



UGC Approved Journal



# IJELLH

**International Journal of English Language,  
Literature in Humanities**

**Indexed, Peer Reviewed (Refereed) Journal**

**ISSN-2321-7065**



**Editor-in-Chief**

**Volume 6, Issue 5  
May 2018  
[www.ijellh.com](http://www.ijellh.com)**

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## ENCOUNTER OF WORLD OF FANTASY WITH WORLD OF REALITY

### Abstract

My imagination completely controls me, and forever feeds the fire that burns with dark red light in my heart by bringing me the best dreams. I've always had a wild imagination, a big heart and a tortured soul so I feel that dark fantasy, love and horror are in my blood.

-Kim

Elizabeth

The stream of consciousness as a concept of reality forefront in the fictional world of Anita Desai. She is one of the most prominent English novelist and recognized feminist in Indo-Anglican fiction. The present work attempt to analyse the intense, possessed and self-absorbed women character in the novels of Anita Desai.

Maya a protagonist represented as 'adjure' indented and silenced. As of the present paper would describe the result of mismatched marriage and the women oppression in Anita Desai's most famous and widely known novel –Cry the Peacock. This work of Anita Desai marks a new and mature level in Indian English fiction writing.

### Introduction

Anita Desai is a concerned social missionary and a keen observer of individual psychology. Her special attention is always to portrait the situation of women in current society. In her

novels, she explores a contemporary problem, which perhaps a chief cause behind the estrangement of women from their family and their relationship. Even all this she never claim herself as a feminist or a social realist. She says:

‘My novels are no reflection of Indian society, politics or character. They are the part of my private effort to seize upon the raw material of life- Its shapelessness, its meaninglessness.’

She analysis the individual, she writes about individual not about the reality of society. She primarily exemplifies the internal dramatic play of livelihood in her fiction, and centers on its primary truth, her imaginative module in researching the wider physical and mental states of the character.

She encompass whole world and develops a cosmopolitan outlook that was a result of her parentage, her upbringing and expatriate experience. Her outlook enables her to develop sympathetic understanding of painful aspect of human predicament-Loneliness, Restlessness and alienation of the sensitive and the tender hearted.

In her novel, *Cry the Peacock*, she portrait how a normal person is drawn towards alienation. Gradually, the protagonist disconnected from their roots, from the society, relationships and finally from their self, that causes tragedy. How a person, if not heard patiently and not understand their sensibility deteriorates from the common and normal mental state toward abnormal mental status.

Purpose of Anita Desai’s writing is to discover individual psychology and with an aesthetic blend, she conveys the truth, which for her is a synonymous with the art. Her effort is always to discover the world of reality by plunging below the surface and plumbing the depths, than illuminating those depths until they become a more lucid, brilliant and explicable reflection of the visible world. Anita Desai is one of those few Indo-Anglican novelists, who have tried to understand closely the predicament of her female psyche. She rightly analysis her purely subjective feelings in the following:

‘ It has been my personal luck that my temperament and circumstances have combined to give me the shelter, privacy and solitude required for the writing of such novels, thereby avoiding problems a more objective writer has to deal with since he depends upon observation rather than a private vision’.

Anita Desai is involved in the process of creative writing, psychological process, and psyche of an individual. To understand Desai's better, it is essential to make up the mind and have a deep knowledge of certain terms like alienation, psychoanalysis, psyche, neurosis, psychology, isolation etc. Her writing style is full of delicate sensitivity that cannot explain in words, even Anita Desai herself says:

'I confess I am afraid of speaking out about the art of writing, the mechanics of my craft. I have an intuitive and deep fear that by speaking of something subterranean and sub-consciousness, I will destroy it- it is something very frail.'

In her novel there is also a tint of alienation, the burden of existence, hypersensitiveness, deeper spiritual urges that transcend religious feelings. Anita Desai's technique of writing is full of stream of consciousness. As it has been refined since the 1920's. Stream of consciousness is a mode of narration that reproduces, without a narrator's intervention, the full spectrum and continuous flow of character's mental process, in which sense perception mingles with conscious and half conscious thoughts, memories, expectations, feelings and random associations.'

- Abram's , P.298-299

Anita Desai's stream of consciousness presents the mental process of an individual, their emotions, sensations, sensitivity, sub consciousness and un-conscious level. She depicts the chaos and incoherence in the mind of a protagonist. Anita Desai's character Maya shows welter of sensation and emotions that constitute her consciousness.

