

Analysis of peculiarities of anita desai's writing style

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Anita Desai's Writings indicate the new direction that Indian fiction is Taking. She is an existential writer who is pre-occupied with internal conflicts and agonies of her sensitive characters in an insensitive world. Her protagonists are extraordinary individuals trapped in extraordinary circumstances of life. She writes " about individual men and women ... only the individual, the solitary being, is true interest.

In the forgoing chapters, an attempt has been made to conclude Anita Desai's novels from the viewpoint of feminine sensibility. Anita Desai is essentially a leading feminist, whose works are full of artistic skill. Her maiden novel, *Cry, the Peacock* presented a panoramic picture of highly sensitive, disturbed and childless neurotic woman, Maya, who has gone deep into the feminine psyche—from childhood to youth and ultimately death. Maya is married to an older man, Gautama, a detached, sober, industrious lawyer. Psychologically, they are opposed to each other. Maya is hardly more than of " quiet, formal, waiting". Her husband is unsympathetic and it is but natural that she is lost in her world, seeking solace in her childhood memories. In her childhood, an albino astrologer had predicted that four years after her wedding, one of them would die and such prediction makes her obsessed by the fear of death.

Primarily it is a psychological novel, probing the workings of Maya's psyche. There is a constant ' to and fro movement' between the past and the present in the psyche of Maya. The novel begins with the death of Maya's pet dog, Toto, but in reaction she rushes to the garden tap " to wash the vision from her eyes" 3. But her husband remains unaffected as " words off as

superfluous, trivial". It oppresses Maya's mind and feels defenseless figure passing as her husband. Ultimately her psychic problems, aggravated by her childhood, drive her to a kind of schizophrenia as she presents herself a body without a heart, a heart without a body. Maya's husband Gautama and with the death of Gautama, Maya's nightmare of albino's prophesy and her future boredom and indifference ends. Similarly in Voice in The City, the rebel hero Nirode meets his defeat and his state of indecision results in his isolation from the family and from his friends and even from himself. Anita Desai employs all the techniques of psychological novel in her Cry, The Peacock and Voices in The City just as flash-back, montage, jigsaw-puzzle, diary-entries, self-analysis and ruminations.

Major characters and situations are employed to bring into lime-light the absurd realities of human existence. She stands foremost in the line of modern Indian novelists who have tried to portray the tragedy of human souls trapped in adverse circumstances of life. Maya, in Cry The Peacock, leads the life of a pampered recluse. She and her husband, Gautama live alone and even he requires little interaction with his wife. With the impact of Western civilization on Indians, the socially advanced females feel neglected by their husband. Maya also feels like this and she feels tied down to the four walls of the house feeling lonely, idle and bored. For months, she lives in fear of her own death.

Psychologists agree that it is impossible to live such horror. A person needs to assuage it. Maya externalizes her trouble and projects her self-hate on Gautama. Her primary instinct is self- preservation. She convinces herself

that Gautama does not love life, whereas with the passage of time, she comes to reflect more and intensely on the meaning of life. She herself assumes that Gautama has to die and she has to live. She also thinks that Gautama has hurt her neurotic pride by rejecting her love. In order to subdue her inner turmoil she kills him in a vindictive rage. Her failure to find life and more of it, becomes an appalling crime. She condemns Gautama to death an appalling crime. Condemns Gautama to death for it then, husband with guilt, and haunted by self-contempt, self-accusation and self-hate, she drags herself into complete darkness of the world of insane.

Desai's second novel *Voices in the City* portrays the pitiable plight of Nirode, Monisha and Amla in the city of Calcutta, Calcutta the city of Kali, Goddess of Death. The central insight is that Calcutta, the city of noises and muffled voices, the city teeming with meaningless riot of life, is really the city of death, Kali the Mother is also Annihilation. The double identification of Nirode's mother with Kali, and Kali with Death, seems an imposition more than an organic relationship to the action and characterization. The novel candidly explores the inner climate of youthful despair and is permeated by the established angst. The novel is quest of what Anita Desai called in an interview with Yashodhara Dalmia, " the terror of facing single-handed the ferocious assault of existence.