indian society as a result old Delhi was badly affected by violence killing rape and murder of innocent people. Earlier Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were living very harmoniously. There was no any kind of hostile relationship between man and man, one religion to another religion or Hindu or Muslims or Sikhs. Culture was also adjusted harmoniously. Before the partition of India Urdu culture was dominant, Hindus also would adopt Islamic culture. There was mutual and cordial relationship between Hindu culture and Muslim culture, a kind of humanity was established between them. But with the partition and its violence there arose unmentionable gap among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Muslims escaped from there and wanted to stay into the safe place. Old Delhi though was a magical place where Hindus and Muslims lived in a very harmoniously before the partition but after the partition of India Delhi simply became grave "Old Delhi does not change. It only decays. It is a great cemetery every house a tomb. Nothing but sleeping graves" (5). The sad atmosphere of old Delhi due to the lack of Muslims and their aristocratic culture can be seen in the following passage where Tara and Bim are in

conversation "Old Delhi does not change. It only decays. My students tell me it is a great cemetery ,every house a tomb. Nothing but sleeping graves .Now, New Delhi, they say is different ... it sounds like a most of fleas" (5).

Due to the bloody partition of the country everywhere chaos, destruction and vandalism were rampant. Old Delhi is also like sleeping grave but Tara and Bim Discuss about Old Delhi which was glorious in the past or during the time of "Tughlaqs, the Khiljis the Sultanate, the Moghuls - that lot" (5).When they are preoccupied by the past. Delhi, hat magically is no more now. It is very far away. Though Delhi still exists, but the Delhi of yester years is no more now. So as to get the glory of the magical of Old Delhi one needs to delve in nostalgia as did by various characters in the novel.

Mira masi, one of the important female characters in this novel has been suffered by widely percolated patriarchal sap of an Indian society. Mira masi is a widow, her husband died young when he was in England for his studies. Her family blamed her that she was an ill fated woman who killed her husband. It has been said in the narrative that many people tried to exploit her physically. In order to forget such a pathetic condition she "takes the help of the past when she was in very happy in the lap of her husband" (31) though it did not last long.

Misra sisters in the novel are very pathetic characters who have been recently divorced from their husbands and they are taking help of music and dance. Since they are undergoing with great trial, trouble and tribulation, they are frustrated characters. Another thing is that their brothers are also enjoying on their earnings. Old man Misra rails at his sons who have

completely abdicated their patriarchal responsibilities and live of their labours. He remembers his promises to take care of his sisters on Rakibhandhan day “even of it was only a custom, an annual festival”(33). His equivocation about the seriousness of patriarchal responsibilities as mere formalities bound by custom and ritual foreshadows what is to come, for a page later he boasts that he was no different from his sons in his own youth. Sometimes in the narrative Misra sisters remember the pleasant moment of their life when they used to play together with Das children:

In the Lodi garden ,we played with goats teased cookoo bird sometimes chasing dogs ... we used to sing songs a midst of great cheerfulness ... these days ... really amazing and intoxicating...which is for distance now it is no more available.(113)

The novel is set on the background of the partition of India. While talking partition of India, the violence also comes at once. This violence brought out by the partition of country has direct impact upon characters in the novel. The 1947 Indian partition of the country lingers as a pivotal moment in the modern world not so much for its political significance of the sovereignties of India and Pakistan but for its lasting impact of monstrosity and horrific emotional duress. From the killing, rapes kidnapping looting and banditry, the south Asian population continues to suffer from psychological wounds etched by partition. Arguably before the Indian partition, the 20th century had not experienced such a massive and excruciating migration of people. The history of partition is history of deep violation and mental for women. By nature women are sensitive and peace loving creature. They hardly take

recourse to war and violence. But the irony is that it is woman who becomes extreme sufferer in the war cum-violence. They due to the violence perpetrated upon women, most of the female characters are suffering from the harsh realities of the present moment, they want to forget it and take recourse to nostalgia of glorious past, and submerged in fantasy, so that they could get solace though for the moment.

