

English (Hons.) II SEMESTER

Paper - Indian Literature in English

Text: 'In Custody' by Anita Desai

For Week 27<sup>th</sup> March - 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2020

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(i) For summary of the novel, refer to wikipedia for 'In Custody' (Novel)

(ii) Refer to Anita Desai's 'In Custody'

Dynamics of Motive and Mode by Supriya Bhandari

This is an interesting critical appraisal of Anita Desai's Motive Behind the Novel.

Points Discussed by the critic in This Write up

(1) Novel is about Devyani's futile attempt to rehabilitate Urdu, a forgotten language of older culture by getting Urdu's interviews and publish for Urdu lovers.

Thus language in Novelistic Discourse is evoked, however Desai refrains from ~~the~~ taking up the Politics. The novel is about seeing and thinking of reality and not remain in world of illusion and glorify it.

(2) The Novelist also brings existential issues related to broader human experience through her Fiction. The device reveal her artistic achievement

For instance, Nur's ailing body suggests the sickening state of Urdü; Devan's psychological pain is to be viewed as alter-ego of Nur's physical pain.

(iii) Tension between conflicts of dreams and duty, is Devan. His failure to fulfil Mured's aim points to Desai's tragic vision, so reminiscent of her novels' endings. And yet there is a truth in the ultimate catastrophic waiting for her protagonists that intrigues and captivates the readers.

It makes him contemplate the existential questions:

"Who was Nur? A poet? An ideal/A God?"  
Or just a Metaphor of Devan's hopes for Reversal of Incidents

(iv) Use of Symbols and Metaphors by Desai

(v) Men women relationships in patriarchal society

Questions to Practice Based on this web content

(1) "Like the male characters, women in the novel are tied to unsuccessful counterparts are no less aggrieved characters as portrayed by Desai! Discuss

(2) "The female characters in the novel, though in a limited canvas challenge the stereotypes, thereby questioning the societal norms." Elaborate