

Existential Pursuits: A Study of Anita Desai's 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'

**A Dissertation Submitted for the Award of the Degree of
Masters of Philosophy in English**



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PREFACE

I have always been interested in novels more than any other literary genre. I find novels to be delightful, crisp and to the point. They create a lasting impact on the minds of its readers. Through this study, I have tried to rekindle my love for novels, of Anita Desai. The techniques and themes used by the author to represent and expose a character to its readers are discussed in this dissertation. The classification of this dissertation in the form of four chapters helps to study and analyse novels and their characters, authors' perspective, readers' perspective.

The first chapter is Introduction, deals with the concept and definition of existentialism. Starting with the meaning and definition of existentialism it also discusses about Existential pursuits, women novelist. It further discusses about Anita Desai and her major works.

The second chapter, Psychogenic Obsession in 'Cry, the Peacock' begins with the discussion of various themes as discussed in the novel, such as theme of marital discord, theme of sentiments and sensibilities, theme of quest for the self, theme of desire of escapism and lastly theme of alienation and isolation.

The third chapter, Colonial Reflection in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' unfolded the various themes depicted in the novel, this chapter deals with various themes such as theme of east-west encounter, theme of gender discrimination, theme of social challenges, theme of displacement and theme of social-psychological conflicts.

The fourth chapter is Conclusions, in which the original findings of the study are discussed in detail, and it also includes an analysis of the aforementioned chapters.

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

Concepts and Definitions

1.1 Existential

Existence is to establish, indicate, yearning, a desire to exist in a locality with one's own identity and to achieve a level of Independence, to fulfill the inner desire, and to exist in society. Existential relates to human existence in a more concrete way, it is regarded as a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom, and choice. In existential humans define their meaning of life, and try to make their own decisions, it is believed that individual is free to take their responsibility. Existential deals with the occurrence, personal concern, dedication, and oneness of the individual. Thinkers believe that people are in search of their existence and identity. The term "Existentialism" (French Existentialism) was coined by the French Catholic philosopher "Gabriel Marcel" in the mid-1940s,

According to "**Merriam Webster**" since 1828, "Existential is something that verifies our existence publicly".¹

According to "**Collins Dictionary**" "Existential is referring to seek advice from individual existence and experience".²

According to western concepts identity means your being should be personified in the society in which you live. A woman is irrespective of gender should be given equal weightage, in day to day affairs. She should also be regarded as an equal partner for carrying the wheel of life. She should not be treated like others. She should be regarded as a force in society. Thus, existence in short brings into being a consciousness by which men-women feel rooted in the plural society.

According to psychology, identity self-denotes the consciousness of men. Consciousness shows that how a man establishes his oneness in the society he inherited from his worth. Thus, the self - question of identity with a specific physical yearning and the way to be followed show something different. From the collective psyche of society, where a person comes in a clash with the collective psyche of society and individual sense as a self which is also known as consciousness. They began turtle between men-women society, man is a being who lives, eats, works. In the novels of Anita Desai's almost all the protagonists fight with the forces of society because these forces are working against them it is an essential mode influenced the novels of Anita Desai as she has taken his characters who are either isolated, alienated, or neurotic. The question of psychology itself concerns with the question of psychological turmoil, and sociological issues, psychology, or psychogenic traits in men compare him to choose the purpose of life. "Internal voice of society based on their, capability, good actions bad actions, is existence"

The society has certain codes and these codes of society do not allow the personal choice of the individual. Set the fear psychosis of codes and the characters of Anita Desai overrules the set code of society and therefore they come into clash with one another and this becomes their existential pursuit. Because they want to exist in a society of their own if someone or something prohibits their personal choice they fight with that no matter what the result comes after their fight. Desai's works bring out dilemma, tension, agony, isolation, alienation, and other threats of existentialism.

1.2 Defining the term Existential Pursuit

Pursuit is a specified kind of activity, especially a recreational or sporting one, pursuit in other terms is an action of pursuing someone or something.

According to Merriam Webster: “Pursuit is a kind of activity that attract people according to their interest”.³

According to Collins Dictionary: “Pursuit is a kind of activity, that consist of all the plan and interest that you do when you are carrying it out”.⁴

A woman consistently stays to have a voice in her environmental factors, it very well maybe her family or it may be her parental house yet the conditional proof, however not in the Vedic time but rather in a time of Puranas and later on Islamic. Ladies were kept inside her family, and she had a go at being kept in care this at that point turned into a social issue. In the existential quest for a lady to exist in the public arena from time remembrance ladies is in effect consistently attempted to come up to come out from the sickles of a patronal infection, She regularly neglected to get accomplishment in it, these days, India is a country observes liberal framework in the public arena and indeed ladies attempted to follow his existential interest or to eradicate the social scrape which was appointed to purchase the patriarchal society. She doesn't need injuries of balance nor does her like to be treated as the second resident this turns into her interest in existing in the public arena and she prevails to an enormous degree. Thus, the win and remove her psycho obsession and her social predicament. This is witnessed by the character in ‘Cry, the Peacock’ and ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’.

1.3 Indian English Novels

Novel

A novel is defined as a piece of prose fiction. The novel has its reasonable length, the novel may be defined as a long narrative. It combines narration, history, philosophy, poetry, fantasy, and social criticism, and a particular view of life. The novels have various elements such as plot. It deals with the event and situations that are presented in the plot. And second is the characters of men-women that appear in the novels, the third element is a dialogue that means interaction among characters. And the fourth element is the scene and time of action. The fifth element is the style in which narration is done, the sixth is the view presented by the novelists. A novelist has a creative view of human life.

According to “**Merriam Webster**”

“A novel deal with human experience, and with their perceptions, thoughts. It is seen as long and complex. It is considered as invented prose”.⁵

According to” “**Collins Dictionary**”

“A novel is defined as a long written story, it depicts about imaginary people and events”.⁶

According to “**Oxford Living Dictionaries**”

“A Fictional prose that narrates and represents the truthfulness of the character and their action”.⁷

Novella

The novel is originated in the early eighteen century after the Italian word “Novella” which was used for fiction thousand words. A novella is a short and well- established narrative,

frequently sensible and satiric in tone. Giovanni Boccaccio, Franco Sacchetti, and Matteo Bandello are the few writers who established the term novella. Geoffrey Chaucer introduced the novella with “The Canterbury Tales”. The novella flourished in Germany, where it is known as the novella. The difference between novella and novel. Novella has fewer subplots and conflict than full-length novels. The Novella does not consist of chapters, “A Novella is considered as a short novel or a long short story”.⁸ Novella is considered perfect for the film adaptations and silver screen, and have an ideal short length.

Short Stories

Short tales generally address only some characters. It is far appearing as a fictional prose narrative shorter than a novel. Before the 19th century, brief tales have usually seemed like an awesome literary form. Short tales typically conscious of the problem or theme.

Sir Hugh Walpole stated that “A short story should be a story, a record of things, happenings, full of incident, and accident, swift movement, unexpected development. Leading through suspense to climax and a satisfying denouement”.⁹

H.G. Wells stated that “A short story is defined as a piece of the novel which could be easily read in twenty minutes of time”.¹⁰

Indian English novels attain their position in the international field. English novels flourishing in both quality and quantity since independence, novels have crossed many stages to achieve popularity. Novels are considered an easy medium to connect with readers. Thus, novels are heart-touching to readers. Indian English novels undergo natural development and become an appealing part of our literature. Indian English novels are a bridge between the East and the West. M.K. Naik delineates his thoughts about the novels:

“Novels are known for their notable work, not only in English education in India but also in prose fiction, it is considered as a source of story-telling, in today’s world novels are known because of their importation from west”.¹¹

Indian English novels are the most popular form of writing in Indian English writing after independence, in modern times, the number of readers is grown up. The novels have their journey from the time of *Rig-Veda* or *Upanishad*. Many Bengali literary works were translated into the Hindi language. The Indian novels are divided into four stages, in the first stage, we have writers like Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Toru Dutt, and Romesh Chunder Dutt. Bankimchandra Chatterjee’s ‘Raj Mohan’s Wife’ [1864] is regarded as the first Indian novel in English. Most of the works were translated from the Bengali language to English and Shaikh Dean Mohammad was the first person in India who write the first book in English, entitled “The Travels of Dean Mohammad” in (1793) which was published in England.

The world war 1st was considered the second phase of Indian English novels. The novelists of this period are, Shankar Ram, A.S.P Ayer, and K.S Venkataramani, after that we had a great trio of novelists like as, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K Narayan, and Raja Rao. The foremost novelists of this era are Manohar Malgonkar, Bhabani Bhattacharya, and Kushwant Singh, and so on so forth. And after that, some of the prominent novelists came into existence like as Kali Krishna Lahiri’s ‘Roshanara’ [1881], Raja Lakshmi Devi’s ‘The House Wife’ [1876], Toru Dutt’s ‘Bianca’ [1878], and other writers who had contributed significantly to Indian English literature.

The nineteen-century novelists are Anand Prasad Dutt’s ‘The Indolence’[1878], Ram Krishna Punt’s ‘The Bay of Bengal’[1866], Trailokya Das, ‘Hirimba Wedding’[1884], Shoshee Chunder Dutt’s ‘The Young Zamindar’[1883], and Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s ‘Bjoy Chand: An Indian Tale’[1888], and Yogendra Nath Chattopadhyaya’s, ‘The Girl and Her Tutor’[1891].

The novelists appeared like Ramesh Chunder Dutt, who translated his novel into the English language 'A Lake of Palm's. in 1902, Noor Jahan, 'The romance of an Indian Queen' in [1909], 'Nasrian an Indian Medley'[1911], 'Kamala'[1925], 'Khamenei'[1931].

Rabindranath Tagore, novels are 'The Home and the World's' [1916], 'Gora' [1910], 'The Wreck' [1910]. Cornelia Sorabji's, 'Love and Life behind the Purdah' [1902]. Sir Joginder's Singh, 'Nasreem' [1915]. A novelist like Sarat Kumar Ghosh's 'Verdict of Gods' [1905]. L.B. Pal's 'A Glimpses of Zanana Life in Bengal' [1904]. Bhabani Bhattacharya's 'Goddess Named Gold' [1760].

Twenty century becomes an inspiration for writers, during this time, the novels are based on social and political conditions. They write about freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi influenced many writers of that time. Mahatma Gandhi's literature was appealed to everyone's heart. His writing becomes popular in literature and is called Gandhian literature. The novelists who were during, Gandhian movement R.S Ventatramm's Murugan in 'Kandan the Patriot: A Novel of New Indian in the Making' [1932] and 'The Tiller' [1927].

During the 1930s the best three novelists are Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, and R.K Narayan, and their works published in the year 1935, and 1938, respectively. These three novelists are known as the father of Indian English novels, they started writing around mid-1930. Their works are the real beginning of Indian English novels. K.S. Iyenger mentions:

"The Indian novelists managed their difficulties, which they had to face, and provide us a creative fiction in both the condition in bulk as well as in quality".¹²

Raja Rao's novels deal with the theme of Indian Independence. His first novel "Kanthapura" [1938] depicts Gandhian Philosophy. His novels 'The Serpent and the Rope' [1960] received the Sahitya Akademi Award 'in 1963. It narrated the connection between the east and west. 'The Cat and Shakespeare' [1965].

The other novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, novels reveal hierarchical evils. His first novel 'Untouchable' [1935] deals with the life and struggle of an untouchable Baka who was a sweeper. Character Munoo, of Coolie (1936) struggled due to poverty. His other novels are 'Seven Summer's'[1951], 'The Old Woman and the Cow'[1960], 'The Big Heart'[1945], 'The Road'[1961], and 'The Private Life of an Indian Prince'(1953).

R.K Narayan is considered a regional novelist. Malgudi a fictitious town, Just as Wessex of Thomas Hardy. Gandhian influence is seen in his novel 'Waiting for the Mahatma' [1955], other novels are 'The English Teacher'[1946], 'The Bachelor of Arts'[1937]'Swami and Friends'[1935], 'The Guide'[1958], 'Man-Eater in Malgudi'[1962] and 'Dark Room'[1938]. His novels have immense fame in India and abroad. Iyenger mentions:

"He is one the few writers in Republic of Asian country who take their craft seriously, attempt to enhance the instrument, following with the simplest way of dedication possibly seem to be the mirage of technical perfection".¹³

These three novelists mark their presence within the history of Indian English literature. A number of the profile novelists express, the reality through their works are Manohar Malgonkar, Khushwant Singh, Chaman Nahal, and Bhabani Bhattacharya.

Bhabani Bhattacharya's novels unfold social, economic, and political issues and he writes six memorable novels. His first novel was 'So many Hungers' [1947], his later novels are 'A Goddess Named Gold' [1960], 'Who Rides a Tiger' [1954], 'Music for Mohini' [1952]. Thus, Bhabani Bhattacharya's novels are unforgettable. Manohar Malgonkar's works include 'Distant Dream' [1960], 'The Princess' [1963], 'Spy in Amber' [1971], 'Combat of Shadows'[1962], and 'A Bond of Ganges'[1964].

Khushwant Singh is a renowned writer in English. His novels are 'Company with Woman' [1999], 'A Train to Pakistan' [1956], and 'I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale' [1959]. His novels have become popular across the globe.

Chaman Nahal was a great novelist of his age. Some famous novels are 'My True faces' [1937], 'Azadi'[1978] 'The Triumph of the Tricolour'[1993], 'The English Queen'[1979], 'Introduction another Dawn'[1977], 'The Salt of Life'[1990], and 'The Crown and the Loincloth'[1981].

Novelists like, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee, and Amitav Ghosh, Githa Hariharan gave a new shape to Indian English novels. Salman Rushdie began his journey as a novelist from 'Grimus' [1978]. 'Midnight's Children' [1981] received a Booker prize in 1981. His later novels are 'Shame' [1985], 'Enchantress of Fluorine' [2008], 'The Moor's last Singh' [1995], and 'The Ground beneath Feet' [1999].

Amitav Ghosh's novels are 'River of Smoke'[2011], 'The Hunger Tide'[2005], 'The Circle of Reason'[1986], 'Sea of Poppies'[2008], 'The Calcutta Chromosome'[1996], and 'The Wass Palace'[2000]. Arun Joshi's novels include his experience, his novels include 'The City and the River'[1990], 'The Foreigner'[1968], 'The Labyrinth'[1981], 'The Apprentice'[1974], 'The Strange Case of Billy Biswas'[1971]. His novel 'Labyrinth' won a 'Sahitya Akademi Award' in 1982.