Before the partition of the country and division between family members, characters in the novel were happy with the life as they were living in harmonious manner. As for example, in the case of Hindu Das family, which is quite happy with Hyder Ali, a neighboring family. Although they were Hindus and Muslims respectively they had cordial relationship with one another. Old Delhi was the city of Muslim. Though majority was of Muslim Hindu was dominant. Any way, they were in social and cultural harmony. But with the sudden outbreak of hatred relationship between Hindus and Muslims, Hyder Ali the neighbor of the Das family who is Muslim has to Delhi over a night. Raja who is great wisher of Hyder Ali's family of very anxious about them. He tries to go to Hyder Ali's house though he can not go as being sick. This sort of love and affection of the two neighbors prevailed in the past but now due to the demarcation line of Muslims and Hindus created by the contradiction, unmentionable gap arose. In this sense, the past was quite glorious where as the present is very harsh. So as to release from the family tension Bim remembers the picnic that she and her sister enjoyed along with Misra sisters :

The Misra family had taken girls with them to the Lodi gardens one day in early spring when in early spring when the bignonia

venustra was in bloom, enfolding the dark walls of the Lodi tombs in long cloaks of flamboyant orange the picnickers lay on the grass in the honey gold sun, eating peanuts out of paper cones and peeling oranges and urging each other to sing songs.(134)

In the above mentioned paragraph, there was the sense of pleasantness in the garden when the female characters in the novel enjoyed in the past. They were happy in the past, each and every character in the novel one way or the other takes the help of nostalgia as they all are suffering from boredom and loneliness of the present. Baba, a mentally retarded member of the Das family "is in semiotic world of music" (30) so that he could have relief from various tensions within and without. In the case of mother of the Das children who is now suffering from Diabetes, she frequently remembers her life when she was a neogamist; she delves in the memory because the present is quite unfavorable for her so her mind is frequently pre occupied with the past. As in the case of Tara, who has to be in the foreign with her husband is suffering from homesickness. In the foreign land she feels the sense of displacement and having no identity of herself. That is why she likes to come at home from the foreign land. In this connection Sudhakar Ratnakar Jamkhandi says:

Still Tara likes to come home or she will lose, touch as would her husband with India. For a while she recalls her childhood adventures she becomes a child again as she would like to steal a guava if she is sure her husband is not looking. When at her old home she even disagrees with her husband who, instead of

appreciating her newly acquired strength, thinks she will revert to her old spineless self if she stays home. (52)

In the case of Das children, when come across with some tensions and problem they remember their past experiences their “playing near the Jamuna river with full fledged enjoyment”(45). They used to share joyous moment together though Tara felt left out of the adventures of Bim and Raja when together, they had experienced “a pure and elemental joy that shot upward and stood straight and right above the surrounding dreariness. There were still those shining summer evening on the banks of the Jumna when they went together” (121).

Clear Light of Day is at once a family chronicle and a history of modern India, But there is a crucial difference. In the novel history is glimpsed only out of the corner of the eye. In the partition riots Delhi is ablaze, but the fires are on the horizon. The novel takes place in old Delhi's civil lines “where the garden and bungalows are quit and sheltered behind their hedges”(41) and the residents only imagine that they hear the sound of shots and of cries and screams. It is here that the family live, the four children, Raja his two sisters, Bim and Tara and Baba, the youngest son, the retarded baby of the family. Raja and Tara leave, Raja to marry the daughter of a rich Muslim businessman, and Tara to marry a diplomat and enter on the displaced life of embassy, shifting from country to country, returning to India from time to time in a forlorn attempt to “keep in touch”(46). Bim teaches history at the local college, “Her life oscillates between history and memory” (10) between the comfortingly distant history of the Mogul's empire that she teaches at college and the memories that she broods over at

home: sad memories for the most part of her aunt's lapse into alcoholism, and rupture that took place between herself and her brother, embittering the love that she still feels for new. It is a noisy house. Bad shah, the dog on which Bim lavishes her affection, irritates the neighbors with his non stop barking, and Baba plays over and over again at full volume his small collection of 1940s records. The noise grates on the nerves of visitors, sometimes on Bim's nerves too, but the noise work only to drown out the noises of the outside to preserve a silence, the silence in which Bim has chosen to live out her days.

Time stopped for her in 1947. Then her sister married, and her beloved brother left home. She lives with her memories, two memories in particular – the one associated with her aunt, the other with her brother. The aunt really a poor relation taken in by Bim's mother so that she need not be distracted by her children from her bridge –recommended buying a cow. The cow broke its tether, stumbled into the garden well and was drowned. That image –the white cow, green slime and black water – haunted Bim's aunt as she lay dying. The white cow is balanced by a white horse. “can you remember” Bim asks Tara “playing in the sand late in the evening and the white horse riding by Hyder Ali Sahib upon it, high above us, and his peon running in front of him, shouting and the dog behind him ,barking” (23). It is the image that first inspired Raja with a vision of the grace of Islam, the glamour of the India's Moghul past, and the beauty of Urdu. It gave him the ambition to become when he grew up a poet or a Hero, a second Iqbal, or someone who might single- handed heal the wounds of his country's partition by the

practice of a reckless magnanimity. Bim's emotional life is suspended between a white dream and a white night move, between love and bitterness

