



**Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute
(University with Graded Autonomy Status), Chennai**

**Papers Presented in
In-House Seminar on Changing Contours of
Contemporary Indian Writing in English**

**Editors: Dr. R. Pushkala, Dean, English
Dr M. Chandrasena Rajeswaran, HoD, English**

**Anita Desai as a Feminist Writer with Reference to the Novel
*Cry, The Peacock***

Devika. L, II M.A. English

Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute (University with Graded Autonomy Status)
Chennai

E mail - Devikaloganathan37@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Anita Desai is a contemporary woman author of Indian literature in English. She has distinguished herself by delving into the human psychology and poignant feelings of her protagonists. She is a sharp spectator of society, and the position of women in present-day society piques her interest. She delves into the deep psyches of her characters, particularly women. *Cry, The Peacock* (1963) is an accurate depiction of the female characters' psychosomatic evolution: the plight of female characters and their struggle for self-emancipation.

KEYWORDS

Human psychology; accurate depiction; psychosomatic evolution; self-emancipation

INTRODUCTION

The novel *Cry, the Peacock* is primarily concerned with the issue of discord in the marriage of a husband and wife. Desai investigates the causes of marital strife and demonstrates how such discord impacts the family. The relationship between Maya and Gautama is strained in this story due to their different temperaments. The marriage links that bind the two are extremely delicate and vague, and the mounting pressure amid them reaches a climax when Maya murders Gautama and then commits suicide.

ANALYSIS

Anita Desai's debut novel, *Cry, the Peacock*, has been hailed as a pioneer in the field of psychoanalytical realism. It delves inside the mind of the main character, Maya, and reveals her anxiety, insecurity, and unusual behavior. The author shows a world of isolation, loneliness, and misery via Maya. Maya, the half-child, half-woman romance heroine, speaks of her spiritual sorrows as she connects with the peacock in the anguish of rapture of their deadly love experience: "Now that I understood their cry, I sobbed for them, and I wept for myself, knowing their words to be mine." Maya, the main character, is married to Gautama, a prominent lawyer and member of a warm-hearted, socially engaged family who is nearly twice her age.

Maya, the protagonist and a supporting character, solves the mystery of the feminine mind in a variety of ways and has her own individual personality. Maya is from a God-fearing Brahmin family, and her father is a staunch advocate of traditional culture and values. She was nurtured in a sheltered atmosphere and is oblivious to life's harsh truths. "My upbringing was distinguished by a lot of isolation, a life that became increasingly confined, almost unnatural, and sensual joy in living," she adds, and she finds pagan delight in nature and the earth. Gautama, her husband, blames her father for her immaturity and inability to deal with unpleasant realities.

Maya is a romantic, sensitive, and emotional person, whereas Gautama is practical, insensitive, and logical. Maya is a poet, a high-strung philosopher, and a recluse. The marriage links that bind them are exceedingly frail and thin, and the mounting tension between them reaches a climax when Maya murders Gautama and commits suicide.

CONCLUSION

Feminism is the philosophy of women's emancipation, and Anita Desai is awakened by and aware of the concerns and lives of women. The novels of Anita Desai are written from

a feminine perspective. She has mostly written about female characters who are oppressed in some way by men or society. She takes advantage of the struggles of women and the difficulties that society faces. Finally, Anita Desai is regarded as one of the most powerful current Indian novelists in English. She is interested in the interior lives of her characters. She strives to find the deep needs, emotions, and sentiments felt by her characters and portrays them as the influential causes behind their actions. Her representation of the man-woman interaction is shaped and conditioned by the complicated social context. She depicts the suffering of modern women in a man-dominated culture. She attempts to express herself. She basically depicts the nature differences as having an impact on the man-woman interaction and women making an attempt to express themselves in today's male-dominated culture.

References

1. Desai, Anita. *Cry, The Peacock*. New Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 2006. Print.
 2. <https://letterpile.com>>Books>Classic Literature.
 3. "An interview with Anita Desai" by Yashodhara Dalmia, the Times of India 1979.
-