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Prof. K.N. Shelke

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A detailed illustration of a quill pen resting on a scroll of parchment. The quill is positioned diagonally across the frame. The scroll is tied with a red ribbon and has a red wax seal. In the background, a lit candle in a brass holder provides a warm glow. In the foreground, there is a glass inkwell with a quill inside it, and a red wax seal with a wooden handle. The entire scene is set on a wooden surface.

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Female Alienation in Anita Desai's *Cry The Peacock***A. Rajalakshmi***PhD Scholar, Bharathiyar University, Coimbatore, (T.N.) India***A. Roshini***PhD Scholar, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, (T.N.) India***Dr. K.M. Sumathi***Assistant Professor, M.V.M Govt. Arts College, Dindigul, (T.N.) India***Abstract**

Female Alienation is an existential familiarity and stipulation that has frequently been encountered in women's literature, but it happens to be an area that has either been ignored or neglected as much as women, as a race have remained subordinated, marginalized and suppressed as a voice. An Indian novelist who has inscribed the theme of alienation in her novels in a systematic way is Anita Desai. Her disquiet for the character estrangement enables her to proffer an unexpected glimpse into the deeper and unconscious psyche state of her protagonists. In *Cry, the Peacock*, Anita Desai astonishes the readers by the neurotic behavior of the heroine Maya who is tortured by the pressures of so many things. In *Cry, the Peacock*, Maya is alienated from Gautama, who is pragmatic, unromantic, un sentimental and believes in detachment on every count, while Maya on the other hand, and is vastly sensitive, gifted with poetic imagination and emotional. Their incompatible temperaments make it thorny for them to have a tepid and harmonious relationship and pave way for their estrangement. This paper analyses the female Alienation in Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*.

Key Words: Stipulation, subordinated, marginalized, estrangement, pragmatic

I. INTRODUCTION

Alienation has always been an isolated and a universal phenomenon that has touched and afflicted the life of many particularly women. Alienation that of women may be defined as a dislocation a separation from their family both mentally and physically. It is an estrangement from the existing values and society. Love is always a secure anchor that helps to support and sustain and the bonds of togetherness is strong, a relationship survives any amount of stress or strain that threatens to sever it. Loveless

ness in relations leads to lawlessness of existence, when one is pushed to an extreme extent of killing another, as Maya kills her husband Gautama. The death of Gautama undoubtedly completed Maya's alienation and aloofness and she becomes a strangely isolated character of Anita Desai

II. FEMININE ASPECTS OF LIFE

Women in Anita Desai's fiction are mostly depicted as emotionally prone individuals, who are sensual, sensitive and introverts and

who nature a self internalized injury as if the world has hurt them. Maya for example is shown as a women not interested in cooking or even eating, relishing good clothes or in any aesthetics like painting, drawing, knitting or sewing and does not read. The only other life she is attached to is Toto her dog, who alone makes her come alive decides her father and memories if her brother Arjun, who has run away from home.

“Wedding is destiny, and hanging likewise”, Heywood wrote over 400 years ago. It is seen that after marriage persecution and harassment take place in various ways. In India the cause for a women persecution varies. She can be tortured for dowry bareness or simply for not being modern, as her husband would want her to be. Women are weak and submissive and tortured with hardly any chance of finding happiness for their own self at home. Most of the women look upon their married life as an over lasting private hell. It is shocking to a woman that all her tender ideas about marriage in literature are not derived from marriage at all, but from courtship

III. PRISONER OF THE PAST

Maya has tendency towards neurotic behavior. She is unused and abnormal women, introverted and childlike. She is a prisoner of the past and she is always under the shade of her past memories her memories engulfing her one after another. The painful past is always throbbing in her inner consciousness and it has taken the shape of a permanent fixation.

