



## Depiction of lie of rural Indian family in Anita Desai novels

### The Village by The Sea

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#### Abstract

Anita Desai is a well-known post-colonial Indian English writer whose works have been well praised. As a result, she is revered as a literary icon both on and off Indian coasts for her contributions to the modern Indian English novel. It's noteworthy that she's breaking new ground in the field of fiction writing by taking a fresh look at the pressing concerns facing Indian culture today, in both rural and urban settings. Her characters' conflicts are well-captured in Desai's works, and much more fascinating is the way she scours their thoughts, allowing her to investigate the psychological subtleties of human beings. It is the goal of this research paper to analyze the book *The Village by the Sea* by Anita Desai, one of her most notable works. This work tells the narrative of an Indian rural family that overcomes a time of adversity to reconcile in the end owing to the endurance of the two heroic children, Hari and Lila, in a very interesting manner. The work under review examines the writer's most crucial theme: how to survive and adapt to a new environment. Desai's book, *The Village by the Sea*, also explores a number of other controversial problems in current Indian culture. The novel's popularity may be attributed to the liveliness of her themes and her strong focus on the complexity of human life, as well as her outstanding storytelling skills, which demonstrate her quality and distinctiveness as a novelist.

**Keywords:** *The Village by the Sea*, Anita Desai, thematic concerns, contemporary society, adaptation and survival

#### Introduction

Indian “author Anita Mazumdar Desai was born on June 24, 1937, in Mussoorie, India, and has been nominated for the Man Booker Prize for Fiction three times. In 1978, she received a Sahitya Academy Award from the Indian National Academy of Letters for her work, *Fire on the Mountain*. A distinguished jury of British children's authors evaluated the 1983 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize for *The Village by the Sea*, which she won. For Desai, English is the language of literature, and she uses it as a means of self-expression. In spite of her lifelong



desire to be a writer, she only entered India's literary scene after independence. As a writer and activist, Desai focuses on the lives of children and women who are caught in the chains of today's pressing social concerns. Desai's major novels are not tools for escaping reality, but rather microscopes through which she focuses on the human condition and the inner psyches of her characters, as Dr. Ansari argues in his paper on An Analysis of the Themes of Alienation, Detachment, and Relationship Crisis in Anita Desai's Major Novels. Because of her contemporary themes and inventive style, Desai has become one of the best-known Indian authors in English. Author Anita Desai aims to illustrate numerous issues in her work *The Village by the Sea*. This is a really affecting tale about a rural Indian family whose life is stifled by poverty and hopelessness. Lila, Hari's older sister, and Bela and Kamal, his younger sisters, round out the family. His mother is a TB sufferer, and his father is an alcoholic who seems to have disregarded his duties as a parent and a spouse totally. As a result of their current predicament, Lila and Hari have been obliged to assume primary responsibility for the household and care for their younger sisters as well as their ailing mother. As the protagonist Hari and his adored sister Lila struggle to find better lands for their family, it's as if they're angels from heaven toiling upward tooth and nail with unflagging bravery. G. Vaidyanathan writes in *The Village by the Sea: A Critical Study* that survival and adaptability are two of the novel's most important themes. Desai brilliantly and passionately illustrates the significance of being able to change with our surroundings in order to survive. In a world that appears to be undergoing revolutionary and nearly inescapable changes at an unparalleled pace with the passage of time, it is imperative that everyone maintain a lifelong commitment to learning. When it comes to the concept of survival and adaptability, Desai relies heavily on Hari. Hari is a twelve-year-old boy. Despite his age, he has the mental capacity to grasp the gravity of his responsibility to his family. Even though he is only a child, Hari is obliged to accept his family's dire financial plight and works tirelessly to make ends meet to save his family from starving to death. Using his net, Hari fishes along the sea belt on the property they own, harvesting coconuts and cultivating it. Unfortunately, even for his own family's sustenance, the produce gathered is insufficient. Even though he does all he can to catch fish, he often ends up returning home without a catch. In spite of his reluctance, Hari perseveres through the growing pile of trials and obstacles with great patience. At first, most of Hari's efforts to support the family are in futile, but he never gives up. As a result of Hari's growing displeasure with his father's inebriation and the family's never-ending problems, Lila is left to deal with the problems of her



