

“PSYCHO ANALYTICAL COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SELECT NOVEL OF ANITA DESAI AND SESHIE DESPANDE.”

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Abstract: The paper presents a psychic comparative study of women characters in Anita Desai select novel *Cry The Peacock* and Seshie Despande select novel *A Matter Of Time*. Anita Desai is fond of working on the internal emotions especially, the women psychic. She lurks deeper into the unconscious layer of human psychic and reveals existential trauma of man. In the present paper we would like to describe the women rightist means of depicting women in Anita Desai- most commonly studied novel *Cry the peacock*. It is a family drama mainly concerned with the theme of marital discord between Gautama and Maya in this we see Maya's cry for love and relationship in her loveless wedding with Gautama. The women in Anita Desai seem to score steady comparison among their father's families and in their research for a feel of accomplishment they remain to trust on the family and the comparative author Seshie Despande is an eminent novelist who has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche. The marital relations are focused to expose the tradition where women characters play subservient role but we can identify a special feature comparatively that there is a psychological growth in their personality. Sheshie Despande characters deal with emotional aspects where they get empowered and all her works portray unique partnership insight with psyche.

Introduction: In this paper psychoanalytic criticism is adopted which is a method of "reading" the mind employed by Sigmund Freud and other psychologists to interpret the select texts of Anita Desai "*Cry The Peacock*" and Seshie Despande "*A Matter Of Time*". The psychoanalysis therapy is based on the idea that individuals are unacquainted of the many factors that cause cognitive thinking and emotions. These unconscious factors have the impending to produce unhappiness, which in turn is articulated through a score of noticeable symptoms, including disturbing personality traits. Our objective of presenting the paper by depicting the main characters is to show that:

- Psychological problems are rooted in the unconscious.
- The manifested symptoms are caused by hidden or 'latent' disturbances.
- Typical causes for psychological upset comprise unanswered issues during development or subdued trauma.
- Human Identity is usually connected to and defined by societal and cultural norms. Woman is deprived of her identity and she is defined in relation with man. It's easy to set free a woman in a ancient social structure even if she is uneducated but it's very hard to think of her liberty in society is moving ahead at the path of advancement and civilization.

The novels of Anita Desai are a policy of female dilemma. Her preoccupation with the woman's inner world, frustration and upheaval of storm raging inside her mind intensifies her predicament. Desai's concern with the emancipation of woman is found in pages of her novels. Our paper is targeted to study the predicament faced by women characters in *Cry the Peacock*. This novel is mainly the story of Maya,

the heroine but it also contains many other female characters that represent different aspects of woman. Published in 1963 *Cry, The Peacock* is one of the most poetic and evocative Indian novel in English. We can see life of women from girlhood through motherhood and man's life style is less. Equality and Liberty are two operative words here. The novel can also be seen as gamut of presentation dealing with the dual opposition of male against women as an object. It seems difficult for a woman to resolve with the reality of life. Anita Desai's women characters experience a weird intuitive experience and endure failures and frustrations. They undergo trauma due to their hypersensitive nature of their insensitive husbands. The women in the novels are a house-wife and a career woman. They feel restricted in their surroundings that make them suffer intensely and they react violently and silently and this leads to disharmony between the husband and the wife. Anita Desai explores the psychic depth of her characters in detail. The qualities of introspection, introversion and a refusal to surrender their individual selves can be noticed in her novel.

Cry The Peacock is a unique example of an illusion. She defines feminine sensibility through the reactions and responses from different events and situations in the novel. Maya, the protagonist of the story is a highly emotional, sensitive and sensuous woman. The writer brings out effectively her claustrophobia; loneliness and frustration. She is seen as a neurotic, introvert and love-famished character, a victim of the inadequacy of human relationships. *Cry, the Peacock* introduces theme that would remain constant in Anita Desai's fiction which is the lonely suppression and oppression of Indian women. The theme of the novel portrays the inner emotional world of the protagonist Maya. Her mental upheavals and her inner struggle are portrayed. She craves for love, warmth

and obsessed with death. The central image is the confrontation between life and death. Her psychological consciousness is aptly illustrated with a lot of detail images, monologues and flashbacks. Maya is perfectly normal and healthy woman. When she experiences solitude and is in need of communication, she feels herself in mental crisis. She tries to strike balance between societal needs and rational cognition and is deeply bewildered when the existential absurdity of life is brought before her. She shares very affectionate relationship with her father and she feels pain to leave her home at marriage. Her upbringing became a problem after her mother's death which made her detached from the world outside. Thus she wrote,

"... my childhood was one in which much was excluded, which grew steadily more-restricted, unnatural even, in which I lived as a toy princess in a toy world. But it was a pretty one.