The death of dog has made Maya realize her sense of alienation. She regards the death of

Toto as the biggest tragedy leading to alienation from her husband for it is something natural for Gautama. She blames her husband for all her problems. The person who has realized her true identity will never do so. The fundamental law of the universe is that one is responsible for one’s problems and miseries. Maya feels the agony of alienation sending her towards meaningless life which she does not want to load at all. The novel *Cry, the Peacock* explores the individual level of the abandoned self of the protagonist

Every life desired intense intimacy with her husband. But in *Cry, the Peacock* the protagonist receives indifference rather than affection and Anita Desai presents here the solitude, melancholy and dark world of shadows in the life of Maya. As a young sensitive girl, Maya desires to love and to be loved in return but Gautama’s coldness disappoints her.

“Oh! You know nothing of me and of how can I love. How I want to love. How it is important to me. But you’ve never loved. And you don’t love me...” (p75)

They are different from each other in tradition and modernity trust and distrust in human relationship. The fate of Maya is indeed the fate of the anguished self crowing for companionship and harmony in an emotionally chaotic milieu. Her quest for identity is concerned with her mental journeys in the world of reality and in the world of illusion. The clash between Maya and Gautama is a clash between illusion and reality. The world is full of violence and destruction according to Maya. She is done

and alienated in a dark world. She is hopeless and full of despair. Maya was brought up by her father on an emotional diet, who would not say 'no' to any of her demands. Her father loved her dearly and she also loved him with the same intensity. Maya was a motherless child, her father kept her away from all the harsh realities of life. She gets married to Gautama, a friend of her father, who admired him. Her father suggested that she should marry Gautama who was tall, stooped and knowledgeable friend of his. Maya is shocked to find that love or any emotion has no place in Gautama's family. She compares her life in husband's house with that of her father's house. She is greatly distressed and becomes desperate in the beginning of her married life.

Maya was blamed for her sterility by her in-laws. She was hungry for love and chooses to offer her love to a dog, Toto. But Toto dies, leaving her alone. A sense of alienation is self by her through the loss of Toto. She wants to provide an honorable burial to the dog, but her husband seeks the help of the municipality truck to take away the carcass of the dog. She is shocked by the treatment given to her dog, Toto. His cold indifference to death of a pet is symbolic of his unawareness of the feelings of his wife. It is further indicative of lack of genuine relationship between husband and the wife. Dreams and images of husband-wife relationships formulated in her mind proved false when Gautama insulted her by uttering quotations from The Gita, thinking that she should not expect love from him. According to him love is only an attachment that acts as a meaning.

Her alienation from Gautama is marked by loneliness and no communication

It deals with the total alienation of Maya from her husband Gautama and from her surroundings and even from herself. Both husband and wife have different attitudes towards life. She wants to be attached to the world and its abounding charms, while Gautama wants to remain aloof and detached so as to attain 'peace of mind'. This attitude alienates them from each other. This incompatibility of nature causes deep alienation in the mind of the protagonist, Maya who becomes intensely abnormal. The mental incompatibility and disharmony is the root cause of Maya's alienation, which is made clear by their reaction to the things around and the attitude to death. Gautama thinks that she is immature and has never been brought face to face with the realities of life. The dream world of Maya and the solid world of Gautama can't go together any longer

IV. CONCLUSION

Cry, the Peacock is mainly concerned with the theme of disharmony in the relationship between husband and wife. Desai looks into the reasons for marital discord and illustrates how such discord affects the family. Sometimes the inability of an individual to be responsive to the behavioral patterns of her partner leads to strain and tension in the relationship, while sometimes it is on account of varied levels of sensitivity, that relationships become strained. In this novel, Maya and Gautama have been projected to live in sharp contrast. Maya the central figure, is alive through all, she senses and lives intensely for each moment. Here

husband Gautama is remote, detached and intellectual. Both of them are as a matter of fact poles apart in their nature.

Maya is dreamy, sensitive and emotional, while Gautama is realistic, insensitive is for more profound in understanding human psychology. Much of its success occurs from its working out the configuration of the inner world of the protagonist. The feeling of being alone can be seen throughout the novel. She feels miserable and is full of self

pity, as she reflects Gautama's attitude. A close Study of Anita Desai's novels show that she delineates the inner lives of her characters. Most of her characters suffer from a nagging sense of insecurity and a desperate need to belong. There is a spiritual dryness and lack of faith found in them. These things emerge from a traumatic interpersonal relationship and a pernicious home environment

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