

## A Comparative Study of Alice Munro and Amit Chaudhuri

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### Abstract

This research paper shows light on a comparative study of Alice Munro and Amit Chaudhuri. Alice Munro is Contemporary Canadian, a fictional and short story writer. She received Nobel Prize in Canadian English Literature, in 2013. Amit Chaudhuri is an Indian novelist, essay writer and a critic. He received Sahitya Akadami Award in 2002. There are similarities and dissimilarities found in Alice Munro's and Amit Chaudhuri's works. The similarities are found in the element of autobiography, historical events, Geographical map reading. Dissimilarities are discerned in their methods of writing and they write in different genre.

**Keywords:** depression, regionalism, autobiography, life, death

Alice Munro is born in 1931. She is well known short story writer. She has written fictions and short stories. Lives of Girls and Women is known as a novel. Her collection of short stories are Dance of the Happy Shades, Who do you Think you are? Love of a Good Woman and Friend of My Youth.

Amit Chaudhuri is an Indian English-language novelist, poet and essayist. He has written novels. For example, "Odysseus Abroad", "The Immortals", "A New World", "Freedom Song", "Afternoon Raag", and "Friend of My Youth". He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and professor of contemporary literature the University of East Anglia. He received Sahitya Akadami Award in 2002 for "A New World". He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2009. He is a professor of Contemporary Literature at the University of East Anglia. He also teaches at Ashoka University, India as Professor of Creative Writing. He was elected as an Honorary Fellow of the Modern Language Association (MLA). He is a singer in the Hindustani classical tradition and a composer of experimental music.

An autobiographical element is similarly found in Alice Munro and Amit Chaudhuri's works. An autobiography presents writers imagination, experience and memories. Through memory and imagination, writers can recall the past. Alice Munro recalls her past and recreates the present. Her own life is presented in her stories. This

element becomes an act of self-reflection. When she writes, she delves into the conscious self and draws the stored memory through her mind. She recaptures experiences and imaginations. She assimilates them and presents in a new perspective. She touches upon the social context. She has the tendency to write about her own life experiences. She focuses on her childhood and adolescence in the beginning of her career. She says, the stories are not autobiographical, but they're personal in that way.

This autobiographical element is discerned in Alice Munro Short stories. Her life is mirrored in her "The Peace of Utrecht". Her mother's figure is described in this short story. Her mother suffered from Parkinson. Her short stories like "My Mothers Dream", "Walker Brothers Cowboy" and "Boys and Girls" are mostly based on her own experiences. The family situation has given birth to a number of short stories of Alice Munro. For example, her mother's illness has given birth to "Peace of Utrecht". Munro's second daughter died at the very early stage of life. These incidents had impact on Munro's mind. She mentions her second daughter's memory in "My Mother's Dream". Alice Munro has called "The Peace of Utrecht" a 'real' and 'first painful autobiographical story'.

Amit Chaudhuri is born in Kolkata in 1962. He has spent most of the time of his life in Bombay, (Mumbai). His father was a first Indian CEO. Old Britannia Industries Limited. His mother was a singer. He studied in Cathedral and John Connon School, Bombay. His Bombay life style, his school mates were influenced on his life. In his novel "Friend of My Youth", he has depicted his friend circle, their names, their habits and his relationships with them. His one of the close friend is Ramu. He has written for him in this novel. He says:

"I think of Ramu when I read these lines. It's of him I think when I reread them.... For one thing, Ramu isn't my first friend from my schooldays...." 1

Alice Munro is a regional short story writer. She belongs to the region, Wingham, Huron County of Ontario, Canada. She mentions the spots like Huron County, Ontario, and Lake Huron. She has tried to use the

geographical map in her short stories. When the readers read her short stories, there is no need to look at the map of Canada. She has spent her most of the time in Ontario. So, her interest is in the geography of Ontario region. She is engrossed with local history and geography of Ontario.

Alice Munro has depicted location, Five Points, Huron Count in Canada. In the title story "Friend of My Youth", she has depicted about a pure friendship. On the surface level, noticed the blood relationship of Flora and her sister Ellie. A deep relationship is a kind of friend. Flora's nature is too appreciated and devoted to her sister. Flora doesn't have ego. She suffers for place living in her home but never demand to her sister. Alice Munro's the next short story is "Five Points". This is a particular location in Canada. In this story Munro has depicted the real places like Lake Huron.

The regional element is found in Amit Chaudhuri's novel. For example, in "Friend of My Youth" he has depicted a city Bombay where he has spent his childhood. He has depicted so many places like Bandra, Worli, Meera Road and etc. He has depicted about Kolkata also in his novels.

Amit Chaudhuri and Alice Munro, both are depicted historical events of their country and their lives and where they have born. She has depicted historical events such as Depression Era-1930 and World War II. Amit Chaudhuri has depicted terrorist attack on Taj Hotel in Mumbai which was in 2009. This event he has depicted in the novel of "Friend of My Youth".

Alice Munro has written a short story collection is "Friend of My Youth" in 1996. Amit Chaudhuri has written this novel in 2017. The title of the book is similar.

Dissimilarities are found in Alice Munro and Amit Chaudhuri's works. Alice Munro is known for short story genre. She has depicted about women and their sufferings. Mostly women characters are playing major role in her works. She used indirect method for her writing. She gave moral lessons through her short stories. The messages are hidden in her short stories. The hidden moral lessons are found in her short stories. She spreads her moral lessons with politeness. The politeness is discerned in her short stories. Her female characters are polite. She focuses mainly on female characters. They are not arrogant. Some female characters express their thoughts and some are silent sufferers. Some female characters abide the rules and regulations the society.

Amit Chaudhuri has given direct moral lesson through his writing. Direct moral messages are found in his writing. In "Friend of My Youth" he says: He says:

"Death in Life" 2

Through this statement a hidden moral message is discerned. It means that people are not satisfied in their lives. They think that their life is meaningless when people think that there is no meaning of their survival and they should die. There is a new life awake. A new hope arise in their mind. They are searching satisfaction of life in outer things but the main life in inner thought. Every day people are working wholeheartedly. At the evening they are tired and say no meaning to survive and they feel 'Death in Life' but next day they get ready to hunt new task and with new hopes and try to satisfy their families and themselves. This is a real picture of all Mumabikars. This novel is not restricted only for those Mumbai's people but this is for all universe people.

Amit Chaudhuri known for his novels. He has depicted male characters in his novels. For example, Ramu in "Friend of My Youth". In this novel male characters are arrogant. They are not submissive. They addicted by drugs, marijuana. He says:

"I presumed he was smoking marijuana. 'Don't ask'. My parents are few steps behind me, I said." 3

Amit Chaudhuri's stories are revolved around male characters. For example, Dr Jayojit Chatterjee in "A New World". He was exhausted by one year from his wife who falls in love with the other man. He has depicted in male suffering through his novels. He has described the psychology of men. Their life styles their behaviour their perspective to look at the lady of life. In these novels Amit Chaudhuri has depicted about male characters. He used direct method for his writing. These dissimilarities are found in Alice Munro and Amit Chaudhuri. These both writers, their genders are different, their native places are different, and their life view to look at life is different. Their methods of writing is different and their genders.

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