Vikram Seth was a popular Indian English novelist. His novel are 'The Golden Gate' [1986]. 'The Suitable Boy' [1993] and 'An Equal Music' [1999].

Shashi Tharoor's famous novels are 'The Great Indian Novel' [1989]. Brought him immense popularity. His novels include 'Small Remedies'[2000], 'If I Die Today'[1982], 'Matter of Times'[1996], 'Riot'[2001], 'Show Business'[1992]. Amitav Ghosh along with Salman

Rushdie made Indian writing in English memorable. These writers give a new direction to Indian English novels.

1.4 Indian English Women Novelists

Women novelists made a significant contribution to Indian Writing in English. The novelists portray a real picture of Indian society and culture and they had a reputed position in literature, among women novelists like Cornelia Sorabji, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamala Das, and Arundhati Roy.

‘Cornelia Sorabji’ marks her last impression on English literature, her stories are ‘Love and Life Behind the Purdah’ [1902], depicts the life of a woman in the early nineteenth century and who was supposed to live in four walls and follow customs and traditions. Her other novel was ‘Between the Twilight’ [1908]. This novel gives her immense popularity. She expresses her views on women and their place in society and the condition in which they live. K.S. Iyenger states: “Miss Sorabji in her productive work. She tried to push silken curtain to the ‘Purdah’ and mention different shade of feminism”.¹⁴

Another Famous novelists like Kamala Markandaya, and Ruth Praver Jhabvala, depict the realistic condition of women in society. Kamala Markandaya’s novel ‘Nectar in a Sieve’ [1954], represents a peasant’s life and the struggle faces during her lifetime. Her novels are ‘Some Inner fury’ [1957], ‘The Nowhere Man’[1972], ‘A Silence of Desire’[1961], ‘The Coffer Dams’[1969], ‘A Handful of Rice’[1966], ‘The Golden Honeycomb’[1977], ‘Two Virgins’[1973], and ‘Pleasure City’[1982].

The concept of Ruth Praver Jhabvala’s novels is based on arranged marriages. Her early novels are ‘Shards of Memory’[1995], ‘To Whom She Will’[1955], ‘Like Birds Like

Fishes'[1963], 'The Nature of Passion'[1956], 'Get Ready for Battle'[1962], 'A Backward Place'[1965], 'A New Dimension'[1973], 'Out of India'[1986], 'Heat and Dust'[1975], 'Poet and Dancer'[1903], 'Three Continents'[1987], 'Edmond in India'[1958], 'An Experience of India'[1971], 'To Whom She Will'[1955], 'The House Holder'[1960], and 'A Strong Climate'[1968], K.S. Iyenger states:

"In the novels of Mrs. Jhabvala's mankind are shown as insane, but some condition and situation of people are entertaining than others. She exposes human follies, self-deceptions, Mrs. Jhabvala makes us laugh".¹⁵

Nayantara Sahgal's novels depict women's freedom. Her novels include 'Plans For Departure' [1985], 'A Time to be Happy'[1957], 'Rich Like Us'[1985], 'A Situation in New Delhi'[1977], 'Storm of Chandigarh'[1969], 'The Day in Shadow'[1971]. Her novels also express individuals suffering.

Among the female novelists, Anita Desai is considered a novelist of 20th-century novels. She has a unique personality in Indian English novels. Her novel 'Cry, the Peacock' [1963], portrays a picture of the female protagonist 'Maya' who is sensitive and cannot deal with her insecurities, out of anger she kills her husband. Desai's later novels are 'In Custody' [1984], 'Clear Light of Day' [1980], 'Voices in the City' [1965], 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' [1971], 'Fire on the Mountain' [1977], and 'Where Shall We Go This Summer' [1975].

Arundhati Roy, the most famous novelist, won the Booker prize, for her first novel, 'The God of Small Things' [1997]. Her writing style is unique which is seen in her novels.

Many Indian English novelists, contributed their work. Women novelists like 'Nayantara Sahgal,' She has command over English. Her novels are 'This Time of Morning' [1965], one of the best political novels in Indian English literature. Her novels include 'Mistaken

Identity'[1988], 'A Situation in New Delhi'[1977], 'Plans for Departure'[1985], 'The Day in Shadow'[1971], 'A Time to be Happy'[1957], and 'Rich Like Us'[1985].

After the 1980s, it is said that women should be treated like men, they should not be treated as an animal or property. They can raise their voice against male-dominated society. All women novelists made their efforts for the development of novels. Thus, novelists made a significant contribution to Indian English literature. To conclude, Indian English novels present multiple shades of life.

1.5 Anita Desai and Her works

Anita Desai is a leading 20th century woman novelist. She has a distinct place in the realm of contemporary Indian English novels it would have been poorer without her. She is considered the first woman who writes about the existential problem of womankind. She is the first who can understand the human psyche better. Her novels depict the inner level of Indian men-women known for their sympathy and lucid prose. Anita Desai is highly knowledgeable in various languages like German, Bengali, Hindi, and English. She always prefers to write in the English language.

She was born in 1937 at Mussoorie of Bengali German patronage. Desai holds a unique place among the contemporary women novelists of India. She stands apart from the bulk of Indian English novelists, like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan. Kamala Markandaya, turn 'outward' for their fictional exploration, but Anita Desai's move 'inward' in subtle psychological probing. She deals with the 'existential' issue, she grapples with the abnormal or the hyper-sensitive. The female protagonists of her early novels- Maya, Monica, Sarah, Sita, etc. The remarkable thing about Anita Desai portrays her characters with the traits, style, and language. Anita Desai attains a unique position as a writer.

Desai's ten novels and other literary works of great value. As a novelist, her novels bring out the pattern of the interior region and the human psyche. Desai uses novels as a vehicle for venting the predicament of man and his existential trauma in the society she belongs to. Desai's main concern with the internal drama of human life in her novels. Desai excels her contemporaries in the art of fiction. She was entirely nurtured and educated in Delhi and started writing when she was just seven. She is married, has four children, and lives in Delhi. Her publication includes two collections of short stories, articles, and interviews. Her works won many awards in India as well as abroad. Anita Desai receives Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978, for her novel 'Fire on the Mountain'. Desai had a keen observation of nature, men-women relationships, Anita Desai is a genuine writer and portrays a picture of society. As a woman, she is capable of understanding a woman's psychological condition better than male writers. All most all the works of Desai's reflect a tragic view of life.

Her first novel, 'Cry, the Peacock' in [1963] in which she depicts hypertension and hypersensitiveness of her women protagonists, but with the publication of 'The Clear Light of Day' [1980]. She started drifting towards a sunnier atmosphere and a happier world. In her later novels, 'Voices in the City' [1965], 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' [1971], 'Where Shall We Go This Summer' [1975], 'Fire on the Mountain' [1977], 'In Custody' [1984], was shortlisted for Booker Prize, 'Baumgartner's Bombay' [1989], 'Journey to Ithaca' [1995], and 'Fasting, Feasting' [1999], is a remarkable admixture of sombreness and jocularity.

Desai's novels discuss various themes like a theme of human relationships, alienation, loneliness, East-West encounter, violence, and death. About her novels. K.R. Srinivasan Iyenger beautifully observes:

“Anita Desai’s novels delineates the internal thoughts of the characters rather than external actions. And her novels convey the inner actions and thoughts of the characters very efficiently”.¹⁶

Thus, Anita Desai marks her unique identity in the field of literature. At M.I.T, she teaches the writing programme and shares her time between India, Boston, Massachusetts, and Cambridge, England. Many of her novels are so popular and still in demand. She is considered one of the best-known novelists of her time, and her work is highly regarded. The writing style and language, of her novels, are still appreciated.

Anita Desai deals with the contemporary problem of men and women more especially of the women no-where. We find out the economic issue as a problem in the novels of Anita Desai. But everyone finds out a problem such as psychiatric obsession. The characters that appear in ‘Cry, the Peacock’ and ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’ suffer obsessive psychotic problems. There is a constant fight between human beings and society. All the characters of Anita Desai portray in a manner that revolt against the prevailing system of society. The characters of Anita Desai come in frame with the organic power of the society, it results in creating tension, frustration, depression, and other psychological problem in the mind of characters, they burn inside their feeling and unable to express their anguish. Though they are in search of their existence, the suppressive mode of society hardly arouses them to undergo the existential form.

Cry, the Peacock (1963)

Anita Desai’s novel, ‘Cry, The Peacock’ psychological novel, deals with the chief protagonists Maya’s madness. Maya is described as a hyper-sensitive, young girl, Maya desires to love and to live. She married Gautama who is much older than herself. Who is a practical-minded person? Maya belongs to a traditional Brahmin family that belief in astrology and Gautama’s

family represents the sensible side of life. The marriage is unsuccessful, Maya haunts continuously by the behaviour of her husband and her affair of life. Maya falls in love with Gautama passionately and desires to be loved in return, but Gautama disappoints her. She does not get any emotional support from her husband.

The disconnection between Maya and Gautama is one of the reasons for the breaking of their marriage, and relationship. The root cause of the entire novel lies, predication made by an albino astrologer who creates fear in Maya's mind.

“The cunning and quailing astrologer, a magician of my hallucinations—no Course they were not hallucinations, Arjuna has proved them to me, and yet-could they are real? Had never said anything to suggest that it was I Who would die young, unnatural, and violently, four years after my marriage, nothing to suggest that he even thought that”.¹⁷

The astrologer prediction comes true in the case of Maya's brother, Arjuna. Gautama, an egoist, fail to support Maya's emotional intensity, and the death of her dog, Toto. Gautama laughs at Maya's traditional views of life. Later, on she suffers from fear and turns mad. Maya realizes that she could never live in peace. The cries of a peacock during the rainy season, make fear in her mind and she experiences terror. Her dark house appears to her like a tomb, she feels alienated, her loveless marriage with Gautama, but finally due to the intensity of pain, she kills Gautama.

‘In Cry, The Peacock’ Desai illustrates tension, agony, frustration, anxiety, fear, in the mind of the female protagonist. Thus, Anita Desai depicts human psyche through her characters. Desai focuses on Indian society, families, and their relationships, and focuses on women suffering and suppression in Indian society.

Voices in the City (1965)

Desai's second novel, 'Voices in the City' depicts the life of the middle-class genius of Calcutta, the story of a Bohemian brother and his two sisters caught for changing social values and atmosphere. There are three central characters, Nirode, the mother, and the city of Calcutta, Nirode came to Calcutta for his existence; but he is a "congenial failure" in his pursuit. Arun realizes the importance of time and success in their life, while the other two Nirode and Monisha fail to realize this. In this novel, Monisha is contrasted to Maya, due to the high intensity of pain, she set fire to herself and die.

The other part of the novel is related to the mother's behaviour towards his sons and daughters. This way the novel deals with the bohemian life of brother and sister and the participation of the mother. Here, the city of Calcutta which appears as a living force:

"Out on the pillar'd porch Nirode spat into an Oleander, for he felt as though. Swallowed a mouthful of Sarla's sweet perfume".¹⁸

Where Shall We Go This Summer? (1975)

This novel depicts Sita's abolishment from the realities of domiciliary life. The heroine of the novel is dissatisfied with her life and is in search of existence, Sita, the wife of an industrialist, her meaningless life in Bombay flat, and her selfish, and uncaring children. Her reminiscence together along with her father at the island, hang-out her, after an undesirable being pregnancy Sita leaves the rental house in Bombay and is derived to an ashram that begins out through her father at the island of Manori village. The novel is split into three parts: Monsoon 67, Winter 47, and once more Monsoon 67.

The First part, focuses on the relation between Sita and Raman. It also shows the arrival of Sita on the island at Manori village. She wants to recollect her past spent on this island.

The second element delineates Monsoon forty-seven display the records of Sita's mom and father. And the participation of her father inside the freedom conflict, and the connection between her mom and father.

The third element repetition of Monsoon 67, depicts the struggles of Sita and rebellion towards her husband. Sita's existence is re-described at the island. She recognizes that her personal married existence and relation are made from compromises. She popped out of miracle and melancholy here. Her residence at the island characterizes the social modifications in twenty years. She is afflicted by ache however later she realizes the stark realities of her family's existence. Here Sita displays herself through flashbacks.

"In those days", she explained, "I thought I could live with you. And travel alone-mentally, emotion-ally. But after that day, that was not enough. I had to stay whole. I had to. "Do you know", she added hesitantly I think perhaps that is the urge my mother felt. When she ran away to Benares. But what happened to her? I would Raman. I had to run away, too, to the island".¹⁹

Bye-Bye Blackbird (1971)

'Bye-Bye Blackbird' deals with the dilemma of three expatriates, Adit, Dev, and Sarah. This novel is set in London and deals with problems confronted by Indian immigrants. Anita Desai's in this novel reveals the character's emotion towards his homeland. Adit works in England and marries Sarah and lives a happy life in England. After some time, Dev comes here for studies, he does not like the atmosphere of England. He comes here only to be an England-returned teacher in India. The heroine of the novel Sarah stands between two poles India and England.

She is weak but raises her voice, she is a victim of psychic and social alienation. The novel depicts that the characters be afflicted by the trouble along with lack of identity, alienation, and humiliation in large part due to racial and cultural prejudices.

The name of the novel refers to England's "bidding farewell to an Indian "Blackbird". The novel refers to England's bidding farewell to an Indian "Black Bird". The novel is divided into three parts "Arrival, Discovery, and Recognition and Departure. The novel is involved with immigrants and, their alienation, loneliness, and nostalgia for his or her beyond existence in India. Like different novels of Anita Desai reveals the tradition of England. England which alternate Dev's hatred of enthusiasm.

He develops a great infatuation for the English people. Adits, childhood memories, and his love for his motherland. In India, marital maladjustment is considered as one of the most dominant themes of Anita Desai's novels deal with. Sarah is only the character who resigns all claim of being an English woman who respects her husband. She gives up even her English self as:

"Silent, frozen on the divan, Sarah, and Adit held hands like a pair of children, feeling Bengali feeling India sweep into their room like a flooded river, drowning all that had been theirs...drowning it all and replacing it with the emptiness and sorrow, the despair and rage, the flat grey melancholy and the black glamour of India. They were tossed about by the flood-like flotsam and then become a part of it, the black flood".²⁰

Fire on the Mountain (1977)

The award-winning novel, Desai explores the emotional world of Nanda Kaul and Raka. The novel is divided into three parts: Nanda Kaul at Carignano, Raka Come to Carignano and Ila

Das Leaves Carignano. The first part of the novel deals with the struggles of Nanda Kaul. A widow of Vice-Chancellor, she remains a lady of city sensibility. Her husband bought at Carignano, the house on the island became a symbol of creation and destruction. Colonel Mac Dougal used to come to this place during summer, but now it is in the possession of Nanda Kaul.

