

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The present writer decides to choose a novel for her thesis because it provides more details and complete information. Shaw (1972:257) states that ‘A novel is lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organized series of events and setting.’ According to Murphy (1972:127), ‘Novel is the most widely practiced and most widely read form of literature in the world today.’ With this in mind, the present writer is more interested in reading novel than reading the other literary genres.

The present writer has obtained some information about Indian culture from the Internet ([South Asian Women Writers](#)). Some of the information is presented as follows:

‘In the past, Indian women were not allowed to speak their mind. Indian women were considered to be inferior to Indian men. According to Indian culture, a woman’s reputation is a matter of life and death for her whole extensive family. Under the situation, no woman writers will be spirited enough to throw

herself into literature, but today many of them have arrived like storm troopers into the diastolic English literary scene.’

Anita Rau Badami is one of the women who have succeeded in proving their ability as writers. Badami successfully published Tamarind Mem and The Hero’s Walk. The Hero’s Walk even won the 2000 Commonwealth Prize for fiction.

The Hero’s Walk portrays the Indian life with its strict tradition versus the Western culture, which is full of liberalization. This makes the present writer interested in analysing the story. Badami describes vividly the experience of the protagonist named Sripathi Rao in dealing with contradictory ways of life. The differences between the two ways of life cause certain problems in his life. In dealing with such problems, he experiences the change of his characteristics through the second chance that comes to his life.

The present writer would like to analyse The Hero’s Walk by using the intrinsic approach. She would like to analyse the theme through the portrayal of the protagonist. This is in line with Kenney’s statement (1966:94): ‘...character is obviously of major importance for the theme.’

Following the statement that ‘In the portrayal of a character’s behaviour, the writer presents the actions and speech of the character, allowing the reader to draw his or her own conclusion from what the character says or does.’ (Literary and the Language Arts), the present writer analyses the theme by focusing on the protagonist’s thought, action, behaviour and speech.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In analysing the theme through the protagonist in Anita Rau Badami's The Hero's Walk, the present writer would like to state the problems as follows:

1. What is the theme of Anita Rau Badami's The Hero's Walk?
2. How does the portrayal of the protagonist help to reveal the theme?

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purposes of the study are:

1. to show the theme of Anita Rau Badami's The Hero's Walk.
2. to show how the portrayal of the protagonist helps to reveal the theme.

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The method used in this study is library research. First of all, the present writer reads the novel as the primary text. She then gathers some information related to the thesis from some references and from the Internet to support the analysis of the primary text. Next, the present writer starts to analyse the novel using the theories that support her analysis.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

This thesis is presented in three chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction, which contains the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Next is Chapter Two, which presents the Analysis of the Theme of Anita Rau Badami's The Hero's Walk. Chapter Three is the

Conclusion, concluding what has been analysed in the previous chapter. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the Synopsis of The Hero's Walk and the Biography of Anita Rau Badami.