

ECO-CRITICISM ON ANITA DESAI'S CRY THE PEACOCK

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Eco criticism is a discipline that implies more ecological literary in any artistic creation. Ecological criticism “is the science of forming and expressing correct judgment upon the merits and faults of writing that depicts the effects of culture upon nature. With a view towards celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through ecologically and environmentally sensitive action.

Eco criticism expands the notion of the world to include the entire ecosphere connecting everything else. The term Eco- criticism was possibly first coined in 1978 by William Ruecket in his Essay Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Eco criticism. Eco critics encourage thinking seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis and about how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications.

Nature have two component organisms and their environments are not only much complex and dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive and interrelated. Ecology relatively a new science, deals with the various principles which govern such relationships between organisms and environment. Today ecology is defined as the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment.

Nature has always proved to be stronger than man. it has often shown its power by controlling manpower through natural calamities like famine. Drought. Flood, earthquake etc.. Man's life and nature are so interlinked that it is not [possible for human beings to separate themselves from its influence. Therefore they have no choice but to accept both nature's bounty and adversity, this can be said to be reciprocal as nature too is the recipient of man's action. Our irresponsible actions cause irreparable damage to nature. This is how the chain of ecosystem works in which in everything is related to each other and therefore affects other.

Anita Desai is the most serious yet appealing novelist of the post-Independence era. She has “ an intensely individual style” (Thomas 269) and, *Cry the peacock*, her final novel *Tour the Force*, was first published in 1963. The title refers to the excited and ecstatic dance of the peacock at the approach of the rain bearing clouds. The dance of the peacock acquires a sinister significance to the heroine of the novel it is about Maya's cries for love and understanding in her loveless with Gautama. Similar is the peacock's cry for love and a life of involvement.

Cry the Peacock is Desai's maiden novel, which can be considered as a trend setting novel as it details with the mental rather than physical aspect of its character. Names of the characters in the novel are symbolic. Gautama as his name suggests believes in philosophy of detachment. Gautama is a person who shuns all sentimentally. On the other hand, Maya as her

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name suggests is too much in love with life. Thus Maya and Gautama stand poles apart in their attitude to life.

Maya an introverted favorite daughter of a wealthy artistic father is married to Gautama an intensive, pragmatic, a detached and sober advocate with whom she is unable to reconcile all her life. As a father of Maya he full filled all the needs of Maya. Even in Gautama she always tries to find her father's substitute which Gautama never succeeded in. the gap between Gautama and Maya is felt throughout the novel. Through their marriage is an unsuccessful one, they continue to live together.

The novel is divided into three parts. In the prologue the author describe the agony and depression suffered by Maya on the death of her pet dog Toto. Maya is on the threshold of emotional breakdown being unable to bear the reality of her pet's death. As a married woman, her motherly instincts remains unfulfilled which she saw in her pet dog Toto, a transferred love object. Since love is an overwhelming powerful element in the life of women, it must get an instinctive outlet. As the novel begin the scavenge ring arrangements are being made to carry away Maya's pet dog. That she begins to cry, is a sign of her motherly attachment for the dead pet dog. After tea, doing the needful for the disposed of Toto's dead body, Gautama say "it's all over, come and drink and stop crying, you must cry" (6)Gautama fails to understand the situation, he remains as busy casual. Maya finds is distinguished and disappointing.

The atmosphere of gloom reminds her marriage that there will be a death, either to her or to her husband. The action of the novel is located in Delhi, "but the city's presence is neither obstructive nor obsessive" (30). There are reference to places like BrilaMandir. Old Delhi and Red Fort. The novel often gives details of own happy days as a child. The author uses the "stream of consciousness" technique to explain the cause and growth of her despair, the present and the past just highlight the temperamental in compatibility between Maya and her husband Gautama.

In her novels characters are drawn from human life and nature particularly from trees, animals, birds, seasons, atmosphere, etc. Maya goes through very strange experience in her life. Hallucinations and rearing to and from sanity and insanity are responsible for her happiness. She fools frightened because she recognizes a demoniac creature to the deafening rear of silent drums.

Maya thinks it is the mead demon of Kathakali ballets. According to Gautama, he wants to be detached from all the aspects of life. As they have together, he waits for Maya tp pour out his tea when she does not come forward to do it, he pours it himself. Maya consoles herself on the ground that is better he learns to stop doing because; she says "one of us would be left alone to always pour his or her tea in loneliness..." (142). Under the pressure of her agony and anger about the prophecy, she feels as if the winds were sweeping over her, and she cries "Dust Strom! Dust Strom" (Sharma42).