Part II deals with when Raka Comes to Carignano reveals the family of Nanda Kaul through memories. She instructs Ram Lal, her servant to arrange for Raka's stay in the house. Raka delineates the nostalgia of Nanda Kaul about the past.

Part III deals with the story of Ila Das who is a childhood friend of Nanda Kaul. She has been betraying by her husband then by her sons. Her ego becomes her downfall. Ila does not the symbolic importance of the house Carignano, she leaves the house for the village and involved in activities like social welfare, on the way to the village, and she is raped and murdered. Preet Singh, a native of the village murders her. Raka narrates the destruction when she observes the fire on the mountain:

“Down in the ravine, the flames spat and crackled around the dry wood and through the dry grass, the black smoke spiralled up over the mountain.”²¹

Clear Light of Day (1980)

The novel revolves around the separation between India and Pakistan and the separation of the residence between Bimla and her brother. Bimla is taken into consideration as a dynamic member of the residence. Bimla lives in an antique residence in Delhi for the gain of their risky brother, Baba. As a self-sacrificing being, Bimla is forced and to look after her father's business. Bimla is analysed on levels- the experience of self and natural awareness:

“An individual may be characterized as a combination of the physical body, its internal Connections that give rise to memories, skills, behaviour, and of course, consciousness: the sense of self or personal identity, pure awareness, and the spark of life or even the soul”.²²

From the beginning till the end Bimla undergoes various changes that leaves an impression on the mind of the readers. As a virtuous, she maintains various relationships but fails to understand. At the end of the novel, Bimla seems like a being who realizes the time via the alternate that makes the residue of time beyond in time present.

In Custody (1984)

Desai’s novel ‘In Custody’ describes Deven Sharma. A mild guy together along with his poetic skills, Deven involves Mirpore village and turns into a lecturer in Hindi. There is withdrawal from the female-centric sample to a male-centric story. Deven Sharma aspires to be the interviewer of famed Urdu poet, Nur.

A.N. Dwivedi analyses the suffering and inner struggle of Deven as an interviewer along with a notable shift in the pattern of Desai’s novels:

“The notable works of Desai’s usually deal with male protagonist rather than the female protagonist, but she is only one who can’t change her attitude towards male society. All the protagonist feel the same pain, agony, weakness, insecurity, as protagonist elsewhere”.²³

Thus, Anita Desai analyses Deven’s psyche and his existential trait. Another character in this novel is Nur who symbolizes the deterioration and demolish of her skills as a poet. He is called the *avatar* of Urdu poetry, but his behaviour towards Deven is inappropriate and inhuman. Deven fails to fulfil the dream of completion of his project on Nur. But out of all the failure he ultimately succeeds to interview and live in the community as a critic. This idea that comes to

her mind is the deception of the people around him. “In Custody”, the novelist shows that the protagonist Deven baffled from dirt, humiliation, at Mirpore, he does not get the fruitful results at Delhi too.

Baumgartner’s Bombay (1989)

‘Baumgartner’s Bombay’ is considered a tenth novel was written by Indian writer Anita Desai. The novel depicts the story of a German Jew named Hugo Baumgartner. This novel analyzes the inner region of consciousness, motives, and the impulses of the human mind. Anita Desai goes deeper into Hugo’s unconscious mind and finds out the quest for self-preservation and self-identity. The inner dilemma of Hugo’s mind subtle and complicated thread in the story.

Thus, in the entire life of Hugo swing in-between “accepting but not accepted”. Hugo has an over-protective mother. For business works he likely to come to Calcutta but the city of Calcutta overpower him. He strives for his existence in Bombay. He becomes nostalgic and thinks about the dangers that might come in the peaceful life of his mother in Germany. Desai expresses the deep attachment of mother and son in this novel.

Hugo comes to his flat in Bombay. He ignored isolation and loneliness and developed an intimacy with another European girl, Lotte, who is a divorcee of Kanti Sethia. Hugo attracted to the environment of Bombay. He noticed that people are engaged in the dirt, drinking wine, and beating their wives. Here women are engaged in an “endless war upon filth”.

At this time Hugo meets another new person who comes from India named Kurt, who is in search of peace. Hugo has already undergone deception after deception in his relationship with others. This time the deception comes from the German neurotic boy, Kurt, who kills him in his sleep in his flat at Hira Niwas.

Journey to Ithaca (1995)

‘Journey to Ithaca’ marks an immense beginning in Indian English novels. The story revolves around Journey to Ithaca and the protagonists’ journey to the East. The journey which ends tragedy in Baumgartner’s Bombay comes to its completion in Journey to Ithaca. It is a Greek drama with its devices of Prologue and Epilogue.

The splendid factor that the novel depicts is the women characters in competition to their social environment. Laila is recollected because of the relevant individual of the novel. Laila despatched to Cairo, Paris, and Milan for analysing the Arabic language. There she is a part of the organization of innovative college students at Alexandria. Thus, she offers her research and joins the troupe of Indian dance.

Another adventure closer to the East is completed through Matteo and his spouse Sophie to recognize the secrets and techniques of existence and death. Sophie as a journalist is trained, because of her early childhood, at the same time as Matteo is a person who burns internal to her Oriental knowledge.

Matteo expands dispute with Sophie in his adventure in the direction of the East; every so often the East in Matteo clashes with the West in Sophie. He is going in his religious ‘Sadhana’ eventually arrives inside the ashram of the mother. The novel ends when. Sophie, confesses the religious regeneration of Matteo.

Fasting, Feasting (1999)

Anita Desai’s ‘Fasting, Feasting’ shows the power of her creative faculty. The novel reveals her awareness of the panorama of the East and the West and her wide knowledge of human relationships. She raises various questions to relate to East and West ideologies. Anita Desai

displays the behaviour of mother and father closeness to a son and daughter. Mr. Dutt displays a partial mindset towards his daughter Uma, being dimwit, ought to stay at domestic for the assist of her brother Arun, rather than pursuing the modern manner of the same rank, being a male infant. Arun gets all of the facilities for his service and he despatched to gear up with a contemporary-day outlook of freedom and individuality. And Uma being a girl infant stays at domestic and looks after it, and stays in orthodox Indian Society. Anita Desai delivers various lectures to universities. She continuously explores the possibilities that east and west be together to create a varied human relationship.

Thus, Anita Desai as a novelist has the least concern to reveal the social and economic problems in her novels. She devotes her entire creative energy to the psychological state of the human intellect. Anita Desai finds life an extremely complicated process. So, the language which she uses in her novels shows an abundance of symbols and metaphors. Therefore, she uses the language of the interior regions of the human mind. She creates a certain complicated problem in her characters and allows them a free choice for their solution.

Sometimes she is like Hardy, who uses the inorganic force of society with all organic powers in her patterns. She thus shows her superiority over her contemporaries in balancing the linguistic and literary perspectives in her novels.

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CHAPTER-2

Psychogenic Obsession: ‘Cry, the Peacock’

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2.1 Theme of Marital Discord

Anita Desai is a well-known Indian Novelist in English. She writes about the realities and desires of human beings. Desai's novels are also known as realistic novels. Anita Desai's novels mostly deal with men-women relationship and their incomplete marriage, and loveless marriage life. Where men are rational and women are sensitive and emotional. Desai's female protagonists seem as sensitive, unstable, isolated, and live in the world of imagination. In Desai's novels problem of man and woman occupy the central place. Marital discord between Maya and Gautama and its consequences are discussed in Anita Desai's novel 'Cry, the Peacock'.

The Novel 'Cry, the Peacock' is a family play that mainly depicts the theme of marital discord.

Anita Desai's through her novels presents the psychological condition of the characters through their relationship. Desai's characters deal with the darkness of life, and isolation. 'Cry, the Peacock' is the story of hyper-sensitive Maya, who feels isolated in her marriage with Gautama. This is the family story that mainly focuses on the theme of marital discord between Gautama and his wife Maya. Novel deals where Maya cries for love and relationship in her unsuccessful marriage with Gautama. Maya haunts continuously by this relationship. She loves Gautama passionately and in the hope to love in return. Gautama's cold behaviour disappoints her. The Peacock's cry here depicts Maya's cry for love and life. The character created by Desai's named Maya married to an elder man Gautama. He is busy in his day to day affair and does not meet the demands of his wife Maya. It is seen both the characters are different from each other. Hence, this marital bond suffers from disintegration. Both characters have a lack of

understanding of marital life. There are various themes that she depicted in her novels, such as marital discord, existentialism, emotional abuse, etc. In Desai's novels, marital discord is highlighted as a major concern, all the women characters of Desai's novels find themselves trapped in a marriage.

Desai said: "My novels are usually deal with the situation and problem of the characters. But my stories cannot handle it. The characters find themselves trapped in a situation and cannot come over it and have no control".¹

In most of her novels, she highlights depression, sex, household responsibilities, family decision making are the reason which leads to marital discord. In 'Cry, the Peacock' Maya feels isolated in her marriage life. Her loveless marriage life leads to an unsuccessful marriage. Maya lives in a world of fairy tales. She is away from reality and this irritates Gautama, a mature man who lives in reality. The relationship between Maya and Gautama is very cold where Maya is pensive, sensitive, and emotional whereas Gautama is insensible and lucid. Maya experiences isolation, and lack of communication. It leads to disharmony in their marriage life and a tragic end. Her married life does not seem like a young married couple. It was a forced decision of her father.

There is a lot of age difference between them, i.e. their marriage is unsuccessful. After marriage, Maya does not love. She is hungry for love. She feels shamefulness of this false love. The relationship between Gautama and Maya is not developed in one day, it has developed over four years, Maya has made constant effort to build up a healthy relationship, and emotional attachment with Gautama, but every time she is neglected.

Desai points out that the couple had a lack of communication that leads to their unsuccessful married life. The incompatibility between Maya and Gautama from their different attitude and approaches to life. Gautama fails to understand Maya's needs. Somehow Maya hates Gautama

for his behaviour and develops a deeper difference between them while living under the same roof of a house:

“They only know how to eat and how to mate. No horoscope for that. But our lives are more complicated.”²

Gautama’s cold behaviour leads Maya alone and isolated. Her nervous system had broken down. Her dream turns into a nightmare. She now sees the “purple shadows of a dreadful night”.³

Gautama is seen as a faithful husband who loves Maya in his way. But Maya never gets satisfied and happy. As Gautama is realistic, down to earth and practical cannot understand Maya’s sentiment and emotion. Every time Maya fails to understand relationship between Father-daughter. It is different from a husband-wife relationship, a father would not take anything but a husband and wife has give and take relationship. Maya shows a lack of faith in him.

Usha Panthania has said:

“In Desai’s novels, marital relationships are developed and reveal closeness. The novel ‘Cry, the Peacock’ the Cry of a woman who is unfulfilled and unsatisfied. She realizes that she wants Gautama’s physical presence and his love”.⁴

Finally, Maya turns insane and kills her husband, because of marital incompatibility and disharmony. She goes insane due to the dissolution of her marital relationship, Commits Suicide. Not only Maya, but Desai has also used other characters, as well on the issue of marital discord. It is a problem that occurs due to a lack of adjustment in the marriage. Every novel of Anita Desai’s depict the traumatic experiences of married life.

According to R. S. Sharma: “The novel makes a Gripping psychological study of neurotic fears and anxieties caused by marital incompatibility and disharmony and compounded by age-old superstition”.⁵

Desai’s novels highlight that most of the women are emotionally and culturally dependent on men, and face problems in a male-dominated society, and are not satisfied, with their marriage. It results in the total loss of self, and later which is seen as neurosis. The novel ‘Cry, the Peacock’ depicts marital discord and unhappy married life, According to Suresh Kohli:

“No other writers is so much concerned with the life of young men and women In Indian cities as Anita Desai is”.⁶ However, Desai’s novels portray failed marriage and the loneliness of the characters. She writes about women who are firstly dominated by parents then husbands.

2.2 Theme of Sentiments and Sensibilities

Anita Desai’s sensibility and writing technique gave her immense reputation in India and abroad. Sensibility is an ability to feel, and sentiments refer to feelings, and emotions females are known for their sentiments and sensitiveness. But their sensibility we can recognize by their Psychology or longings. Anita Desai in her novels deal with feminine sensibilities, she depicts the insensitiveness of husband, father, and brother. She highlights the sentiments, of the characters how they feel, and suffer from any situation. Anita Desai’s characters are extremely sensitive and full of sentiments and emotions. She has a keen observation of sentiments and sensibilities of human life, and the atmosphere as well as the mind of the characters.

D.S Maini comments:

“Cry, the Peacock” is a typically “feminine” novel, a novel of sensibility rather of action. It has the quality of an orchid and a flute about it. Its concern is almost wholly with the terrors of existence, and it achieves its effects through a series of exploding and multiplying metaphors”.⁷

Maya in ‘Cry, the Peacock’, is a sensitive woman and thinks emotionally, but she revolts for her identity and existence in society. In this way, the novel depicts over sensitiveness, whereas Maya is passionate and Gautama is sensible men. The women characters undergo suffering and pain due to their insensible husbands. Desai’s novels deal with the uniqueness and feminine sensibility through the response of the protagonists. The indifferent and cold attitude of Gautama, depressed Maya, who is deeply sensitive and emotional but later on she realizes that her husband fails to understand her, this indicates his insensitiveness to life. Maya and Gautama stand at two different poles, where Maya is sensitive, emotional, and sensible, and on other hand, Gautama is hard, cold, and insensitive, which leads to loneliness and isolation. Desai focuses on the sentiments, sensibilities, and inner realities of the characters. Maya always cries for love and her husband does not understand the pain and sentiments. Maya struggles but fails to get love and sentiment security. Desai explores the sentiments, alienation, and death, of protagonists. Desai writes about Indian women and their sentiments are not cared by their husbands and in-laws, she continuously haunts by her sentiments and sensibilities i.e. she is unable to adjust to the atmosphere of the family. She constantly in a search of her identity but fails to do so, in the world of sentiments and sensibilities her identity is trapped emotionally. Gautama's insensible behaviour towards Maya shows his coldness in his behaviour. She finds that Gautama is insensible to Maya’s feelings. Desai also represents the theme of sentiments and sensibilities and how women suffer emotionally and mentally and become victims, of a male-dominated society. She does not have social, economic, and political powers equal to

men. Women's sentiments are ignored and she is treated just like a toy. She faces ignorance and loneliness and a sense of alienation.

