

A second ending to Anita Desai's *Cry, the peacock*

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Abstract - Anita Desai is an Indian novelist. She is known for her women-centred novels. Some of Her novels are *Cry, the peacock*, *Clear Light of Day*, *Voices of the city*, *Bye Bye Blackbird*, *Where shall we go this summer*, *Fire on the Mountain*. These novels have excellently showed the readers about the female psyche, multifaceted man-woman relationships, identity crisis from a female point of view, inner traumas of women and exploitation but unfortunately has failed to give a solution to these problems. This paper focuses on her debut novel *Cry, the peacock* and a possible solution to the problem faced by the main protagonist Maya.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women-centred novels have always failed to figure out the solutions for problems faced by the female characters. Anita Desai's novels are known for showing the world about the existent problems faced by the females. Anita Desai delves deep into the minds of these women and lays it bare open to the world and makes the world understand women. She paints the moods, conflicting choices and inner experiences realistically that most of the women starts to empathize with the characters. Anita Desai has prospered in this story line because everywoman was effortlessly able to relate with these female characters, but, somehow Desai failed to suggest a solution to these empathising women about the methods to escape from this inner suffering.

2. SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

Cry, the peacock is an epitome of what would happen to a jobless woman caught in a frustrated wedded life. A woman without a profession will fall behind the world of work. She will utterly lose contact with the outside world and ends up in a world of her family. Such women will be completely immersed in their personal life that they will start to create a beautiful parallel world of her family which comprises of her husband and children only. But, soon this parallel

beautiful world starts to lose all its initial beauty and eventually everything around her fails to fulfil her needs. This is what happened to Maya in *Cry, the peacock*. When the novel starts Maya has lost all the so called beauty of her parallel world and everything around her has become disastrous including her husband. Maya gets frustrated with her life even with her husband and finally ends up in killing him. Building a career is vital for a happy existence of woman and not marriage. Being in a profession or doing a job is considered as the most effective weapon to fight against all the frustrations of a marital life.

Cry, the peacock is about a woman named Maya who kills her husband to liberate herself. Later, she commits suicide to liberate herself from that guilt. The novel is about marital relationship between a sensitive and emotional person with an insensitive and rational one. Maya is the person who is sensitive. Gautama is the rational one to whom Maya is married. Maya is sensitive to the beauty around her, the flowers, fruits in the garden, the trees and plants, the skies and seasons, pets and other animals whereas Gautama, her husband, is a busy lawyer who is least interested in the beauty of the nature. She is the peacock in the title of the novel and just like peacock, she finally gives away her life.

For Maya, killing her husband was just a reaction against her basic frustrations, unhappy married life, unfulfilled longings and unresponsive reaction of her husband. All these would have ended if Maya was immersed in some occupation. Maya's loneliness in the house is paradoxically due to her too much of attachment for her husband. It is not for the lack of love for her husband that she suffers, but for too much of love for him. Her feelings of alienation emerges basically from her unemployment. Had she a job then she would have spent less time thinking about Gautama and their silly things in their marital relationship. She was stifled by the constant pressure

of vacuum in her life. Her sufferings became acute due to lack of communication with the outside world and people. *Cry, the peacock* gives an idea that Maya's intention to kill her husband came to her mind after meeting an astrologer. It was after the astrologer's prediction about the death of either Maya or Gautama, which ultimately triggered Maya to push him from terrace and kill him. Astrologer's words brooded over her mind for a long time and she herself dugged up silly reasons to state that Gautama has no right to be alive in this world.

If she was an independent woman who was employed, she would have been herself busy with the work with no time to think over such silly matters or she would have found some way out of this dilemma. It was her idleness in her marital life which made her worry about such irrational words of the astrologer. As the famous proverb says "an ideal mind is the devil's workshop", Maya 's mind was a devil's workshop which kept on finding faults in her marriage. One should have an engaged mind. It has a great role in maintaining our life and mind. If Maya's mind was occupied or engaged in some activities, she would not have allowed the devil to work through her hands and kill her husband. Then everything would have been different in her life. Only a self-reliant, cultured woman can think about coming out of her unsuccessful marriage life. Maya would have easily come out of her unsuccessful marriage if she was self-reliant.

3.CONCLUSION

Books are always a permanent record. The stories, poems, history remain in these books forever without a change. As years pass, many people will read these novels and sometimes will get inspired. Since Anita Desai is known for women-centred novels, she will be widely read by all the ladies. By reading *Cry, the Peacock* many women can certainly connect with the protagonist Maya and can with no trouble get influenced by her in an undesirable manner. That is why, it is said, that a focusing on her career was always a decision open for Maya instead to wailing for her emotionless husband. Women should build a career and should leave a feather in this world which would shout out their existence even after their death. It is the best way to mark our survival rather than getting married at a very primary age. Choosing a career or a

profession was an essential second ending to this beautiful novel of Anita Desai because reading such novels with such endings would certainly encourage other women, to come out of their unhappy marital life and to lead a very happy successful career rather than ending up in a mental asylum or committing suicide like Maya.

REFERENCE

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