But soon she realizes that it is not death, but life which is suggested by the storm. The Dust storm symbolizes Maya's inner, mental condition. Her unconscious mind wants to enjoy life withal its pleasures, and this is suggested by the dust storm. The stronger desire for life leads her to realize that the desire for pleasure is inalienable. From the agony of the fear of death. Her mind is ready to destroy this fear so that she may have eternity making room for the truly eternal that would emerge.

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Maya's acute longing for the pleasure of life fills her with a strong desire to live as she is prepared to murder her husband. Fresh and relaxed after taking bath, Gautama proposes that they should go out in the lawn. But Maya wants to go to the roof unaware of the design of her insane mind aspects the proposal. While going out from the room, her attention is drawn by the statue of the dancing Shiva. The statue symbolizes her forthcoming act. Shiva first destroys and then create a new world out of it. Maya also feels that after killing Gautama, she will be able to create a new life for herself. She believes that by throwing down Gautama from the roof she will escape ultimately in death. Finally she becomes very happy leading lonely, this is the end of the novel *Cry the Peacock*.

The Okios integrates the sacred, nature, culture and the humans in a complex kinship, even as a family of kith and kin *Cry the Peacock* is Maya's story almost the entire story is the remembrance of past. Maya is obsessed with the death and haunted by an astrological prediction that her marriage is going to end in its fourth year, with the death of either wife or husband. When the novel opens Maya's marriage with Gautama is running its fourth year and the hypersensitive, childless Maya, is just beginning to reel under the pressure of prophecy.

Gautama who is twice her age believes in the philosophy of detachment. Maya and Gautama nurtured in different house holds and the impact of the environment has a bearing on their mental outlook and attitude. The novel describes not only the interior landscape of the mind of the protagonist but also the exterior images of the beauties of the nature the plant kingdom, animal kingdom, astronomy, nature, seasons and colors. Maya who rejoices in the world of sounds senses, movements, colors, odors and tunes, is too much in love with life. Even from the childhood she regards the world as a toy specially made for her, painted in her favorite write colors and set moving to her favorite tunes.

Through the symbolic use of nature, Anita Desai throws light on the perennial cycle of life and death. The spring season is shown as the symbol of creation and new life. Nature presents the reality of human life before man. Another example for nature versus human being is one day Maya goes to dinner party at Lai's with her husband. There she sees orchids and she feels restless to think about them. She tells Gautama, "There were orchids in a basket on the veranda.... But Mrs. Lai said they never flower. They are hill orchids, you see. They will soon be died" (Sharma 31). This statement of Maya is very evocative. Through orchids Anita Desai paints of Maya's real life. These are hill orchids but have been brought to the different environment and so cannot survive there.

Maya belongs to a different life style and is unable to adjust herself to her present life. The orchids do not flower, and this is symbolic of Maya's barrenness. She seems to predict her imminent death when she affirms that they will die soon. That Maya external her affection towards her pet dog Toto is unbelievable. *Cry the Peacock* is replete with fine poetic descriptions of animal kingdom also. Apart from that the first animal image. Toto Maya's pet dog, images of slimy, creeping, crawling, creatures such as snakes, lizards, rat and iguanas figure the one after other in the novel. The images of rat suckling their young one, indicates Maya's ego missing obsession with her barrenness. Maya carries the burden if the memory of the albino in her subconscious mind. But on occasion when she is sane and enjoys nature, the blades of grass, the flowers, and their fragrance illuminate her life.

She enjoys the temporary beauty of dew drops on the petals of roses and blades of grass, nature also plays a vital role in the life of Maya, it is always tries to entertain Maya, by giving its

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shades, smell through flowers, gentle breeze, and extenders and warm welcomes in the verandas of Maya's garden. In four years since Maya and Gautama were married and Maya feels certain that one of them has to die she never thinks the possibility of averting the calamity by accepting the advice of the albino and seeking the grace of the merciful god almighty. She dare not speak of it to Gautama and there were no friends with whom she could share her fears. The albino becomes the nightmare and his prophecy haunts her repeatedly. "It seemed real, I could recall each detail, and yet God, Gautama, father surely it is nothing but a hallucination. Surely not, I sobbed" (Thomas 12).