2.3 Theme of Quest for the Self

Quest for the Self refers to individual existence in society to attain the meaning and value of life. Quest for the self is one of the dominant themes of her novels. Her women protagonists engaged in establishing self-dignity against the odd condition of life. Anita Desai's novels deal with women's existential dilemma. As she thinks that women-led a life not better than the slave. At all the stages of life from childhood to old age, a woman has to suffer at the hand of a man and compromise her life. She has never shown herself as an independent entity or liberated woman.

Anita Desai depicts Quest for the self in her novels. She focuses on the women who silently suffer at the hands of men. Her protagonists struggle to find their identity and existence, all the female protagonists suffer from traumas and other psychological problems. She highlights the torture, violence of women in Indian society. Her novels deal with the themes of incompatible relationships, alienation, the quest for independent identity. Anita Desai focuses on the obstacles faced by women in Indian society. She is deeply interested in women's identity, this added a new dimension to her novels, and she not only highlights the characters of women but also the inner psyche and feelings of the character.

In her novels, female characters are given more importance than male characters. She deals with the women's inner voice, identity crises, quest for the self, voicelessness, in all her novels.

Earlier women struggled with identity crises, as wife, mother, and daughter. Especially middle-class women suffer from mental stress, unfulfilled demands, and unsatisfied desires.

Women in the form of the traditional systems have always been shown as secondary to men. Desai wants to show the self-freedom, equality, existence, in the male-dominated society.

Desai's characters tackle every situation and struggle for their identity and existence, Maya's constant efforts to have her own identity is threatened by the presence of Gautama. Maya fails to create her identity, stable, and happy life. Anita Desai's female characters fail to adjust to the harsh realities of life, Maya the protagonists in 'Cry, the Peacock' fails to understand the reality of life, and reaches an unhappy end.

Anita Desai is considered the leading novelist. An in-depth study of her works reveals her struggle against the patriarchal society. As women novelists, the study finds a Quest for self-identity in her novels. All her female characters are in search of their identity and they are trapped in a male-dominated society or home customs. They feel helpless, unsatisfied, and are in search of identity, go to the extreme extent of destroying themselves. They are in search of self in society but guilty, that they do not belong to the place or a person, and finally, they struggle in society for their existence. All the female characters of Anita Desai novels had their desires and dreams.

Anita Desai's protagonists are in search of their individuality. They show their willingness for smooth existence. The problem faced by the women as they cannot come out of customary roles because of a male-dominated society. Women are locked in four walls of the house, and they are considered as an accessory to men, no individual identity or existence is there for women. Anita Desai highlights a woman who suffer at the hands of men.

'Cry, the Peacock' is a remarkable novel in which Maya the protagonist of the novel is in search of her identity and cries for affection and sympathy in her unsuccessful marriage. Her lack of understanding and dominant nature does not fulfil the desire of Maya. She sees herself as a

“doll” and pampered by all, because of alienation, existence, loneliness, she ends up with self-destruction. Desai’s characters are continuously engaged in a quest.

Maya is a motherless girl. She is always in search of human love. Maya always wants love of Gautama as a woman and as a wife. She always hopes to fulfill her dreams, when she fails to do so, she feels isolated, loneliness, and deserted. She is neglected, tormented, and reflect as an inferior woman by Gautama. The hallucination and isolation make her psychosis patient, and develop a negative view toward life and finds it useless and meaningless life. Maya marries a man who is without emotions. He fails to understand Maya’s emotions and feelings, and Maya is always in search of herself. A trauma visits to the unconscious mind, and other shocking predictions made by astrologer about her future, that troubles her unconscious mind. While her unconscious mind forces Maya to realize her identity as a wife. The continuous sound of prophecy haunts her mind she becomes as “overwhelming as lava”.⁸ Maya's social status affects her unconscious mind that she becomes a victim of the trauma.

Maya decided that she will destroy her husband to liberate herself. She finds detachment from Gautama and finally, she convinced herself that he is the one who should die. She pushes her husband from the roof then she realizes the fact that she achieves a victory and liberty and her self-identity. Maya removes her obstacle from the path of her quest and experiences fulfilment and relief from depression and anxiety.

She became apparent in her failure to realize her identity as a wife, Maya dream that as a married young lady. She expects a womanly fulfilment but because of Gautama, her womanhood remains unfulfilled. She wishes to create her world a world of dreams and fantasy, but Gautama fails to fulfill her dream and her survival in society. Maya could not adjust to the hard realities of life and reaches an unhappy ending. She believes in the unity between body and soul. Her quest lies in her vision. Desai describes inner psyche of the protagonists.

Desai's women are in search of self and search of fulfilment of desires, emptiness, as they feel with parent's husband and siblings. The quest for the self in Anita Desai's protagonists is not related to the search for self, but it is related to some understanding and love.

Throughout the novel, Anita Desai depicts how women are put aside, ignored. In the novel 'Cry, the Peacock' Maya is a victim of society. From childhood she is dependent, she is pampered, and later on, she is dependent on Gautama, from whom she is neglected and cannot fulfill his desire, and in a search of identity. She lives in a dream and fantasy world away from the hard realities of life. Later, Maya suffers from anxiety and a lack of self-confidence. Anita Desai portrays several women characters, who constantly in search of their existence, they do not exist in society, they have no identities, like Maya till the end she struggles for her individuality, and she is in search of his quest, even though she faced a tragic end.

Thus, Anita Desai successfully raises women's voices through her women characters. She is the only one who understands the inner psyche of the characters. Her novels are mainly concerned with the individual quest, freedom, and existentialism.

2.4 Theme of Desire for Escapism

Anita Desai's novels cover various themes in his novels such as the theme of marital discord, isolation, and the theme of Escapism. She explores these themes to explore the life of the characters, how they struggle with the odd conditions of life lose their hopes. The character of Maya is in search of love and affection. But does not face the present she lives in dreams and fantasy and escapes from the harsh realities of life.

Escapism is seen in the novel through characters how they effect by the suffering and pain, her novel portrays the failed marriage, escape from odd situations, alienation, and so on. Escapism

plays a vital role in Anita Desai's novel 'Cry, the Peacock'. And shows the marital status of Maya and Gautama. How Maya gets adjusted her life with Gautama who does not care about her feelings, and how she cries for her love and affection. She dreams about a caring husband, as her father does. Throughout the novel, Maya wants existence and liberty from Gautama. She wants to escape from the Gautama and wants her existence and identity. She feels isolated and alienated from her husband, their thinking does not match. Maya thinks emotionally and Gautama practically. The prediction made by the astrologer disturb Maya and she got depressed, and cannot accept the reality of life, wants to escape from the reality, and due to the intensity of pain. She faces a tragic end.

Earlier in the novel, Maya is pampered by her father and after that, she married Gautama who is practical and lives and practicality. On other hand, Maya lives in a dream and fantasy world. But her marriage is unsuccessful because she cannot fulfil her dream as she was earlier and even pampered by Gautama. She got detached from Gautama, she recalls her memories with her father how she uses to play badminton, and dance and do parties, her life is changed she cannot escape from the memories, which she had with her father. Maya is sensitive and her father creates a world of a dream for her.

Maya wants to escape from the life, life of cruelty, and alienated life with Gautama. She has trapped like a bird in the four walls no one is there to share her grief and pain. She knows the fact she cannot escape from the present life; she tries to escape from the world of realities. She becomes mad, throughout the novel she faces emptiness in her life and the cold behaviour and attitude from her husband. The indifferent attitude of her husband kills her from inside and anyhow she wants freedom from Gautama. She finally thinks that death is only a way to escape and murders her husband and to be free. She thinks that by throwing Gautama from the dome she will rescue from the incompatible marriage life with her husband and the prediction made by the Albino astrologer.

2.5 Theme of Alienation and Isolation

The novel depicts the theme of alienation and isolation by portraying the characters of Gautama and Maya, the frustration and disappointment of their relationship leads to alienation. She does not cope-up with the situations and family members with the in-laws i.e., the reason she is isolated from the family which leads to disappointment. The feelings of loneliness and isolation are seen throughout the novel.

Anita Desai being a female can understand very well the women's condition in society, and their suffering from isolation and alienation, their suffering is not external but internal. She goes deep and finds their problem. She sorts out their problem as a wife, sister, and mother, and women are forced to live in four walls in isolation. All the protagonists feel, isolated, alienated, and separated from the modern world. They have no existence in society. As existence is the root cause of alienation, they live in their world and imagination.

Desai's characters found it difficult to face the realities of life. Her protagonists found themselves trapped in socio, economic, and political crisis. In Desai's novels, female alienation is seen throughout the novel. Her female characters feel alienated due to lack of communication and isolation. The characters do not face reality and there is a sense of alienation and isolation in them. Gautama lives in a practical world and Maya in a world of dreams. She cries for the love of Gautama. There is a loneliness in the house, they both do not share any emotional bond. Maya feels alienated as no one is there to share her thoughts and grief.

Desai explores Maya who constantly struggles in life and turns neurotic. Her neurotic condition leads to isolation and marital discord. Maya does not find anyone to share her grief and loneliness, the Peacock is a symbol that symbolizes Maya agony and pain as:

“The symbol of the peacock explains Maya's struggle for life in death and death in life”.⁹

Anita Desai's novel 'Cry, the Peacock' highlights the tension between family members and alienation, which is a major problem of her novel. The era of alienation and isolation can occur due to many reasons, like generation gap, fear, isolation, existence, loss of identity, and so on. In the novel, protagonist Maya, could not establish good communication with her husband Gautama, and their different attitude towards each other leads to alienation and isolation. They live like strangers, Maya feels alone in the company of Gautama. The novels explore the dark life of Maya.

Gautama is always terribly busy in his work and is unable to give proper time to Maya and pays attention to Maya. She too does not show any interest in Gautama. She is also responsible for his alienation. She never tries to show her love to Gautama and talk about the fear of death predicted by the astrologer.

Maya always has a sense of isolation and alienation. Her childhood behaviour is also a cause of isolation. She fulfilled her love with her pet dog Toto, but her death is unexpected for Maya. She feels it is death for her child. She feels alienated after the death of Toto, there is no one to whom she can show her love. The cold behaviour of Gautama towards Maya, in this case, she feels isolated. Isolated and alienated Maya and her loneliness haunts her. There are many factors where Maya feels, isolated. Firstly, the death of pet dog Toto, and miss communication and rude behaviour of Gautama, the unfulfilled love, understanding leads to isolation. From every side, Maya feels isolated from her husband's side, family side, and friend side too. She cries for love and feels isolated, and she requires her husband, father, and brother.

Maya is a sensitive, emotional, and nature-loving person, whereas Gautama is intelligent and logical. Their indifferent thinking and mismatch are the only reason for alienation. Maya always in search of love and takes care of Gautama, but Gautama shows his love differently which is not like Maya and cannot satisfy her. Maya makes all the efforts for her love but

finally, she realizes that Gautama is far away from her. Maya feels isolated when she comes to know that she is treated like a toy in the hands of her siblings and do not take Maya seriously.

Maya's reason for isolation is her desire, unfulfilled love, lack of understanding, from her husband, and prediction made by an albino astrologer turns Maya into mental trauma. There is one more reason, Maya feels isolated and alienated. She never gets the company and protection of Gautama. She is always in search of her husband's care and concern. As she feels before marriage her father pampered and protected her, she missed that protection and care in Gautama, and her mind always recalls the memories that she spends with her father and the comfort of her father. Her father's world is different. There she had all the enjoyments like parties, dance, badminton, poetry and so on. But Gautama's world is different.

Maya is over protection from her father and over-indulgence leads her to isolate from Gautama as well as to the harsh realities of life. She cannot strike out the picture of her father, even after marriage she cannot erase the memories, and she sees an image of a father in him. Gautama knows very well that Maya is obsessed with her father i.e., she marries her, later on, Gautama blames her father, for her condition and her psychological alienation, that her father spoils his daughter's life. Due to overprotection and concern, she is unable to see things properly and lives in the world of fantasy and cannot adjust to her husband. Thus, Maya's obsession with her father fails her to become a good wife and fails to make Gautama a good husband.

Maya is always far away from the realities of the world, and unable to face pains and odd situations. Maya's excessive attachment to life leads to alienation, isolation, trauma, and then murder. Maya's inner agony and pain give rise, she only thinks about the prediction made by the astrologer. She thinks about the death of Gautama or herself. And becomes insane due to obsession and becomes abnormal and all alone.

Maya is isolated from her neighbours; she does not know who lives in her neighbourhood. She feels strange her. The submissive nature makes Maya alienated from people, friends, and family, she murdered Gautama and committed suicide. On another side, Maya's brother Arjun is also a victim of alienation. He wants love from his father, but the indifferent attitude of his father hurt him. Maya behaves differently from his brother. He always feels isolated as his father gives all his love to Maya that is why he runs away from the house.

Thus, Maya's alienation is both situational and psychological. Alienation in the characters in 'Cry, the Peacock' is created by their situation. Maya's loneliness and isolation lead to destruction. In most of the novels of Anita Desai protagonists feel alienated. Alienation can be of husband and wife or family alienation. The women are detached from the modern world and feel isolated as they think about individual feelings and desires, but no one thinks about their demands and needs, in the male society they feel alienated and busy in household works. Even they cannot share their pains and feelings with anyone. They suffer silently in the hands of society. Maya constantly struggles with alienation and isolation, reaches for her destruction.

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CHAPTER-3

Colonial Reflection: 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'

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3.1 Theme of East-West Encounter

'Bye-Bye Blackbird' is a suitable example of an East-West encounter. It is related to diaspora literature, the migration of people from one country to another is a major issue in the novel. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' is a reflection of cultural identity through cultural encounters. This novel highlights the characters who are in search of their identities, on the western land and it results in the cultural clash of East and West.

Anita Desai's novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts the theme of East-west encounter. It highlights conflict between two cultures, East and West. The West stands for Indians. Dev and Adit and the East stands for Sarah and Emma. She explores the physical and mental difficulties face by Dev and Adit in England because they are Indian immigrants. Anita Desai shares her own experiences in her novels, and her novels are deeply rooted in her own life. The novel represents two different cultures of India and England.