Maya had many expectations on her husband, but it was not fulfilled. She finds her husband Gautama, as a man in whom understanding was scant, love was meager. As a result, she becomes stultifying. As we read the novel we can clearly understand that her husband loves her, but does not take her solemnly because she is a woman. He identifies her as Maya-illusion she recedes to her past and fantasizes her childhood days. Fantasy becomes a part of the total structure of the novel and it is invariably anticipated in contrast to the world of reality. Maya always clings to fantasy, and is unable to transmit herself to actuality. Her relationship to reality passes through three different stages—her childhood, conjugal life and the lastly she totally surrenders herself to the world of insanity and commits suicide in the end. We can observe as time passes, she becomes more and more restless, emptiness in heart and broods over her emotional feelings as she says;

"I had yearned for the contact that goes deeper than flesh – that of thought – and longed to transmit to him, the laughter that gurgled up in my throat as I saw a goat nuzzle secretly a basket of sliced melons in the bazaar while the vendor's back was turned or the prolonged thrill that lit a bonfire in the pit of my stomach – when I saw the scene unfurl like a rose in the west and farther west ... But those were the times when I admitted to the loneliness of the Human soul, and I would keep silent".

Maya is an extremely sensitive character, an introvert and a pampered daughter of a wealthy aristocratic father, is married to Gautama, who is older than her. A portrayal of woman who has failed to come to terms with power and patriarchal order. Although she lives in the male world bounded by male dominance, she denies recognizing with it and battles against it in her own way. Though Maya can live a comfortable life with all the necessities fulfilled, yet

she is neither happy nor satisfied nor is she the ideal, she doesn't want to be content as a housewife who compromises with her situation and thus suppressing her individuality and womanly yearning in her heart till she dies. Maya is a rebel woman who fails to identify herself with Gautama's world and finds herself estranged from the warmth she got from her father and besides her overall financial reliance on her husband makes her feel rather insecure and powerless. There are other traits in Maya's character which transcends the idea of Feminity. She is in search of new vista for a woman's world, a space in which she is at par with man. In the dance of the peacock's they destroy each other in spite of being madly in love. Maya feels her married life with Gautama is a deadly fight back in which one is destined to kill the other. Rebuffed by her husband, Maya is in a dilemma between her love of life and her fear of death. She is deeply stricken with the sense of lonesomeness and timidity she says

"God, now I am caught in the net of the inescapable, and where lay the possibility of mercy, of release". This net is no hallucination, no. Am I gone insane? Father! Husband, who is my savior? I am in need of one. I am dying and I am in love with living, I am in love and I am dying, God, let me sleep, forget me, But no I'll never sleep again. There is no rest any more only death and waiting."

It is clear that Maya is Bipolar neurotically affected and Freud believed that both normal and abnormal behavior result from interactions between the id, ego, and superego. At times, either the id or the superego will threaten to overwhelm the ego's control, resulting in unacceptable feelings or behavior. In response to this threat, the person experiences anxiety. Most anxiety is not experienced consciously but is apprehended by defense mechanism. Though often adaptive, over use of defense mechanism may hinder the thought processes and daily functioning. A healthy adult has the ego strength to balance conflicting demands by the id, and the superego. When the ego experiences too much conflict, it is weakened. This produces rigid behavior patterns, called neurosis. In extreme cases, the ego collapses and adaptive functioning ceases, a condition known as psychosis.

Shashi Deshpande's novels are a realistic depiction of the anguish and conflict of the modern educated middle-class women. Caught flanked by patriarchy and custom on one hand, and self-expression, individuality and independence on the other, her protagonists feel themselves lost and confused and explore ways to fulfill themselves as a human being. Deshpande's concern and sympathy are essentially for the woman. She has given an honest portrayal of her fears, sufferings, disappointment and frustrations. Besides revealing the women's struggle to secure self-respect and self-identity the author lays bare the mul-

tiple levels of oppression, including sexual oppression. Not only are all her protagonist's women but also the story is narrated from their point of view. It is only in one of the nine novels, *A Matter of Time*, which she has shifted to the omniscient narration, but there too it is the women's point of view that prevails. *A Matter of Time* is yet another novel wherein the husband walks out on his family comprising the wife and three daughters. Sumi, is so traumatized that she lapses and hooked on to complete silence but it appears hard to keep things normal for her daughters. Her abandonment is a reason for great embarrassment and psychological disturbance. It's not only a matter of great humiliation and dishonor but a bitter recognition of being redundant. Words of sympathy from relations fail to console her. She has a lot of self-respect so she takes up a job for herself and her daughters. When Gopal, returns we can find Sumi is changed differently. She has coped with the tragedy with remarkable stoicism.

