

Anita Desai's *Where Shall We Go This Summer* and *Clear Light of Day*:

Revisiting the notions of Motherhood and
the Emerging Traits of the 'New Woman'

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Anita Desai's innovation in her novels is primarily the shift of issues concerning women from the external to the internal world. She creates room for women characters who are intellectually advanced and are in a constant quest for identity and freedom from the patriarchal society. The novels of Anita Desai revolve around women protagonists, who mirror the persisting constraints of the culturally imposed notion of being 'Feminine' upon their female consciousness. In this context, motherhood is elucidated in a different light in her novels where women appreciate the experience of motherhood but are shown to be in continuous strife to reject the oppressions associated with it. Her protagonists like Sita and Bimala in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* and *Clear Light of Day* are women who, in their perpetual quest for their individuality, admit to their nurturing instinct for mothering but refuse to accept the 'vegetative existence' that is expected from a married woman and mother in a patriarchal society. This paper aims to explore the possible traits of being the 'New Woman' along with the capability of being single independent mothers through the characters of Sita and Bimala in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* and *Clear Light of Day*.

Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer*, the wife of an upper middle class factory owner, in Bombay, Raman, has had four