There are several things and the effect of western culture on eastern culture. During the nineteenth century, the Britishers came to India to rule over India, and established a colony, and showed superiority to Indians, later on they affected the people of India and had an impact on the lifestyle, and communication style of the people. There is a clash of values due to generation gap. People have adopted modernity and thinking about western culture. In the modern age, the youth generation is more attracted to western lifestyle and culture, and old people do not have much impact on the western lifestyle they like their own culture.

The author compares 'Blackbird' to Indians as they face discrimination and inequality in London. Adit and Dev are two major characters in the novel. The novel is divided into three parts Arrival Discovery, Recognition, and Departure. The novel deal with Dev and Adit's difficulties and the isolated environment face by them in London. Adit already understands the two different cultures the eastern and the western culture. On the other side Dev read about London and came to seek opportunities but he did not find any kind of opportunities and felt isolated. He lives with his friend Adit, who is married to an English woman Sarah. And his love for Sarah makes love for England in his heart. She is the one who can understand the two different cultures East and West. She feels isolated among white women because she married an Indian man named Adit. Both of them suffer from alienation, humiliation, and racial discrimination. She fails to adjust to the dual culture, at the same time, their marriage is a bridge between the East and the West. Sarah likes the concept of India. Anita Desai beautifully highlighted both the culture of India as well as London. Adit's love for western culture and adopts western culture. He thinks that western culture is superior to his mind. He likes the way of westerners. Adit criticizes the Indian culture because there is no discipline or punctuality in India. The transportation system is weak, no exact time of buses, he got irritated by the Indian Culture. The novel depicts the dual culture in Adit's mind. Both Sarah and Adit belong to a different culture and they love each other, Sarah cooks Indian curry for Adit, as an ideal wife, Sarah does not like Indian music and jokes. On the other hand, Dev an Indian immigrant unable to adjust to the environment of England, is avoided and ignored everywhere. Due to the Indo-Pakistan war, there is a turning point Adit decide to return to India along with Sarah.

The novel depicts that Sarah feels alienated, and not happy because she faces racial discrimination. She married to an Indian. At last, Sarah feels very bad, she is leaving her own country and culture for Adit. Anita Desai beautifully highlights the alienation and cultural encounters in these three characters Dev, Adit, and Sarah, who suffer from East-West

encounters throughout the novel. Sarah remains silent and lived with Adit. She feels alienated in her own country. Her adjustment to two cultures makes Sarah depressed. She is a matured woman but unable to get adjusted to Indian culture. She is different from other protagonists of Anita Desai who fails to adjust to Indian culture and feels alienated. She is disturbed in managing dual culture. Sarah and Adit have gone through the same situation as they both feel alienated and unable to adjust to different cultures. The novel also deals with the most recurring theme, i.e., marital maladjustment. Adit does not bother about Sarah's convenience, Sarah is so much affected by his schedule, and she experiences a kind of loneliness and alienation after married to Adit.

According to R.S Sharma: "It has rightly been maintained that the tension between the local and the immigrant blackbird involves the issue of alienation, and accommodation that the immigrants, has to confront in an alienated, and yet familiar world"¹.

Adit's love for his homeland increased, and he decided to return to India, Adit gives all the responsibility to Dev, Dev feels alienated in London among Indians as well as among Englishmen. They consider Dev as an outsider he cannot work as an Indian in England. Dev already understands that he is an outsider in England. He is completely ignored due to his cultural identity. Dev tries to adjust to the emptiness of London, but he feels alienated from the western culture and realizes both the cultures are different as there is no similarity, nothing is common in England and the Indian lifestyle. Adit enjoys the life of London and its culture. He thinks the behaviour of English people is better than that of Indian people. On the other hand, Dev does not like the environment of England and its lifestyle.

Anita Desai maintains a balance between East and West, the novel achieved its freedom based on equality and love. Which leads to the East-West. Desai also explains the love of English women 'Sarah' towards Adit, she too loves culture of Indians and returns to India with Adit.

Anita Desai very systematically highlights the conscious and unconscious level of the protagonists throughout the novel. Dev and Adit, the two Indian characters represent the two different life. Adit loves England and marries European girl Sarah and Dev come to England to seek higher education. Dev does not like England. He disrespects in England. He thinks that England is a country of injustice, inequality, cruelty, inhumanity against Indians. The change in culture results in confusion, distress, and frustration.

Anita Desai depicts the East-West culture through her characters, their personal life, status, and so on. Desai gives a perfect picture of her characters in relation to East-West encounter. Throughout the novel, the condition of Indian Immigrants is shown in England and how they adjust to other cultures. The novel is a mixture of the East-West world. Desai portrays the immigrants who settled in England and face a cultural conflict and become alienated and isolated. Immigrants suffer from an internal problem. The English society shows Indians as 'Blackbird' and this causes isolation and a feeling of rootlessness among Indians. The novel is full of cultural conflict and rootlessness. There is a change in the behaviour of Adit and Dev due to rootlessness. All the characters of the novel change according to the situation and circumstances of life. The dimension of the East-West encounter reflects in the novel.

As Krishnamoorthy Aithal explored: "Anita Desai's "Bye-Bye Blackbird" depicts the theme of East-West encounter, covers numerous aspects of this, the encounter between the British and the Asiatic immigrants in England, includes the most intimate and most demanding encounter".²

Thus, Anita Desai's, "Bye-Bye Blackbird" depicts the condition of Immigrants in a new land, they feel alienated and cannot adjust to the political system and face identity crises.

3.2 Theme of Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination does not only discuss gender equality but also gender freedom and liberation. Women are discriminated against by males, and they are assigned to limited works like home keeping and care of families. Desai gives a picture of customs in Indian families and the toleration of women in a male-dominated society. Gender discrimination is a central issue in the family as well as in society.

Desai's women protagonists constantly struggle to find their voice and are in search of their identity. Her novels are actively trying to understand gender discrimination. Discrimination always faces problem in life, gender discrimination is related to men-women how women are ill-treated by the opposite sex, they are considered a slave and are under control, they do not have freedom and equality. Anita Desai's most novels are based on women characters and their sacrifice and how they adjust in the male-dominated society and struggle for their identity and existence. Women should seek equal rights and opportunities for education and employment.

Desai's novels aim to understand the nature and gender discrimination. Domestic work, exploitation, physical abuse, and sexual harassment affect the lives of women. They silently suffer at the hands of their family members. As we compared past women with modern women. They have achieved a lot but with struggle and obstacles. Now, women are playing a vital role in society. They have an equal status in society and proved themselves, they are an entrepreneur running a business and families as well. Women are too much dedicated to their families as dutiful daughters, devoted wives, and sacrificing mothers, but still, they are humiliated and tortured.

Anita Desai tries to pull women out and voices that they should have an individual identity and reputation in society. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' the female protagonist, 'Sarah' has to suffer from cultural alienation, she faces problems due to cultural differences between her and her husband

as they both are different from each other. Sarah, the English lady married to an Indian immigrant named Adit after their marriage Sarah faces a cultural clash and she is discriminated against by her society as she is married to an Indian immigrant. After so many sacrifices done by Sarah then also, she is not treated well by Adit, she is shown as a victim who silently suffers all the pains and sufferings. She is a devoted wife to Adit. The other female characters such as Maya in 'Cry, the Peacock' and Sita in 'Where Shall We Go This Summer', both the female characters suffer throughout the novels for their existence in the world of a male-dominated society. Both Maya and Sita face problem-related to married life and undergo mental agony to establish their identity in the male-dominated society. There is something wrong with society and how they treat women. Women should attain freedom and liberty and consider equal to men.

In the male-dominated society, women's existence is nowhere, they are never taken seriously even in the area of literature. Gender discrimination is openly discussed in Anita Desai's novels. Women are treated like dolls. Their feeling is ignored, and they do not have the emotional support of family. They go through the pathetic condition in the male-dominated society. Anita Desai in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' uses bird images to reflect the feelings and longing of the characters.

In the fictional world, women find it difficult to adjust to the present situation. Women are regarded as inferior to men. The trouble faces through the ladies in Indian society, ladies can't pop out of the normal roles due to the fact the conservative outlook of male ruled society, and ladies are imprisoned in four partitions of the house in which there is no one to share their grief. Women have usually been recollecting as an asset to man, no impartial life has been allocated to her weak, foolish, fate-headed are some phrases to explain a lady. Now women are emerging fast. Desai represents the class of women who silently suffer at the hands of men. The women face dominance, insecurity, violence, and sexual harassment. Women's work is invisible and

less valuable. Anita Desai's as a woman very well understands the problems of women and their mental status which is seen in her novels. Desai's works bring out dilemma, tension, agony, isolation, and problems of men and women. Almost all the novels of Anita Desai's reflect the tragic view of women's life. She takes a deep study of women characters and analyses their problems in patriarchal Indian society. Women suffer because they remain alienated, isolated and their desires are unfulfilled.

Mostly, western women have the power to fight for their rights and identity. The discrimination faced by women in Indian society is behind the men in all the fields of life. On the other side, she is exploited, tormented, inside or outside the world this is seen in Indian society. It is a fact that when she is a child she is in the custody of her father, after marriage with her husband, in old age with his son. In any of the cases, she is not independent, across the world women are considered less than men from the ancient time there is gender discrimination. Women must face inequality in every field if it is related to education and employment.

Gender discrimination is a major cause in developing countries like India and it affects women as they are not free to participate in any of the activities and are only born for home keeping, and they are ignored. This may affect their minds which may result in harmful consequences. It is not only in India but also presents in different religions, countries, and communities.

Anita Desai understands the inner psyche of women in a male-dominated society and their relationship in the patriarchal society. In Desai's novels, female protagonists are seen as victims of society, and struggle for their life and try to resolve the problem in their own way. They are depressed with the cruelty of the world, and this leads to their tragic end. Throughout the life, she must face hatred. In 'Bye-Bye Blackbird', she explores gender discrimination and inequality against women, she is depicted as a victim of Indian society and considered secondary

in all the aspects of life. Even now women are exploited by male society and harassed everywhere. There is no safety for women in society.

Anita Desai is a genuine writer and portrays the picture of women in society and its reality. As a woman, she is capable to understand women's psychological condition better than male writers. It is seen in her novels and they reflect the tragic view of life through women characters. She represents a psychological woman who fails to adjust to a male-dominated society.

3.3 Theme of Social Challenges

Anita Desai depicts various social challenges in her novels that show different aspects of life in Indian society and the problems like as dowry, incompatible marriage, child marriage, and so on. Desai's novels handle their problems and explore the root cause of the problem. Desai's treatment of social challenges shows her interest and concern.

Thus, Anita Desai exposes tension and conflict between the individual and society. Her novels show sympathy for women and her degradation in a male-dominated society. In her novels, girls are often tortured for dowry system. The harassment and humiliation face by the girls also depicted in her novels. Another social problem is the joint family system where women adjust according to their family system and they have to face many social challenges like discrimination between boys and girls, education, poverty, race, and so on. The characters in her novels who get widowed at the age of fifteen are treated as slave and that shows the realistic picture of the society.

Through 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'. Desai shows selfish nature and greedy people who all around in a society that puts all the human values aside, and it results in poverty crime, and rape. She

shows various ill effects through her novels. She mostly focuses on women's psyche and their problems, and degradation of women in our society. Anita Desai aims to unfold, the truth of society especially for women. The challenges, she has to face such as gender discrimination, dowry, child marriage, all create awareness, in women of Indian society. Social challenge is referred to a problem where a person has to face difficulty to interact with others, the problem faced by the citizens in society. Desai highlights the social issue and culture of an individual human being. Individuals must face different problems in society whether it is related to identity crisis or existence without them a person cannot adjust in society or get equal rights.

The problems faced by Dev in England as an immigrant is described very nicely by Desai. He does not have equal rights as others, he is unable to adjust to the environment of England. The social problems that affect the people of the society are due to poverty and homelessness, the people move from one country to another is a major social problem the problem they must face in other countries as they do not have citizens' rights and are not treated equally, they are segregated by the neighbours and racial discrimination. Desai's women protagonist, Sarah is not socially happy as she married to an Indian immigrant. She is discriminated against by his society and feels alienated from the people. She is very sensible and takes care of things, she is not socially satisfied. Anita Desai depicts the characters 'Bye-Bye Blackbird', who must face social problems from beginning till end in the novel. They constantly suffer an identity crisis and racial prejudice.

3.4 Theme of Socio-Psychological Conflicts

Desai's novels explore the human psyche. She more concentrates on inner reality, than the outer world. The protagonists in Desai's novels went through mental trauma and psychological conflict. Some of them lost their existence during the struggle their minds deal with within

different situations of life. Her characters are mixture of all types of the human psyche. Most of the socio-psychological conflicts occur due to the clash between inner reality and outer reality.

Desai's protagonists deal with different levels of agony and pain and they go through different levels of trauma which is affected by society. All the women protagonists are sensitive like Sarah and Maya, but sometimes the case is different. Raman is a sensitive character from 'Where Shall We Go This Summer?' This novel depicts the psychological condition of the protagonist Sita, who is also trapped in an unhappy marriage with Raman, like Sarah in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' and Maya in 'Cry, the Peacock', she feels alienated. Desai always shows the psychological mind of the characters and the man-women relationship. None of her characters are happy. All go through psychological conflicts in some or other way.

'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts the socio-psychological conflict, of Indian immigrants in London, and their emotional relationship. The novel depicts adjustment of characters as personal and social. The struggle of the characters that they face in London especially the women and their existence. The women come up with every situation of life as they struggle in life and damage themselves for others. The socio-psychological conflict of characters, the treatment of the characters and the adjustment that they must face as Indian immigrants in London depict in the novel.

She analyses the problem of her characters, Adit, Dev, and Sarah. These three characters face so much problem in finding their identity, they are alienated and it is not easy for them to adjust. Desai shows the conflict between the alienated characters. Dev comes to England, but he is ignored and feels isolated in the hands of England people, and consider an outsider. On another hand, at the beginning of the novel. Adit is happy with the atmosphere of England but slowly and gradually he feels alienated and his thinking changes towards England. Sarah, Adit's wife

an English lady she suffers from the existential problem and loss of identity, she feels isolated by marrying an Indian immigrant. She is neglected by her own country as:

Meenakshi Mukerjee Said: “Sarah is complex, hypersensitive, and intelligent and the model character of Desai’s novel”.³

The socio-psychological conflicts in the mind of Desai’s characters are tortured emotionally, Dev suffers because he constantly feels alienated. The novel highlights psychological isolation and emotional disturbance. The psychological disturbance between Adit and Sarah how they feel and are alienated from both the country England as well as India. ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’ delineates the psychological conflict of Indian Immigrants who are incapable to adjust to the environment and situation of England and shows the existential conflict between Adit and Sarah.