In almost all Deshpande's novels, we find that the protagonist is exposed to some shock at the beginning. In *A Matter of Time*, Gopal walks out on Sumi. Saru is repeatedly attacked by Manohar, her husband. Chandra Holm raised this question in her interview:

"It is as if all of these characters needed a strong kick to be shaken out of their placid existences to discover the stuff they were actually made of. Why is this? In reply to this question, Shashi Deshpande said,

"My novels always begin in a moment of crisis. Most of us go on unquestioningly until we are shaken out of the rut by something catastrophic or disastrous. Suddenly all that you have taken for granted becomes doubtful, everything falls apart. You begin then to question everything. And it is through this questioning, through this thinking that you move on, picking up your life once again. But you are never the same after this. This is true of all human beings, not just women....In this thinking process, humans do discover their own potential. So do the women I have written about"

Her novels divulge patriarchal ethnicity and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman in being a part of them. Deshpande also suggests that it is women themselves who perpetuate patriarchy through their own actions. Patriarchy is also criticized by questioning the importance given to a male child. Mohan sees toughness in his mother's silence. The social structure has been criticized but not the individuals. Although most men are self-centered and callous, there are a few who help the protagonists to evolve their own identity. Deshpande is not against the institution of marriage, as her women protagonists strive to make their marriages work in their endeavor to lead a meaningful existence. Shashi Deshpande keeps her narratives female-centered and gives an intimate insight into the psyche of the middle-class Indian

women who feel oppressed and hemmed in by their patriarchal socialization. She provides new ideals for a better man-woman relationship, thereby broadening the scope of woman's existence and we can see Sigmund Freud concept of sublimation to her, tradition is the values of harmony and coexistence that symbolize the Indian way of life, and modernity is the assertion of the independent, individual identity. After having passively played out their socially ordained roles, her protagonists move out of their cloistered selves to assert their individuality as human beings. Deshpande feels that the woman must be true to her own self if she wants to realize herself. The straitjacketed role imposed on woman only bogs her down in mire of negation and suppression. She must venture out of the familial framework to give full expression to her individuality and identity. In *A Matter of Time*, Sumi the protagonist is not reduced to a weeping child after Gopal left her. It is observed that conflict between the tradition and modernity, the various painful experiences that the woman undergoes from innocence to maturity; the effect of social and political events on a woman's life, a man made moral code and a subjugated society of male; the power structure among women themselves lack of educational and economic opportunities; woman's hypersensitivity; her potential to overcome her tragic situation through conscious effort. She particularly writes about women and she is unhappy when she has to write untruth about a certain woman. However, she is conscientious and decides not to repeat her mistake. This new psychology emphasizes on women's rather than men. The research has been described as women - centered, women's interior potency and basic psychological structure has been recognized. The psychologists have found in study of women that care - giving and associated ideals like empathy, affiliation, nurturing and a collective apparition of communal life to be middle of the part assigned to women has been devalued and treated unimportant. This depreciation generates inside women a sense of inferiority and dejection. The male morality has a 'righteousness direction' while the female morality has an 'accountability direction'. She shows that women's sense of self and of morality revolves around the issues of dependability for care of and inclusion of other people. She believes that psychology has tirelessly and analytically misunderstood by women. Even Nancy Chodorow in *The Reproduction of Mothering* says: "The boys' initial identification with the mother is replaced with the identification with the socially accepted male role. This is the reason that boys become more detached while girls become emotionally dependent and exploitable. The girls' identification with their mother leads to the need of 'mother'. Finally, she focuses on the reproduction of mothering giving way to the subordination of women. Female bonding,

an important expression of nurturing and care giving, helps in female identity formation. It challenges the male – centered approach and interpretation of female psychological development and offers new paradigms to contextualize female friendship. It became an act of self – affirmation for many to recognize and appreciate the mother”.

In Shashi Deshpande’s novels, there is a conscious attempt to represent the suppressed emotions of women and to assert their quest for independence in a concrete manner.

Comparison: Anita Desai is explicitly not pleased with the voices and achievements of Indian women novelists for they have been content to record and document and their interest in the psychological of their characters have been commonly marginal. She displays her disfavor for the novelists who take interest in the outer rather than the inner world, preferring the social to the psychological novel. Desai, herself contributes psychic novels, which she writes is purely skewed. Anita Desai tries to introduce a neo-psychological vein and displays an emotional response usually does not come across with other Indo-Anglican writers of fiction. Anita Desai laid pressure on the art of portrayal. She insists on analyzing her characters, and the anecdotes are important only when they reflect the passion and repressions of her characters. Free from the journalistic zeal for por-

traying the socio-political life in India, Desai makes each work of hers a haunting quest of the psychic. There are, of course, obstacles to their freedom but these obstacles are in relation to their choice—whether choose to be in relations or out of it. Psychoanalysis has equipped the modern literary critic with remarkable knowledge of the interior scuffles of fictional characters and other aspects of the literary product. It is now a common thing that Freud’s discoveries of the complex nature of the human mind have led to a fundamental revolution in the approach to literary expressions. Comprehensively attempts have been made from beginning to end about psychoanalysis to view the nature of women’s ‘consciousnesses. The society compels every individual particularly women to repress instinctual urges and the desire to exercise will in the name of perpetuation. Shashi Deshpande’s description of female characters is fundamentally from a psychoanalytical point of view. Most of her writings appear to be feminist based but proven essentially to be psychological. Shashi Deshpande’s “A Matter of time” has been taken to prove a thing that man – woman relationship is of course an enigma by analyzing the characters from a psychoanalytical perspective. A Matter of time is a family story of intimate spaces, emotional wounds and intrusions that are absolutely unexpected.

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