



Anita Desai's Female protagonists with reference to Cry the peacock

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The main theme of the novel is marital discords and alienation. Most of Desai's protagonists are alienated and neurotic female characters. The book won the Sahitya Academy Award for Anita Desai. It is a story of a young girl named Maya, who was surrounded by a childhood prophecy of disaster.

Anita Desai portrays the psychic tumult of a young and sensitive married girl Maya who is haunted by a childhood prophecy of a fatal disaster. She is the daughter of a rich advocate in Lucknow. Being alone in the family, with her mother being dead and her brother having gone to America to carve his own independent destiny, she gets the most of her father's affection and attention and in her moments of affliction exclaims to herself: "No one, no one else, loves me as my father does". The excessive love Maya gets from her father makes her have a lopsided view of life. She feels the world to be a toy made especially for her, painted in her favorite colors and set to move according to her tunes.

Maya is a sensitive, poetic, and unstable type of personality that appears consistently in Desai's fiction. She is extremely sensitive to the beauty around her, the flowers, the fruits, the sky, and her pet, her trees, and her animals in short the whole nature. Gautama on the other hand is her opposite. He is totally insensitive to the beauty of nature. He

is a pure rationalist. The name of the characters in the novel fit their behaviour. Maya means illusion and Gautama is the name of Buddha, who was able to rend the veil of Maya. Thus Maya reveals the world of senses Gautama rejects entirely.

Maya herself is responsible for her own alienation because she never tries to make herself clear to Gautama. She is always haunted by fear of the astrologer's prophecy. She also faces a number of emotional and psychological disturbances but never tells anything to Gautama. Maya lost his mental control totally because she cannot get the love that her father gave her. And because of the prophecy of astrologer that one of them must die after their marriage, So Maya decides to kill Gautama because in her view, he has rejected all that makes life worth living to her; he is already dead. So in the end one of the day when Gautama must busy in his work she is asked to accompany to her to terrace of their house to enjoy cool air, where she pushes him from a terrace, she also committed suicide in the end. The cries of a peacock in the novel represents her cries for love. Maya is an extremely sensitive married girl. Her husband's name is Gautama, who was also a lawyer. She got all the attention and love from her father and after her marriage she accepted the same from her husband. But being a busy man he has failed to meet her demands.



The love Maya got from her father made her have a feeling that the world is a toy especially made for her, seeing her morbidity her husband warns her from turning neurotic and blames her father for spoiling her. Maya is a sensitive, poetic, and unstable type of personality that appears consistently in Desai's fiction. She is extremely sensitive to the beauty around her, the flowers, the fruits, the sky, and her pet, her trees, and her animals in short the whole nature. Gautama on the other hand is her opposite. He is totally insensitive to the beauty of nature. He is a pure rationalist. The name of the characters in the novel fit their behaviour. Maya means illusion and Gautama is the name of Buddha, who was able to rend the veil of Maya. Thus Maya reveals the world of senses Gautama rejects entirely.

Maya herself is responsible for her own alienation because she never tries to make herself clear to Gautama. She is always haunted by fear of the astrologer's prophecy. She also faces a number of emotional and psychological disturbances but never tells anything to Gautama. Maya lost his mental control totally because she cannot get the love that her father gave her. And because of the prophecy of astrologer that one of them must die after their marriage, so Maya decides to kill Gautama because in her view, he has rejected all that makes life worth living to her; he is already dead. So in the end one of the day when Gautama must busy in his work she is asked to accompany to her to terrace of their house to enjoy cool air, where he pushes him from a terrace, she

also committed suicide in the end because of her guilt.

Cry The Peacock presented the psychological alienation of Maya, a young bride who is obsessed by a childhood prophecy of disaster. She suffers from neurotic in a utter loneliness she remarks;

"Torture and guilt, dread, imprisonment, these were the four walls of my private hell. In Cry the Peacock, Anita Desai portrays the psychic tumult of a young sensitive married girl Maya who is haunted by a childhood prophecy of a fatal disaster.

Maya is the female protagonist of the very first novel of Anita Desai, Cry the Peacock. In this novel Desai is concerned with the theme of disharmonious and unfulfilled family relationships of the female protagonist. Maya, While representing different meanings to different cultures, the peacock, with its unique beauty, makes it a handy symbol for power, strength, confidence, and even divinity, something with which most monarchs throughout history have wanted to be associated.

Desai's female protagonists are self-conscious of the reality around them; they carry with them a sense of loneliness, alienation and pessimism. Anita Desai deals with the dislocation of normal life morbidity of temperament

Through the female protagonists of her novels Cry. the Peacock. Voices in the City and Fire on the Mountain Anita Desai sets herself seriously to voice the mute miseries and hopelessness of millions of married women of Indian society. These women are tormented by existentialist problems and



predicaments. Desai reveals a rare imaginative awareness of various deeper forces at work and finds a profound understanding of women's sensibility. In this way she unravels the subconscious of her highly sensitive female 30 protagonists. She writes about helplessness, agony, anger, struggle and surrender of the female protagonists. Almost all of the female protagonists of Anita Desai feel alienated and exiled even though they stay in the crowd. She is more interested in the interior world of her female protagonists than in political or social realities. Her novels deal with ferocious assault on existence. Her female protagonists are persons for whom alienation is the ultimate reality.

. Her female protagonists have an imaginary world of their own they have crisis of consciousness and tension of the external and the internal world. Here in the novel Cry. the Peacock Maya is the female protagonist. Major themes of the novel are marital disharmony, lack of identity, escapism and a sense of the meaninglessness of life. The novel has three parts to it. The first part of the novel is prologue and the third part is epilogue. In the first part the novelist describes the agony and depression suffered by female protagonist Maya on the death of her pet dog Toto. For her Toto is more than the child. The second section the novel has seven chapters. This part reveals the gradual stages by female protagonist Maya moves from sanity to insanity. Thus the novel highlights female protagonist's various aspects. Novelist Anita

Desai excels the miserable position of highly sensitive and emotional women, females are tortured by males by negligence and loneliness. Though the novel Cry. the Peacock is about female protagonist Maya, all the secondary female characters like Nila. Pom, Leila. Mrs. Lai. the mother etc. contributes to the poly timbered voice of women and issues related to them..

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