Desai always shows the psychological state of the characters she thinks that the inner-thinking and life of men and women. Her characters are psychologically disturbed by their relationship. The women characters have a psychological breakdown, the characters go through deep into the psyche and find the truth. She depicts the exploitation of women, and chaos inside the mind of the characters that create psychological trauma, depression faced, and individual. She is different from other Indian novelists. Desai takes interest in the inner world and human psyche and its reality; her primary intention is to depict the psycho-emotional and socio-psychological condition of protagonists who lives in isolation

Mostly her female characters are the victims of the traditional system. Thus, she writes about their psychological experiences. The female characters who face socio-psychological conflict such as marital discord, emotional maladjustment, and existential. ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’ depicts the frustration of Dev and Adit and the difficulties faced by them in an alien land. The deeper psychological level of Adit shows her alienation, the change in Sarah’s life is not a social and

cultural but a psychological change. Sarah is tormented and alienated like Desai's other protagonists. According to Usha Rani: "She peels off, layer after layer, the hidden impression. And experiences of the conscious as well as the sub- Conscious self".⁴

Anita Desai depicts the psychological conflict of the characters. It can be said that "Bye-Bye Black" deals with the socio-psychological conflicts of Indian immigrants in England, who fail to adjust to the environment and situation of England. They are ignored and feel rootless and cut from people and themselves. Desai's most novels deal with Socio-psychological conflict. "Bye-Bye Blackbird" depicts the social and psychological dilemmas, Adit married Sarah, but due to alienation, he wishes to leave England and return to India for his existence. Desai shows the psychological obsessions of her characters in the novel. She delineates the true nature of the characters in her novels and the conflict and confusion in the mind of the characters.

3.5 Theme of Displacement

In "Bye-Bye Blackbird" the theme of displacement is shown as a problem faced by Indian immigrants in England and lack of adjustment, alienation, and isolation. Displacement plays a major role in her novels. The Indian writers reveal the displacement and the socio-cultural sense of displacement.

Anita Desai deals with human relationship and cultural conflict, Desai's novels are known for her characters, finds themselves alienated. Dev an Indian immigrant finds out difficult to adjust to the environment of England, the way English people treat the Indians. He gets frustrated and decides to return to India. On another hand, Sarah English Woman married Adit Indian Immigrant. Sarah is teased by her neighbours. She feels alienated and isolated in her land. Meanwhile, Adit loves England but he decides to go back to India his homeland and lives a real-life and Sarah to accompany him. On another hand. Dev's attitude changes towards

England's environment. He is in dilemma whether he should remain in England or go back to India. He finally decides to settle in England. In the novel, Anita Desai depicts the condition of Indian immigrants and how they survive in alien territory and feel isolated.

The theme of displacement is expressed in the novel, the whole novel revolves around the three main characters Dev, Adit, and Sarah. Adit and Sarah are husband and wife, but Sarah took interest in Indian things like Indian life, stories, and songs. So, this is the reason she married to Adit. Dev alienation is somewhat different from Adit and Sarah. He came to England to take a degree, but, due to the atmosphere of England, his desire is unfulfilled, by seeing the immigrants lose their self-respect in England. He felt isolated and fed up with the environment and isolation of London. He was humiliated by the English people. He faces racial discrimination and wants to go back to India. Dev is almost trapped and feels suffocated in the environment of England.

The characters suffer from different kinds of situations and alienation and it is seen in the novel. Desai very clearly depicted all the problems in her novels. The displacement in the novel happened due to various conditions of the characters. They feel isolated in an alien land. They do not exist in the society, due to Indians they face discrimination and feel humiliated by the English people. The individuals feel emotional breakdown. Displacement is the dominant theme of her novels, almost all the characters are displaced from their homeland and are struggling.

Desai explores the tension between local and Indian immigrants 'Blackbird' here involves the issue of displacement, isolation. She portrays the condition of individuals very brilliantly in the novel. The displacement is not only seen in the novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' but also in other novels of Desai like 'In Custody', the character Deven felt displaced in his own country, he went through various illusions and displacements. Deven felt isolated and collapsed. He fails

to stand up for his own, he finds himself as an animal who is trapped in marriage, family, and job. The town Mirpore is a symbol of alienation and displacement for Deven.

The displacement is taken place due to memories and expectations, not because of geographical dislocation or and cultural displacement. Anita Desai depicts the cultural and geographical displacement and characters' isolation.

According to Michael Cernea: “Displace people confront eight main risks of impoverishment, landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, morbidity, and food insecurity, loss of access to common property, assets and social disarticulation”.⁵

The displacement is often seen as a burden, individual suffer from alienation, and unable to get attached to something. The theme of alienation and displacement is closely related to each other. They both at the same time can affect an individual. The person who is displaced from one place to another has no reason to happy. She constantly struggles for his existence but fails to do so, and suffer from discrimination, emotional trauma, and cultural identity.

Anita Desai highlights the problem that emerged in the novel. The mental and psychological problems that characters have to face in the alien land during displacement are in search of perfect life i.e. in the novel ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’ the character Dev decides to go back to India, and Adit settles down to England. Desai’s characters are alienated and struggle for existence in society. Her novels also deal with human relationships, conflicts, struggle, physical abuse, and marital discord.

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CHAPTER-4

CONCLUSION

4.1 A Critical Analysis of Core Chapters

This research study comprises four chapters. The first chapter is introductory in nature. It describes concepts and definitions of existentialism. Existential is aimed to establish, indicates, yearning a desire to exist in a locality with one's own identity to achieve a level of independence and fulfill the inner desires to exist in society.

This chapter further discusses term Pursuit. It is a specified kind of activity especially, a recreational or sporting one. It is an act of pursuing someone or something. It also depicts a brief survey of Indian English Novels, and has a brief introduction of the novel, novella, and short stories. Novel is defined as a piece of prose fiction, of a reasonable length. The novel may be defined as a long narrative. It combines narration, history, philosophy, poetry, fantasy, and social criticism, and view of life. It also deals with the plot and characters of men and women, dialogue, scene and time of action, and style. Secondly, it discusses novella and its origin in the early eighteenth century. A novella is defined as short and well-structured. Short stories deals with only characters it is shorter than a novel. It is generally focused on the subject or theme. It also discusses Indian English novelists who contribute to the growth of novels.

The Indian English novels flourish in both quality and quantity. Since independence, it has been considered as a medium to connect the reader and become an appealing part of our literature. Indian English novels have their journey from the time of Rig-Veda or Upanishad. The Indian English novels are divided into four stages. The first stage includes the writers such as Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Toru Dutt, and Ramesh Chandra Dutt. Bankimchandra Chatterjee's first novel "Raj Mohan's Wife" (1864), considered as arrival of English fiction. It is translated from Bengali to English. Shaikh Dean Mohammad, an Indian writer write the first book in English entitled "The Travels of Dean Mohammad" (1973).

The further discussion highlights the second phase of Indian English novels writers like as A.S.P. Ayer, K.S. Venkataramani, and the great trio of novelists like as Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao. The foremost novelists of this era are Manohar Malgonkar, Bhabani Bhattacharya, and Kushwant Singh. After that some prominent writers came into light and contributed to Indian English fiction. The nineteenth-century novelist came into existence like as Ram Krishna Punds “The Bay of Bengal” (1866), Trailokya Das, ‘Hirimba’s Wedding’ [1884], and Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s ‘Bjoy Chand: ‘An Indian Tale’ [1888], and Yogendra Nath Chattopadhyaya’s, ‘The Girl and Her Tutor’ [1891]. The novelists appeared like as Romesh Chunder Dutt, who translated his novels into English language ‘A Lake of Palms’ about Indian lifestyle in 1902. Rabindranath Tagore contributes to the novels. His novels are “The Wreck” (1910), “Gora” (1910).

The twentieth century becomes an inspiration for writers. During this the novels are based on social and political conditions. They write about freedom struggle and that time literature is known as Gandhian literature. The novelists of Gandhian movements is R.S Ventatramm’s Murugan ‘The Tiller’ [1927]. During the 1930’s the best three novelists are Mulk Raj Anand, R.K Narayan, and Raja Rao and their works published in the year 1935, and 1938, respectively. They started writing around mid-1930. Their works are the real beginning of Indian English novels.

Raja Rao novels deal with the theme of Indian Independence. The first novel “Kanthapura” [1938], is about Gandhian outlook and teachings. R.K Narayan, considered as the foremost novelist. Gandhian influence is seen in his novels as ‘Waiting for the Mahatma’ [1955], ‘The Bachelor of Arts’ [1937], and ‘The Dark Room’ [1938]. These three novelists mark their presence in the history of Indian English literature.

Bhabani Bhattacharya became famous after publication of his first novel 'So many Hungers' [1947]. Manohar Malgonkar another prominent novelist, and also known as partition writer. Khushwant Singh is a well-known writer in English. Chaman Nahal was a great novelist of his era. His famous novels were 'My True faces' [1937], Azadi, [1978], 'The English Queen' [1979], 'The Crown and the Loincloth' [1981].

Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, and Geetha Hariharan, are the modern novelist of Indian English Writing. These writers gave a new shape to Indian writing novels. Salman Rushdie began his journey as a novelist from 'Grimus' [1978]. His novels 'The Midnight's Children' received Booker Prize in 1981.

Amitav Ghosh's, novels are 'The Circle of Reason' [1986], 'The Calcutta Chromosome' [1996], 'The Wassa Palace' [2000], 'The Hunger Tide' [2005], 'Sea of Poppies' [2008], and 'River of Smoke' [2011],

Arun Joshi's novels include his experiences. His novels include 'The Foreigner' [1968], and 'The strange case of Billy Biswas' [1971], his novel Labyrinth won 'Sahitya Akademi Award' in 1982

Vikram Seth is considered popular Indian novelist. His first novel is 'The Golden Gate' [1986], 'The Suitable boy' and his third novel 'An Equal Music' [1999]. Amitav Ghosh along with Salman Rushdie made Indian Writing English a memorable one and give a new direction to Indian writing fiction.

The first chapter also talks about the emergence of Indian women novelist. Women novelists made a significant contribution to Indian writing in English. These novelists portray a real picture of Indian society and culture. Women novelists like as Cornelia Sorabji, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamala

Das, and Arundhati Roy through their respective works highlighted issues related to society and women at large. Cornelia Sorabji marks her great impression on English literature. Her stories depict the life of a woman in the early nineteenth century. Her another novel is 'Between the Twilight' [1908], gives her immense popularity. Kamala Markandaya's and Ruth Praver Jhabvala's, novels reflect, the women's condition. Kamala Markandaya's first novel 'Nectar in a Sieve' [1954], represent Peasant's life and struggle. The best novel of Kamala Markandaya is, 'A silence of Desire' [1961].

The concept of Ruth Praver Jhabvala's novels is based on arranged marriages. Among the female novelists. Anita Desai's novels present contemporary problems of men-women relationships and economic issues. Her first novel 'Cry, the Peacock' [1963] portrays a realistic picture of the female protagonists 'Maya' who is sensitive, and cannot deal with her insecurities, out of frustrations she kills her husband.

Shashi Tharoor, is known for his novels. 'The Great Indian Novel' [1989]. It bought him immense popularity. Arundhati Roy, won the Booker prize, for her first novel, 'The God of Small Things' [1997]. Her writings style is incredibly unique. Some other novelists like as, upmanyu Chatterjee, Amit Choudhry, Kiran Desai, also contributed to the development and growth of Indian English literature.

After the 1980s, it is said that women should be treated like men, they should not be treated as an animal or a property. They can raise their voice against male-dominated society. All women, novelists made their effort for the development of Indian Writing in English. Thus, Indian English novels made a significant contribution to Indian English literature. To conclude Indian English novels presents multiple shades of life.

Anita Desai's is a leading 20th-century women novelist. She occupies a distinct place in the realm of contemporary Indian English fiction. It would have been poorer without her. She is

considered as the first woman who writes about the existential problems of womankind. She is the first writer who can understand the human psyche better. Her novels depict the inner level. The remarkable thing about Anita Desai is that she portrays her characters with the traits, style, and language.

Anita Desai attains a unique position as a writer. Desai published ten novels and other literary works of great value. As a novelist, her novels bring out human psyche. Desai uses fiction as a vehicle for venting the predicament of man and his existential trauma in the society to which he belongs to. Desai excels her contemporaries in the art of characterization. She was entirely nurtured and educated in Delhi and started writing when she was just seven. Anita Desai received Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978 for her novel 'Fire on the Mountain'. Desai had keen observation of nature and men-women relationships. Anita Desai is a genuine writer and portrays a realistic picture of society. A great majority of Desai's works reflect tragic view of life.

Her novel, 'Cry, the Peacock' depicts hypertension and hyper-sensitiveness of women protagonists. But after the publication of 'The Clear Light of Day' (1980), she started drifting towards a sunnier atmosphere and a happier world. In her later novels, 'Voices in the City' (1965), 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' (1971), 'Where Shall We Go This Summer' (1975), 'Fire on the Mountain' (1977), 'In Custody' (1984), 'Baumgartner's Bombay' (1989), 'Journey to Ithaca' (1995), and 'Fasting, Feasting' (1999). She discusses various themes like as theme of 'human relationships', 'alienation', 'loneliness', 'East-West encounter', 'violence, and death'.

Anita Desai deals with the contemporary problem of men and women more especially of the women. Nowhere have we found out economic issues or other financial problems in novels of Anita Desai. The study finds out problems such as psychiatric obsession. The characters that appear in 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' suffer from obsessive and psychotic

problems. There is a constant fight between human being and society. Anita Desai portrays her characters in such a manner as they revolt against the prevailing system of society. The characters of Anita Desai come in frame with the organic power of the society. It results in creating tension, frustration, depression, and other psychological problems in the mind of characters. They burn from inside. They are unable to express their anguish. Though they are in search of their existence, the suppressive mode of society hardly arouses them to undergo the existential form.