Raja married Hyder Ali's daughter, became his heir, and wrote Bim a letter arguing her that he would not increase the rent. She pays for the family house. Bim has never recovered from the shock of her brother, her hero diminishing to a land lord. She keeps the letter by her, until at the end of the novel, she destroys it, as sign that she has recovered from that obsession. It is the progression figured in the novel's third white memory, a memory associated with Tara Tara was running after her mother, "as her mother strolled through the rose garden"(34). She spied something gleaming from under a heap of fallen rose petals, a pearl, or a silver ring. But what Tara finds when she bends to look a "small blanched" snail. Her face wrinkling with disgust her mother turned and placed on without a word, leaving Tara on her knees to contemplate the quality of disillusion. The incident is recalled again later in the novel, But as it is repeated, it is transformed. Tara stayed for a while on her knees crushed with disappointment, then lifted the snail onto a leaf and immediately delight gushed up as at a newly mined well at seeing the small creature untold, tentatively protrude its antenna, and begin to slide forward on a stream of slime. The loss of childish illusions need not alter all be sad: it may mark the beginning of the adult's capacity to find joy in looking at the world undeceived. Music and songs are rampant through out the novel. The novel ends with the song of famous Urdu poet, which may show that poetry and art are significant in the history of India. India is a curious place that still preserves the past, religions and its history no matter how modern India becomes, it is still very much an old country.

Most of the characters being nostalgic talk about Urdu literature, songs *Muzara* dance which are connected with Muslim culture. By showing the characters submerged in nostalgia about Urdu culture. Anita Desai is not romanticizing the Urdu literature rather she is showing actual realities of Old Delhi where Urdu literature was dominant in the past but after the partition of the country the History of the Urdu literature got lost which is very sad for the writer. So in this sense past was so much glorious. In order to relieve the tension arising from the issue of the division in the Das family the main characters in the novel seem to harking back to the past which was devoid of tension and upheavals.

The novelist starts with the call of the koel presenting the soul of the day break which symbolizes the past which was quite pleasant as that of the song of koel:

The koel began to a call before daylight. Their voices rang out from the dark trees like an arrangement of bells, calling and echoing each other's call mocking and entering each other into over higher and shriller calls. (160)

Here koel's music symbolizes the glorious past which is not available here now as it is overshadowed now by harsh realities.

In the novel how the child interacts with his or her family and to the question of validity of the concept of the family in the view of the way it affects the children. Indeed the child's view of life and of the world is through the family. Desai portrays Bim's and Tara's parents as individuals who are completely unconscious of their children and have no real interest in them, leaving them in the case of others eventually of their aunt. Desai

insists on the acute need for love which the children show however, it becomes an event that to her it is not a natural instinct amongst parents to love their children, and that in their case their “true” family has a negative on them. Tara suffers greatly from the feeling of loneliness and jealousy towards her siblings as well as from the tremendous lack of love from her parents. When she recalls her childhood then only she gets relief. Tara, Raja and Bim realize the dullness of their household and the strange distance between the world of adults and children. Their diabetic mother, tight – lipped father administering daily an injection of insulin to their mother, their separate world of the club and card-games created a charm between the parents and the children. It also brings the four children much closer in their search of love and security. It is interesting to observe how later in life their relationships evolve. The childhood closeness is lost gradually as the children grow older, become aware of their surroundings and become quite disappointed. At that time; they imagine themselves in the innocent world of the childhood which was quite pleasant unlike the present moment. Here in the novel ingenious present is over shadowed by the glorious past.

The theme of childhood and innocence is dealt so largely in the novel. The Novelist has changed the form and language to describe childhood and adulthood. It is the stylistic devices used by Anita Desai to make the distinction between adult and child. Anita Desai makes a strong use of Flashbacks to introduce childhood scenes Virginia wolf calls it a tunneling process by which she tells the past by installment. Its main advantage is that it provides a method of presenting character outside time and place, in the double sense that first, it separates the presentation of consciousness from

the chronological sequence of events, and second, it enables the quality of a given state of mind to be instigated so completely, by means of pursuing to their end the remote mental pursuing to their end the remote mental association and suggestion that we do not need to wait for time to make the potential actual before we can see the whole.