Nature plays a significant role in Anita Desai's fiction. In the stark barren and lifeless lives of the protagonist's nature acts both as metaphor of hope and life and as an ironical presence that sharpens the awareness of a grim existence in the hollow metropolis. The garden has an element of fantasy attached to Maya.

Cry the Peacock is about Maya's cries for love and understanding in her loveless marriage with Gautama. The peacock's cry is symbolic of Maya's agonized cry for love and a life involvement. Maya wanted to leave her life passionately like peacocks which store at before making love. The author tries to compose natural creation, with the human beings even though, she spent a life with a living thing as a husband, she overflows her rejoice only towards nature, even though it is non-living object.

He tries to dominate Maya in all aspects, follows the principles and philosophy of detachment. The author shows the character Gautama as a ruler, as holding the power of a husband and shows Maya as a ruled one and as a typically Indian wife. The starkness and barrenness in nature correspond to the pattern of life and the protagonist's level.

The author points out the quality of the nature and its impact, it rules the mind of Maya and she becomes unknowingly moved towards nature as a ruled one. Another example which is stated in the novel is that it abounds incidents that show how her longing for outdoor life is constantly frustrated mainly by Gautama. As a child she had enjoyed the scenic beauty and cool weather of Darjeeling and now she longs to go there with Gautama.

To her imploration to take her to the south, Gautama coolly suggests that she has wait till a Kathakali troupe comes to Delhi. He apparently sees no strong reason to undertake a tiresome journey down south in the sweltering summer. This incident shows how Gautama tries to dominate quality of Gautama as a ruler and Maya as a ruled one. Desai's protagonists are always suppressed by male- domination.

Maya's imagination and her speed are highly sensuous. She notices all though unconsciously, the subtle shades of color, of smell and of touch. She watches faint mauve petunias, sentimental, irresolute flowers which reflect her own nature. On the contrary, Gautama is "compared with a horse, symbolic of his animal blameless to nature"(Dash 199). Even Gautama fails to recognize the smell of lemons from that of petunias. Nature is a life giving until one tries to harm nature it won't destroy us. As per saying, nature which has fascinated and bewitched Maya with its entire splendor punishes Gautama for his immunity. Gautama, like Maya, is not an aesthetic person and his detached and different attitude towards nature result in his "unnatural death"

Maya, she does not delight in seeing the nature during the night times amidst the followers and trees in the garden, under the starry night, Maya is conscious of some evil, an indefinable unease. She feels the presence of a truly physical shadow like the shadow of the

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giant tree approaching her, splitting across the leaves and grasses, she feels snakes coiling and uncoiling and lapping at her feet. It is the figure of the astrologer in her subconscious and his prophecy which has been revived in her memory by the death of her pet dog to Maya anticipates another tragedy about to happen. Here nature tries to threaten Maya in the name of albino a stroller. Nature plays both destroyer and preserver.

The spring season begins with you the mournful cry of the brain fever bird upsetting Maya violently. It is the spring in Gautama's garden in the metropolis of Delhi which makes her sad, Maya is afraid of the shrieking sound of the peacock, when the cry she becomes restless. Their cry is associated with death. The peacocks according to her know the truth of life and death.

Another example for viewing nature as a creator and how human beings are using nature as positive and also negative force according to the perspective of the characters. They take advantages even in the wild quality of nature. They try to find new life and hope in nature. According to Maya one of them in their married life is going to die as per the prophecy said by the albino Astrologer. For Maya there is no escape from the trap because now even in her conscious mind there is only the sick desire of world pleasures and the fear of death. While she is thinking about her fear of death heavy storm Arises in the place, the dust storm is symbolic. At first Maya thinks that dust storm is the symbol of the end of her life. Such storm would sweep the earth and erase the last traces of these masses of creeping, crawling, toiling and struggling cell- conglomerations that now wracked the earth.

Finally I conclude that the nature creates a great impact among the readers through the novel *Cry the Peacock*. The characters who are presented by Anita Desai reflect the quality of inner emotions and thoughts through nature and its tiny creatures. In nature even a small object like leaves and shadows plays a predominant and memorable role in the life of protagonist. The novel is constructed work especially made for women in their lives life's under the male domination. One should preserve only then one get peace and solace from nature. If one tries to harm nature defiantly nature will annihilate them in return. Humans will just vanish as they cannot with stand the more power of nature. A forestation will certainly help man to live a life of joy and fulfillment.

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