This chapter portrays Maya and her madness from Desai's 'Cry the Peacock'. Maya is defined as a hyper-sensitive younger girl marries Gautama who is older than her. The marriage is unsuccessful, Maya is haunted continuously through the behaviour of her husband and affairs of life. She does not get emotional help from her husband. The root cause of the entire novel lies, predication made through the albino astrologer who creates fear in Maya's mind. Gautama, an egoist, fails to support Maya's emotional intensity. Later on, she suffers from fear and turns mad, and loses balance of her mind. Maya realized that she could never live-in peace. The cries of a peacock during the rainy season, make fear in her mind and she experiences terror. Her dark house appears to her like a tomb. She feels isolated in her loveless marriage life with Gautama. But finally, due to intensity of pain, she kills Gautama.

In her novel 'Cry, the Peacock' Desai illustrates tension, agony, frustration, anxiety, fear, in a female protagonist. Thus, Anita Desai depicts human psyche through her characters. Desai focuses on Indian society, families, and their relationships, and focuses on women suffering and suppression in Indian society.

Her second novel "Voices in the City" depicts the life of the middle-class genius of Calcutta. The story of a Bohemian brother and his two sisters caught for changing social values and atmosphere. There are three main characters, Nirode, the mother, and the city of Calcutta,

Nirode came to Calcutta for his existence. Arun realizes importance of time and finds success in their lives, while the other two Nirode and Monisha fail to realize. In this novel, Monisha is contrasted to Maya, due to the high intensity of pain and finally, she set fire to herself and dies.

The other part of the novel is related to a mother's behaviour towards her sons and daughters. The novel deals with the Bohemian life of brother and sister and the participation of the mother.

The Third novel 'Where Shall We Go This Summer' is considered a domiciliary novel that reveals psychological status of protagonists. The novel depicts Sita's abolishment from the realities of domiciliary life. The heroine of the novel is dissatisfied with her life and is in search of her existence. Sita, the wife of an industrialist, her meaningless life in Bombay flat, and her selfish, and uncaring children has been shown in the novel. The novel is split into three parts: Monsoon 67, Winter 47, and once more Monsoon 67.

Anita Desai's next novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' deals with three expatriates, Adit, Dev, and Sarah. The novel is set in London and deal with problems confronted by Indian immigrants. The heroine of the novel Sarah stands between two poles India and England. She is weak but raises her voice. She is a victim of psychic and social alienation. The novel depicts that the characters suffer from problems such as loss of identity, alienation, and humiliation largely on account of racial and cultural prejudices. The name of the novel refers to England's "bidding farewell to an Indian "Blackbird". The novel refers to England's bidding farewell to an Indian "Black Bird".

Her works also include the award-winning novel. Desai novel 'Fire on the Mountain' explores emotional world of Nanda Kaul and Raka. The novel is divided into three parts: Nanda Kaul at Carignano, Raka Come to Carignano, and Ila Das Leave Carignano. The first part of the novel deals with the struggle of Nanda Kaul. A widow of Vice-Chancellor, she remains a lady of city sensibility. Her husband bought house on the island and it became a symbol of creation

and destruction. Colonel MacDougal used to come to this place during summer, but now it is in the possession of Nanda Kaul. Part II, deals with when Raka Comes to Carignano, reveals family of Nanda Kaul through memories. She instructs Ram Lal, her servant to arrange for Raka's stay in the house. Raka delineates nostalgia of Nanda Kaul about the past. Part III deals with the story of Ila Das who is a childhood friend of Nanda Kaul. She is betrayed by her husband then by her sons. Her ego causes her downfall.

The novel 'Clear Light of the Day' revolves around the separation between India and Pakistan and the separation of the residence between Bimla and her brother. Bimla is taken into consideration as a dynamic member of the residence. Bimla lives in an antique residence in Delhi for the gain of their risky brother, Baba. As a self-sacrificing being, Bimla is forced and to look after her father's business. Bimla is analysed on levels- the experience of self and natural awareness.

Her next novel 'In Custody', describes Deven Sharma. A gentleman with his poetic skills, Deven comes to the Mirpore village and becomes a lecturer in Hindi. Another character in this novel is Nur who symbolizes deterioration and demolishes of her skills as a poet. He is called an avatar of Urdu poetry, but his behaviour towards Deven is inappropriate and inhuman. Deven fails to fulfil his dream to complete his project on Nur. The only thing that comes to his mind is the deception of the people around him. In Custody, shows how the protagonist Deven baffled from dirt, humiliation, at Mirpore. He does not get the fruitful result at Delhi too.

The 'Baumgartner's Bombay' is considered the tenth novel, written by Indian writer Anita Desai. The novels depict story of a German Jew named Hugo Baumgartner. This novel analyzes the inner regions of consciousness, motives, and the impulses of the human mind. Anita Desai goes deeper into Hugo's unconscious mind and finds out the quest for self-preservation and self-identity. The inner dilemma of Hugo's mind subtle and complicated

threads in the story. Thus, in the entire life of Hugo swings in-between “accepting but not accepted”. Hugo has an over-protective mother. For business work he is likely to come to Calcutta, but the city of Calcutta overpowers him. He strives for his existence in Bombay. He becomes nostalgic and thinks about the dangers that might come in the peaceful life of his mother in Germany. Desai expresses deep attachment of mother and son in the novel.

Her novel ‘Journey to Ithaca’ marks a huge beginning to Indian English novels. The story revolves around Journey to Ithaca and the protagonist journey to the East. The journey which ends in tragedy in Baumgartner’s Bombay comes to its completion in Journey to Ithaca. It is a Greek drama with its devices of prologue and Epilogue. The remarkable thing that novel depicts the female character, Laila as the mother and the chief protagonists in this novel.

Desai’s ‘Fasting, Feasting’, shows power of her creative faculty. The novel reveals her awareness of panorama of the East and the West and her wide knowledge of a different kind of human relationship. She raises various questions related to East and West ideologies. Anita Desai shows the behaviour of parents towards a son and daughter.

Anita Desai in her novels shows an abundance of symbols and metaphors. Therefore, she uses the language of the interior regions of the human mind. She creates certain complicated problems in her characters and allows them a free choice for their solution. She like Hardy, uses the inorganic force of society with all organic powers in her patterns. She shows her superiority over her contemporaries in balancing the linguistic and literary perspectives in the novels.

Chapter second illustrates the Psychogenic obsession in ‘Cry, the Peacock’ and its various themes such as theme of marital discord. Anita Desai novels mostly deal with men-women relationship and their incomplete marriage, and loveless marriage life. Where men are rational and women are sensitive and emotional. Desai’s female protagonists are sensitive, unstable,

isolated, and in the world of imagination. In Desai's novels problem of men and women occupy central place. As Desai's characters deal with the darkness of life, and isolation, 'Cry, the Peacock' is story of hyper-sensitive Maya, who feels isolated in her marriage with Gautama. The theme of marital discord is shown through Gautama. The novel deals with Maya cries for love in her unsuccessful marriage. Maya haunts continuously by this relationship, she loves Gautama passionately in the hope to be loved in return, but Gautama's cold behaviour disappoints her. The cry of Peacock here depicts Maya's cry for love and life.

In Desai's novels, marital discord is highlighted as a major concern. All the women characters of Desai's novels find themselves trapped in a marriage. In most of her novels, she highlighted depression, sex, household responsibilities, and family decision making, as the reasons that leads to marital discord. In 'Cry, the Peacock' Maya feels isolated in her marriage life. Their loveless marriage life leads to unsuccessful marriage. Maya lives in a world of a fairy tale, she is away from reality and this irritates Gautama, a mature man who lives in the present world and reality. Isolation is a major issue in Anita Desai's novels. Which is the cause of marital discord. Maya is pensive, Sensitive, emotional whereas Gautama is insensible and lucid. Maya experienced isolated, and a lack of communication, love, with Gautama that leads to disharmony in their marriage life and a tragic end.

This chapter unfolds the theme of sentiments and sensibilities. Anita Desai's sensibility and writing technique gave her immense reputation in India and abroad. Sensibility is an ability to feel, and sentiments refer to feelings, and emotions. Females are known for their sentiments and sensitiveness but their sensibility we can recognize by psychology or longings. Anita Desai's in her novels deal with the feminine sensibilities. She depicts insensitiveness of husband, father, and brother. She highlights the sentiments of the characters, how they feel, and suffer from situation. Anita Desai characters are extremely sensitive and full of sentiments and emotions. She has a keen observation of sentiments and sensibilities of human life. Maya

in 'Cry, the Peacock', is a sensitive woman and thinks emotionally. She revolted for her identity and existence in society. The novel depicts over sensitiveness whereas Maya is passionate, and Gautama is sensible men, the women characters undergo suffering and pain due to their insensible husbands. Desai novels deal with the uniqueness and feminine sensibility through responses of the protagonist in the novel. The indifferent attitude of Gautama made Maya to feel depressed. She is deeply sensitive and emotional but later on she realizes that her husband fails to understand her. This indicates his insensitiveness to life. Maya and Gautama stand at two different poles. Where Maya is delicate, spiritual, and sensible and Gautama is hard, cold, insensitive, this leads to loneliness and isolation. Desai's specialty lies in the sentiments, sensibilities, and inner realities of the characters. Maya always cries for love and her husband doesn't understand the pain and sentiments. Desai explores sentiments, alienation, and death, of the protagonists. Desai writes about Indian women and their sentiments are not cared for by their husband and in-laws, she continuously haunts by her sentiments and sensibilities i.e. she is unable to adjust to the atmosphere of the family. She constantly in a search of her identity but fails to do so, in the world of sentiments and finally her identity is trapped emotionally.

The third theme is quest for the self refers to individual existence in society to attain meaning and value of life. Quest for the self is one of the dominant themes of her novels. Anita Desai's novels deal with the women's existential dilemmas. As she thinks that women led a life not better than the slave, at all the stages of life from childhood to old age a woman must suffer in the hand of man and compromise her life. She has never been shown as an independent entity or a liberated woman. Anita Desai depicts quest for the self in her novels. She focuses on the women who silently suffer at the hand of man. Her protagonists struggle to find their identity and existence. All the female protagonists suffer from traumas and other psychological problems. She highlights the torture, violence of women in Indian society, her novels deal with the themes of incompatible relationship, alienation, the quest for independent identity.

The next theme portrays the theme of desire of escapism Anita Desai's novels cover various themes in her novels such as the theme of marital discord, isolation, and the theme desire of escapism. She explores the life of the characters, how they struggle with the odd conditions of life and lose their hopes. The character Maya in the novel 'Cry, the Peacock' is in search for love and affection. She lives in dreams and fantasy and escapes from the harsh realities of life. Escapism is seen in the novel through characters of Maya and Gautama in 'Cry the Peacock' how they are affected by the suffering and pain, her novel portrays the failed marriage, escape from odd situations, alienation, and so on. Escapism plays a vital role in Anita Desai novel 'Cry, the Peacock' shows the marital status of Maya and Gautama and how Maya gets adjusted her life with Gautama. Who does not care about her feelings, and how she cries for his love and affection. She dreams about a caring husband, as her father does. Throughout the novel Maya wants existence and liberty from Gautama. She wants to escape from the Gautama and wants her existence and identity, she feels isolated and alienated from her husband. Their thinking does not match. Maya thinks emotionally and Gautama practically. The prediction made by the astrologer disturbs Maya and she got depressed, and cannot accept the reality of life, wants to escape from the reality and due to intensity of pain she faces a tragic end.

The last theme is the theme of isolation and alienation. The novel depicts frustration and disappointment of Gautama and Maya. Their poor relationship leads to alienation. Anita Desai being a female can understand women's condition in the society and their suffering from isolation and alienation. Their suffering are not external but internal. She goes deep and finds their problem she sorts out their problems as a wife, sister, and mother, and women are forced to live in four walls in isolation. All the protagonists feel, isolated, alienated, and are separated from the modern world. Desai's characters find alienation and difficulty to face the realities of life. Her protagonists find themselves trapped in socio, economic and political crises. In Desai novels, female alienation is seen throughout the story. Her female characters feel alienated due

to lack of communication and isolation. The characters do not face reality and there is a sense of detachment, separation in them. Anita Desai in 'Cry, the Peacock' highlights tension between family members and alienation, which is a major problem of her novels. The era of alienation and isolation can be happened for so many reasons, like as generation gap, fear, isolation, existence, loss of identity, and so on. In the novel, protagonist Maya, could not establish good communication with her husband Gautama, and their different attitude towards each other leads to alienation and isolation of characters.

'Alienation' in the characters of 'Cry, the Peacock' create by their situations. Maya's loneliness and isolation lead to destruction. In the novels of Anita Desai protagonists are alienated, and alienation can be of husband and of wife or family alienation. The women are detached from the modern world and they feel isolated as they think about individual feelings and desires, but no one thinks about their demands and needs. In the male society they feel alienated and busy in household works. Even they cannot share their pains and feelings with anyone. They suffer silently in hands of society. Maya constantly struggles with alienation and isolation and reaches destruction.

The Third chapter portrays the "colonial reflection in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'". The migration of people from one country to another is a major issue in the novel. Bye-Bye Blackbird is a reflection of cultural identity through cultural encounters. This novel highlights the characters who are in search of their identities, on the western land, and cultural clash of East and west. It highlights conflict between two cultures as India Versus England. The West stands for Indians Dev. and Adit, and the East stands for Sarah and Emma. Anita Desai shares her own experiences in her novels, and her novels are deeply rooted in her own life. The novel represents the two different cultures of India and England.

The novel is split into three parts Arrival, Discovery and Recognition, and Departure. The novel deals with Dev and Adit's difficulties and isolated environment faced by them in London. Adit already understands two different cultures the eastern and the western culture. On the other side, Dev read about London and came to seek opportunities, but he does not find any type of opportunities and feels isolated, he lives with his friend Adit, who married to English woman Sarah. And his love for Sarah makes love for England in his heart. He is the one who can understand the two different cultures East and West. Sarah feels isolated among white women because she married an Indian man named Adit. Both of them suffer from alienation, humiliation, and racial discrimination. She fails to adjust in dual cultures, at the same time, their marriage is a bridge between the East and West. Anita Desai maintains a balance between East and West, the novel achieved its freedom based on equality, love, which leads to the East-West encounter. Desai also explains the love to English women Sarah towards Adit's. She too loves culture of India and return to India with Adit.