Flashback is powerful because of its evocative nature. Indeed, it appeals to the senses because of their its focus on the sights, small and sound which make up the experience. This process is used, notably in the thoughts and analysis of each character as regards their relationships towards each other in the novel. The novel focuses on the adults life of Bim and Tara who are re-examining their childhood in an attempt to understand what they have become. The choice of vocabulary and register of language are crucial when looking at the novel in which the predominant theme is childhood because it is the main characteristic of a child's speech and thoughts which distinguish it from an adult's speech. This has been the basis for a great deal of the praise of Anita Desi's novel. The novel is saturated with nostalgic experiences of the characters. The novel basically is about a family chronicle and a history of modern India. But the history in the novel is glimpsed only out of the corner of the eye. In the partition riots Delhi is ablazed but the fires are on the horizon. The novel takes place in old Delhi's civil Lives where the gardens, and bungalows are quiet and sheltered behind their hedges and the resident's simply imagine that they hear the sound of shots and of cries and screams. It is here that the family lives, the four children. Raja, his two sisters, Bim and Tara and Baba the youngest son, the retarded baby of the family. Bim teaches history at the local collage. Baba, the retarded baby always

remains in the semiotic world listening the harsh mine. Raja studies at collage and their parents are always detached from them. They are always busy in bridge game. So it has been said in the narrative that their father is simply "a master of entrance and exit at home" (53). This Das family has a neighboring house of Hyder Ali, a Muslim landlord who has a beautiful daughter named Benazir since Raja, Tara, Bim and Baba remain detached from parents, aunt Mira Masi, called there with the view to looking after them. Aunt Mira Masi is a widow, her husband died young when he was in England for studies. Her family blamed here that she was an ill-fated women who killed here husband. It has been said in the narrative that many people tried to exploit here physically. When Mira Masi, a young widow came in the Das house, she started taking alcohol and later on she dies very pathetically. Bim's mother dies of diabetes and her father dies in a accident time stops in 1947 when Raja and Tara leave, Raja to marry the daughter of Muslim and Tara to marry a diplomat, Bakhul. Then with the sudden outbreak of hatred between Hindus and Muslims during independent moment by Hyder Ali along with his family goes to Hyderabad to take shelter Raja who was infatuated by Muslim culture, even more by Benazir goes to Hyderabad he has some tussles with Bim regarding the issues of Family business. Now Bim remains all alone amidst great trial, trouble and tribulation and here dream and aspiration of life are collapsed. Thus with many domestic upheavals in the family and due to the horrendous event of the parent of India and its violence, protagonist along with other characters submerged in nostalgia, fallacy and dream of the glorious past to avoid the ignamious present.

IV. Conclusion

It is almost impossible to arrive at a conclusion in any literary work in general and widely acclaimed work like *Clear Light of Day* in particular.

The power of Anita Desai's novel lies in the fact that it has drawn in the intellectual attention of number of critics and scholars and readers from the very outset of its publication. Despite having been several reading of this text, the present study has drawn a distinct conclusion with the analysis and the argument of the issue.

Anita Desai in the novel has created an entire little civilization from a fistful of memories, from a patchwork of sickroom, dreams and children games and fairy tales. Most of the characters take the help of dreams and childhood days so as to forget the unbearable present situation. As in the case of Raja who is a male protagonist of the novel remembers the day when Hindus and Muslims used to live together with the light of understanding. When Raja wants to join the Jamia Millia for the study of Islam his father does not allow him to do so giving the news of rampant hostility between Hindus and Muslims. Due to this existing hostility Raja submerges in nostalgia. Similarly Bim the female protagonist of the novel is also living in the wind of memory. She is victimized by political turns of the country on the one hand, on the other, when she becomes lonely in the family, as she is left by all members, she takes relief with the memory of bygone days. Her mind is in great tussles. Another character Tara is also nostalgic character. As most of time she is in foreign countries, her mind is preoccupied with her own hometown Delhi particularly. As in the case of Misra sisters who have been divorced by their husband are leading quite pathetic life. They are in

great trial, trouble and tribulation. To avoid this pathetic condition they frequently remember their past life. Another pathetic character Mira Masi a widow is also suffering a lot. She has been excluded from the home as she is charged as ill-fated woman. When she is alone, she also remembers her past life.

Hence, memory and nostalgia have become the dwelling place of each and every character. Every character is victimized by the harshness of their present life. Since the present is harsh, to avoid it characters take the help of fairy tales, dreams and myths to make it meaningful.

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