

SYNOPSIS

THE WORKS OF ATTIA HOSAIN: A CRITICAL STUDY

The present dissertation attempts a critical study of Attia Hosain's work with special reference to her novel Sunlight On a Broken Column and a collection of short stories entitled Phoenix Fled and Other Stories.

Attia Hosain, though not a prolific writer in English, is regarded as a prominent Indian writer in English. She was associated with Progressive Writers' Movement in India. She is known for her only novel Sunlight on a Broken Column, probably the first novel by a Muslim lady on the theme of Partition, which presents the Muslim point of view. Similarly, her short stories are known for brilliant characterization particularly for some 'evocative sketches of North-Indian women'.

The first chapter of the dissertation is an introductory one and presents a brief history of Indian fiction in English. It also includes the tradition of the Muslim novelists and their contribution to Indian fiction in English. Besides, it gives brief summary of the novel Sunlight on a Broken Column and various critical views expressed by critics.

The second chapter is the core one as it studies the novel from various angles. The first part of the chapter attempts to study the genre of political novel and analyses

the novel as a novel of partition. The second part of the chapter studies the effects of purdah system on Indian Muslim women. The third part of the chapter studies the theme of East-West encounter which partly results into disintegration of traditional joint family system.

In the third chapter of the dissertation the short stories of Hosain are analysed on the basis of thematic patterns adopted by her. Her short stories deal with variety of themes such as cultural conflict, caste-prejudice, superstition , partition, exploitation and suffering of women, political corruption, purdah motif etc.

The fourth and the concluding chapter tries to assess Hosain's achievement as a novelist and a short story writer. Similarly it tries to interpret the event of partition from socio-cultural and Psychological points of view. It also shows the multi-dimensionality of the novel Sunlight on a Broken Column and the inspiration behind Hosain's short stories.