Anita Desai sensitively characterized the picture of Maya, a depressed, alienated, married woman. The centre theme of the novel is the hazards and complexities of man-woman relationship that is a cause of unmatched marriage. Anita Desai is interested to portrait peculiar and eccentric characters rather than normal, everyday, average characters. In *Cry the Peacock*, she projected the plight of introspective, hypersensitive woman, Maya. Anita Desai's protagonist Maya is alienated from the world, society and the family around her because she fails to meet the challenges of the life.

Anita Desai's protagonist is sensitive individual-male and female- is poised against hostile or indifferent forces of the family, individual relationship and society leading to suffering. According to Arya Ghosh:

'They are torn(...) her novels chart a peculiar path of circularity where texts only begin and rebegin, and 'end' by coming back to the point of beginning once more.'

Anita Desai's painted a mindscape of Maya in which she portrait the inner reality of Maya's mental quest, the conflict between self and social norms and the forces beyond the self and her search for the answer of her question. Having all the effort Maya seldom finds the right answer.

Cry the Peacock is written in first person in which Maya is a centre figure or can say the pivot around which whole story revolves. In Cry the Peacock Maya is a figure who is filled with fear, sorrow and her anxieties. She depicted as hypersensitive character who is suffering from neurosis. Maya is sensitive and imaginative, full of life and zeal and always wants to enter the each tint of life. We can say Maya is interested in all the good part of life, as she loves birds, animals, having an interest in poetry and perfect in dance. Maya is always in her world of fantasy and wants to enjoy it. She loves to enjoy the beautiful scene and sound, as she is an epicurean to the core of her heart. Gautama, a husband of Maya, is standing at utmost different corner from where Maya is standing. Gautama is a friend of Raisahab, father of Maya. He is very senior to Maya. By profession, he is a successful lawyer and according to his trade, he develops their taste as a senior and mature personality who loves to live in his world of reality. He is cultured, rational, practical and too much engrossed in his own trade. In nutshell, he has a prosaic personality. Maya and Gautama both are standing on an utmost different bank of river. Marriage has intertwined them but having an extreme different trait they become a two bank of a same river that cannot mingle. This is a root cause of their tragedy. Gautama is totally alien what Maya dreamed off, for an example when Maya presented her sentiments in front of Gautama, he discourage her by saying her that 'she has the mind of third grade poetry', Maya quickly remarked:

'Because when you are away from me, I want you. Because I insist on being with you and being allowed to touch you and know you. You cannot bear it, can you?

No, you are afraid, you might perish...'

(Cry the Peacock, P. 113)

In these lines, we can see the despair of Maya. This is a cause of Maya's alienation, which is a result of unmatched marriage. Raisahab just married Maya on seeing the economical and social status of Gautama. This unmatched marriage resulted neurosis in Maya and finally resulted the murder of Gautama.

Novel starts with the agony and melancholic mood of Maya because her pet dog Toto had died. Due to confined environment and lack of communication with her relative, she starts intrapersonal communication. Anita Desai presents that the limited and confined environment make their character superstitious and psychic. Maya too become superstitious and remembers the words of astrologer whose prophesy was that in the fourth year of her marriage, there will be a death, either her husband or hers. In fact, Raisahab dismissed that prophesy at the very beginning and console Maya that this will not happen but Raisahab was a fatalist and this generate into Maya also. Maya generally jump into her past to avoid the burden of present life. She loves to live in her world of fantasy and her past reveries in which she pampered as a princess of her surroundings. She loves to live in her past and in her own world of fantasy and this world of fantasy and past is a part of total structure of the novel because whenever Maya feels loneliness and aloofness, she starts to remember her childhood. This escapism filled maya with several psychological problems. She is not ready to face the world of reality and challenges. She develops her own island of grief, sorrow and loneliness of Gautama's inability to fulfill her expectations. She spent a motherless childhood in the case of her wealthy and prestigious father who left her unfit to surmount the despair and dejections and anxieties of normal existence of a real world.