family on her alone in Bombay. Following an extremely tough time, the family is reunited and finds peace, proving that no matter how little your problems may seem, there is always a solution in sight if you are clever enough and persistent enough to accomplish your objectives. In this way, the author conveys the urgency of the struggle for one's life. The message's impact is amplified by the choice of a twelve-year-old kid as the protagonist. Everybody knows that adaptability is a necessary aspect of survival. Nearly nothing stays the same in this fast-paced world we live in. It's difficult to stay relevant in a world that's always changing since we need to be able to adapt to the new circumstances. Hari, in the conclusion of the novel, is able to adapt to the ever-changing world around him. Thule will soon be home to a brand-new industrial complex. Their agricultural and fishing businesses are in jeopardy because of the locals' fears. They begin to see the new plant as a setback and see themselves as losers. Hari, on the other hand, is unconcerned since he's educated enough to pick up on and adapt to the sociological shifts brought on by growing urbanization. Mr. Pinwale's compassionate apprenticeship teaches him the skill of repairing timepieces. As a result of Hari's newfound expertise in watch repair, he can now enter the hitherto untapped market in Thule. Hari will become a wealthy man when millions of people move to Thule to work in the new industries, allowing him to repair their watches. He also plans to develop a chicken farm, which he hopes will bring him an additional income. Everybody knows that adaptability is a necessary aspect of survival. Nearly nothing stays the same in this fast-paced world we live in. It's difficult to stay relevant in a world that's always changing since we need to be able to adapt to the new circumstances. Hari, in the conclusion of the novel, is able to adapt to the ever-changing world around him. Thule will soon be home to a brand-new industrial complex. There is a sense of gloom hanging over the village's agricultural and fishing operations. industry. They begin to see the new plant as a setback and see themselves as losers. Hari, on the other hand, is unconcerned since he's educated enough to pick up on and adapt to the sociological shifts brought on by growing urbanization. Mr. Pinwale's compassionate apprenticeship teaches him the skill of repairing timepieces. As a result of Hari's newfound expertise in watch repair, he can now enter the hitherto untapped market in Thule. Hari will become a wealthy man when millions of people move to Thule to work in the new industries, allowing him to repair their watches. He also plans to develop a chicken farm, which he hopes will bring him an additional income. Hari is taught by Mr. Pinwale and Sayyid Ali Sahib to adapt his life to the ever-changing world. If the business next door had not proven kinder, Hari would have remained a



frog in the well. According to Mr. Pinwale, if one cannot stop the changes from occurring, he must be able to adapt with them. Mr. Sayyid Ali brings forth a real-world example to drive home this point in an engaging way. He claims that development has wiped off the forests where birds like sparrows and pigeons formerly thrived. As a result, birds that had no other place to go began migrating to urban areas in search of food. This is a fascinating case study in the idea of adapting to survive. The core of Anita Desai's picture of life is the character's interior state of mind. As a result, her symbols, tales, and visions are written in a dialect of the mind. She is shown in all of these photographs with her obsessions, mood swings, and psychiatric abnormality. This is evident in her work, which includes novels. When it comes to love and marriage as well as other human issues, she has a unique ability to handle them. Another of Desai's concerns in the story is the injustice done to innocent people by unscrupulous entrepreneurs and politicians. The impoverished residents of Thule would lose both their agricultural and fishing livelihoods if a factory is established there. As a result, they form a protest group and plan an action in Mumbai to deliver a petition to the Chief Minister. All their efforts have been in vain because of the interference of self-serving politicians. In the pursuit of their own small selfish objectives, they never hesitate to impede the poor. To even speak out against injustice, the poor are so powerless that it is impossible for them. Just like the mountain mist goes before the rising light, they've always withdrawn in front of wealthy businessmen and politicians.

Indian rituals, taboos, beliefs and superstitions are often mentioned in the work by author Desai. Hari's sisters' dowries are a major concern for him. According to legend, the Indians were the first to demand a dowry from the parents of the bride. Since ancient times, this has been a common occurrence in Indian society. Almost every woman in Thule travels to the beach's trio of rocks early in the morning to make an offering of kumukumupowder and flowers to the sea deity. They believe that if they pay homage to the sea deity, their fishermen would be able to sail the oceans in safety. In their daily lives, they are heavily influenced by superstitions. A good example of this is the figure of the village quack or medicine man, who is essentially a result of the peasants' legendary beliefs and illiteracy. Because of the ineffectiveness of the quack's treatment of Lila's mother, it is clear that superstition is a matter of old-age beliefs. People from both rural and urban regions in India have a strong belief in the importance of religion. Festivals like as Diwali, Coconut Day, and Pujas to the God are celebrated in Bombay. Such circumstances effectively depict the religiosity of Indians. Clearly, Desai's efforts to



portray the cultural life of India seem to have been a success. Desai also examines the influence of industrialization and urbanization on the country's society and ecology in this book. It is nearly unavoidable that the society will be subjected to modernity, globalization, and commercialization as a result of industrialisation. Because of this, the writer investigates the hardship of the rural people as she shows how the residents of Thul saw a nearby industry as a danger to their way of life. The devastation of the country's ecosystem that has resulted from industrialisation is an important side effect. The land is demolished indiscriminately in order to free up communication cables and build industries. Wildlife, particularly rare and endangered species, are being wiped out as a result of the reckless destruction, degradation, and depletion of natural ecosystems. The earth's once-abundant woods are rapidly vanishing. In order to enrich themselves, self-seeking businesspeople and power-hungry politicians are responsible for wreaking havoc on environment. The writer uses a dramatic juxtaposition between Bombay, a heavily industrialized metropolis, and Thule, a pristine wilderness, to demonstrate the negative effects” of industrialisation.

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