In Cry the Peacock Maya is suffering from alienation. Karl Mark has given the term alienation in economical perspective but here alienation used as a sociological process. It is a process where man become detached and alien towards society, family and finally about their self. In this process person disconnected their self and start to interact with their own self. This feeling of isolation, loneliness, and dejection disturbs the mental health of a protagonist. Man is a social being, needs society, family and relationship for their existence and for expression. Man remains normal when he/she feels secure in their relationship and finds a proper place for their expression. However, when this expression stops, it creates abnormal condition and psychologically man feels weak. This weakness results an abnormal psyche of a person. Same Maya after her marriage feels herself alienated because her counterpart was unable to match her energy. Both the counterpart has their different taste due to a huge age-gap or can say a generation gap. This might cause a disaster in Maya's life.

Gautama, a middle-aged person finds stability in his profession. He has mature, serious and professional personality where Maya has all the taste of young life. She needs the time of Gautama for her inner expression where Gautama fails to provide this emotional security to Maya. Maya's world of reality was different to Gautama. She wants to taste all the tints of colorful life but when she fails to touch it, she goes in a deep dejection, which causes tragedy.

Marriage is most important institute of Indian culture. In marriage, it is important to understand the feeling and emotions of both counterparts. Generally, in traditional Indian families, the senior person of family fixes marriage without taken any further consideration of girl, this might causes misunderstanding. Families look the economical status of groom as well its reputation in society. Same in the case of Maya, Raisahab marries Maya with Gautama without thinking that there is a big age gap as well a gap in interest level of both.

After marriage, Maya finds herself alone, alone in her world of fantasy. She stops social interaction and starts to interact with her and this make her a patient of neurosis. Generally, in Indian families women do not find a platform when they express their self freely. This suppression of feelings in an extent leads an abnormal psyche in somehow. Same with Maya in her childhood, she is unaware about the real world challenges because Raisahab as Daddy's doll, who gave her a comfortable life and not frames her personality who can face the challenges of real life and merciless world. Her personality lacks maturity and independent identity. Anita Desai's protagonists are sensitive individuals-male and female- is poised against hostile or indifferent forces of the family, individual relationship and society leading to suffering. According to Arya Gosh-

'They are torn (.....) Her novels chart a peculiar path of circularity where texts only begin and begin, and 'end' by coming back to the point of beginning once more.'

Anita Desai depicts the flux of sensations and emotions probing into deep psychology of unconsciousness. Desai stands in the mind of protagonist and present what in actual the character is thinking, what is going on her /his mind at a subconscious and unconscious level. she present the chaos and in coherence of present mind status. She presents in her novel a succession of images that externalize the internal conflict. In her novels, Time constantly shift between present and past for an example when Maya want to get rid of all worries, she escape from the present world to her lovely past.

Maya always remember her father throughout her married life, "He is always my gentle father". (..52). She longs for him, "with fiercest desire" (52). However, she not only professes her love and regard for him but also looks up to him as a savior. This abnormal state leads her to neurosis. From the very beginning, Maya was obsessed with the heart shaken prophecy of astrologer. After dismiss by her father that this is non-sense and forget it, yet she reminds it at the fourth year of her marriage that was trigger by the death of her pet Toto.

Maya is suffering from suppressed hostility, which was explain by Freud as-

'It can be recognized most clearly in neurotics suffering from obsession thinking.... that superstition derives from suppressed hostile and cruel impulses, superstition is in large part of a expectation of trouble; and a person who has harbored frequent evil wishes against others, but has been brought up to be good and has therefore repressed such wishes into the unconscious.'

Maya was submissive by nature, obedient daughter and wife but alienation leads her anomic state where she revel an immense suppressed hostility towards her husband and seems him as a responsible for her unfulfilled desires in the married life. She becomes rebellion due to anomic state of mind and considers Gautama as a root of her all problems. She neurotically seems Gautama's death as a solution.

In conclusion, we can say the style of Anita Desai is full of all grace where her stream of consciousness, quest of protagonist's mind and psychoanalytical condition of a character is unique. We read her novel, in novel her character; in her character her mind, in her mind the conscious, unconscious and subconscious level. Therefore, in this way we go deeper and deeper and find interest in the depth of character's psychology. Maya's madness presents her struggle to come out from the psychotic solution for this Maya deliberately schemes the death of Gautama. Finally it also show that the result of unmatched marriage is also traumatic and with unpredictable and continuous pain.

Anita Desai portrayed her female character as a victim or rebel. She is inclined to portray the anomic condition, alienation, the silent psychology of her female character. Through this, she represents the womanly sensitivity and advocates the right of women as a part of society. She demands equal esteem and prestigious of female in this responsible society. Conclusion of

this review to teach that relationship will long lasting only when it is treat with equal care, respect and love.

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