Anita Desai very systematically highlights conscious and unconscious level of the protagonists through her novels. Desai gives a perfect picture of her characters regarding the East-West encounter. Throughout the novel, condition of Indian Immigrants is shown, in England, and how they adjust in other cultures. The novel is a mixture of East-West world. Desai portrays immigrants who settled in England. They face cultural conflict and becomes alienated and isolated. The immigrants suffer from the internal problem. The English society shows Indians as a 'Blackbird' and this causes isolation, among Indians and arises feeling of rootlessness. The novel is full of cultural conflict and rootlessness. There is a change in the behaviour of Adit and Dev. Due to rootlessness all the characters of the novel change according to the situations and circumstances of life. The dimensions of the East-West encounter is reflected in the novel. Theme of gender discrimination, which plays a vital role in society. It does not only discuss gender equality but also gender freedom and liberation. As well Women are discriminated

against by males, and they are assigned to limited works like home keeping and care of families. Desai gives a picture of customs of the Indian family and tolerance of women in a male-dominated society. Gender discrimination is a central issue in the family as well as in society. Anita Desai most novels are based on women characters and their sacrifices and how they adjust in the male-dominated society and struggle for their identity and existence. Women should seek equal rights and opportunities for education and employment.

Desai's novels aim to understand nature and gender discrimination, gender issues should not be ignored and should be recognized as men's and women's capabilities. Nowadays, women equal rights as men, and get equal place and position in the world. Domestic work, exploitation, physical abuse, and sexual harassment affect the lives of women. They silently suffer in the hands of their family members, as we compared past women with modern women who have achieved a lot but with after a lot of struggle and obstacles. Gender discrimination is a major cause in developing countries like India, and it affects the women. They are not free to participate in any of the activities and they only born for home keeping. Their works are ignored, this may affect their mind which may result in harmful consequences. It is not only in India but in different religions, countries, and communities as well.

Anita Desai, is a genuine writer and portrays the picture of women in society. She is capable of understanding women's psyche better than the male writers and this is revealed in her novels. She reflects the tragic view of life through women characters. She represents a psychological woman who fails to adjust to the male-dominated society.

The next theme is the theme of social challenges. Anita Desai depicts various social challenges in her novels that show different aspects of the life of Indian society, and the problems like as dowry, incompatible marriage, child marriage, and so on. Desai novels handle these problems and understands the root cause of problem. Desai treatment of social challenges shows her

interest and concern. Desai deals with social challenges and better understanding of Indian society. She fully exposes tension and conflicts between the individual and society. She adopts the social problems as her attitude, her novels show sympathy for women and the degradation of male-dominated society. Anita Desai aims to unfold the truth of society especially for women. The challenges she has to face such as gender discrimination, dowry, child marriage, sati pratha, that all create awareness, in women of Indian society. Social challenge is referred to a problem where a person has to face difficulty to interact with others, the problem faced by the citizens in society.

Desai highlights social issues and culture of an individual human. The individual must face different problems in society whether it is related to identity crisis or existence. Without them a person cannot adjust to society or get equal rights. The problem faced by Dev in England as he is an immigrant. He does not have equal rights as others, he is unable to adjust to the environment of England. The social problems that affect people of the society are due to poverty and homelessness. The people move from one country to another is a major social problem. The problem they have to face in another country. They do not have citizens' rights and are not treated equally; they are segregated by the neighbours. Racial discrimination is a major problem. Desai's protagonist 'Sarah' is not socially happy as she married to an Indian immigrant. Anita Desai's characters in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird', have to face social problems from beginning till end in the novel. They constantly suffer from identity crises and racial prejudice.

Desai always shows psychological mind of the characters and man-woman relationships. None of her characters are happy, all go through psychological conflicts in some or other way. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts socio-psychological conflicts, of Indian immigrants in London, and their emotional relationship the novel depicts the adjustment as personal and social, the struggle of the characters that they face in London especially the women and their existence. The women cope up with every situation of life. They struggle with life and damages themselves and some

time to others. She shows conflicts of the alienated characters. The socio-psychological conflicts in the mind of Desai's characters tortured them emotionally, Dev suffers because he constantly feels alienated. The novel highlights the psychological isolation and emotional disturbance, the psychological disturbance between Adit and Sarah and how they feel and are alienated from both the country England as well as India, from where they have migrated. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' delineates the psychological conflicts as Indian Immigrants are incapable to adjust to the environment and situation of England.

Desai's most of novels deal with socio-psychological conflicts. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts the social and psychological dilemmas, and Adit marries Sarah, but due to alienation. She wishes to leave England and returns to India for her existence. Desai shows psychological obsessions of her characters. She delineates true nature of characters in her novels.

Theme of displacement deals the problems faced by the Indian immigrants in England, and lack of adjustment, alienation, and isolation. Displacement plays a major role in Desai's novels. The theme of displacement is expressed in the novel, the whole novel revolves around the three main characters Dev, Adit, and Sarah. Adit and Sarah are husband and wife. But Sarah took interest in Indian objects like Indian life, stories, and songs. So, this is the reason she marries Adit. Dev's alienation is somewhat different from Adit and Sarah, he came to England to take a degree, but, due to atmosphere of England, his desires are unfulfilled. By seeing the immigrants lose their self-respect in England, he feels isolated and fed up with the environment and isolation of London.

Desai explores tension between local and Indian immigrants. She portrays condition of individuals very brilliantly in the novel. The displacement is not only seen in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' but also in other novels of Desai like as 'In Custody' the character Deven feels displaced in his own country. He went through various illusions and displacements. The

displacement is taken place due to memories and expectations, not because of geographical dislocation or and cultural displacement. Anita Desai's works depict cultural and geographical displacement and character's isolation.

The displacement is often seen as a burden as individual suffer from alienation, and unable to get attached to something. The theme of alienation and displacement is closely related to each other. They both at the same time can affect an individual. The person who is displaced from one place to another has no reason to happy. He constantly struggles for his existence but fails to do so. And suffers from discrimination, emotional trauma, and cultural identity. The mental and psychological problems that characters have to face in the alien land during displacement. They are in search of perfect life like as in the novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird', character Dev decided to go back to India, and Adit settles down to England. Desai's characters are alienated and struggle for existence in society.

4.2 Original Findings

The Present research work is done on the selected novels of Anita Desai. The two novels have been selected for research work are as "Cry, the Peacock" and "Bye-Bye Blackbird". These two novels discuss women's' struggle for their existence. The chapters are mainly focused on Anita Desai's treatment of women protagonists in the selected two novels.

The following are the main findings of the present research study:

- Desai's novels focus on the inner activity, of the characters, and her main aim to discuss the problem of women protagonists and their struggle for lives.
- The present study portrays the condition of women in contemporary society.

- Desai's novels add new ideas and dimensions to Indian English novels through her great works.
- Desai's novels mainly concentrate on female centric issues. She portrays conditions and lifestyle of Indian Women and shows them as fighter and discusses feminine consciousness.
- Gender inequality, and the social status of women, are the main themes, in Desai's novels.
- Women play a vital role in family and society but they do not attain equal status or love in return.
- Desai's female protagonists are in search of their identity/existence and equal status in family and society.
- Female characters such as Maya, Monisha, Sarah, Sita, and Nanda Kaul, struggle for their own identity.
- Desai's novels explore the reality of life, of the upper-middle class.
- Anita Desai's female protagonists faced problems in a male-dominated society, and discrimination.
- Anita Desai's novels engross her place in Indian English novels, for their richness and sophistication.
- The study also explores women's position in society.
- Desai's novels mostly focus on the psychic mind of the women protagonists and some critical state of their lives.
- Desai acquired immense position and create an image of strong women. So, her female protagonists could fight for themselves and stand as a fighter.

The study reveals that the select novels of Anita Desai truly represent an individual's struggles for the betterment of life and relations. The individuals are continuously striving hard to establish their identity in the society. The characters like Maya, Gautama, Dev, Adit and Sarah from the select novels are in search of their existential pursuit. They do not know whether they will be able to justify their role in a new setting. Being women Maya and Sarah faced many problems in the male dominated orthodox society. They tried their level best to raise their voice against their sufferings and sorrows.

They express their desire for freedom and identity and their actions represent theme of women emancipation and equal rights for women. Some of the characters find very- hard to get adjusted to a new land and started feeling isolated and alienated. This has been beautifully explored and portrayed by Anita Desai. She understands human psychology and therefore quite successful in presenting mental and physical conditions of her leading characters. Thus, the study finds that the select novels are best representative of existential pursuits of women protagonists.

Thus, Desai's novels also deal with various social and psychological problems. Face by the Indian Married women, women are shown as toys in the hands of their husbands. Desai made a successful attempt to show the real picture of society through her novels. Anita Desai depicts a real picture of society and there are many Maya, Monisha, Sita, Sarah, and Nanda found in Indian society who are in search of their identity. The condition of the women is pathetic in Indian society. It is necessary to stop the discrimination between men and women and they should be treated equally.

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Annexures

**GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES IN ANITA
DESAI'S BYE-BYE BLACKBIRD: A COLONIAL PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract

Anita Desai deals with the contemporary problem of men and women more especially of the women no-where. We find out the economic issue as a problem in the novels of Anita Desai. But everyone finds out a problem such as psychiatric obsession. The characters that appear in 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' suffer obsessive psychotic problems. There is a constant fight between human beings and society. All the characters of Anita Desai portray in a manner that revolt against the prevailing system of society. The characters of Anita Desai come in frame with the organic power of the society, it results in creating tension, frustration, depression, and other psychological problem in the mind of characters, they burn inside their feeling and unable to express their anguish. Though they are in search of their existence, the suppressive mode of society hardly arouses them to undergo the existential form.

Keywords: Alienation, Isolation, Gender discrimination, Colonial etc.

Introduction

Gender discrimination does not only discuss gender equality but also gender freedom and liberation. Women are discriminated against by males, and they are assigned to limited works like home keeping and care of families. Desai gives a picture of customs in Indian families and the toleration of women in a male-dominated society. Gender discrimination is a central issue in the family as well as in society. Desai's women protagonists constantly struggle to find their voice and are in search of their identity. Her novels are closely trying to understand gender discrimination. Discrimination always faces problem in life, gender discrimination is related to men-women how women are ill-treated by the opposite sex, they are considered a slave and are under control, they do not have freedom and equality. Anita Desai's most novels are based on women characters and their sacrifice and how they adjust in the male-dominated society and struggle for their identity and existence. Women should seek equal rights and opportunities for education and employment. Desai's novels aim to understand the nature and gender discrimination. Domestic work, exploitation, physical abuse, and sexual harassment affect the lives of women. They silently suffer at the hands of their family members. As we compared past women with modern women. They have achieved a lot but with struggle and obstacles. Now, women are playing a vital role in society. They have an equal status in society and proved themselves, they are an entrepreneur running a business and families as well. Women are too much dedicated to their families as dutiful daughters, devoted wives, and sacrificing mothers, but still, they are humiliated and tortured.

Anita Desai makes an effort to pull women out and voices that they should have an individual identity and reputation in society. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' the female protagonist, 'Sarah' has to suffer from cultural alienation, she faces problems due to cultural differences between her and her husband as they both are different from each other. Sarah, the English lady married to an Indian immigrant named Adit after their marriage Sarah faces a cultural clash and she is discriminated against by her society as she is married to an Indian immigrant. After so many sacrifices done by Sarah then also she is not treated well by Adit, she is shown as a victim who silently suffers all the pains and sufferings. She is a devoted wife to Adit. The other female characters such as Maya in 'Cry, the Peacock' and Sita in 'Where Shall We Go This Summer', both the female characters suffer throughout the novels for their existence in the world of a male-dominated society. Both Maya and Sita face problem-related to married life and undergo mental agony to establish their identity in the

male-dominated society. There is something wrong with society and how they treat women. Women should attain freedom and liberty and consider equal to men. In the male-dominated society, women's existence is nowhere, they are never taken seriously even in the area of literature. Gender discrimination is openly discussed in Anita Desai's novels. Women are treated like dolls. Their feeling is ignored and they don't have the emotional support of family. They go through the pathetic condition in the male-dominated society.

Anita Desai in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' uses bird images to reflect the inner feelings and longing of the characters. In the fictional world, women find it difficult to adjust to the present situation. Women are regarded as inferior to men. The trouble faces through the ladies in Indian society, ladies can't pop out of the normal roles due to the fact the conservative outlook of male ruled society, and ladies are imprisoned in four partitions of the house in which there is no one to share their grief. Women have usually been recollect as an asset to man, no impartial life has been allocated to her weak, foolish, fate-headed are some phrases to explain a lady. Now women are emerging fast. Desai represents the class of women who silently suffer at the hands of men. The women face dominance, insecurity, violence, and sexual harassment. Women's work is invisible and less valuable.

Anita Desai's as a woman very well understands the problems of women and their mental status which is seen in her novels. Desai's works bring out dilemma, tension, agony, isolation, and problems of men and women. Almost all the novels of Anita Desai's reflect the tragic view of women's life. She takes a deep study of women characters and analyzes their problems in patharical Indian society. Women suffer because they remain alienated, isolated and their desires are unfulfilled. Mostly, western women have the power to fight for their rights and identity. The discrimination face by women in Indian society is behind the men in all the fields of life. On the other side, she is exploited, tormented, inside or outside the world this is seen in Indian society. It is a fact that when she is a child she is in the custody of her father, after marriage with her husband, in old age with his son. In any of the cases, she is not independent, across the world women are considered less to men from the ancient time there is gender discrimination. Women have to face inequality in every field if it is related to education and employment.

Gender discrimination is a major cause in developing countries like India and it affects women as they are not free to participate in any of the activities and are only born for home keeping, and they are ignored. This may affect their minds which may result in harmful consequences. It is not only in India but also presents in different religions, countries, and communities. Anita Desai understands the inner psyche of women in a male-dominated society and their relationship in the patriarchal society. In Desai's novels, female protagonists are seen as a victim of society, and struggle for their life and try to resolve the problem in their own way. They are depressed with the cruelty of the world, and this leads to their tragic end. Throughout the life, she has to face hatred, In 'Bye-Bye Blackbird', she explores gender discrimination and inequality against women, she is depicted as a victim of Indian society and consider secondary in all the aspects of life. Even now women are exploited by male society and harassed everywhere. There is no safety for women in society.

Anita Desai is a genuine writer and portrays the picture of women in society and its reality. As a woman, she is capable to understand women's psychological condition better than male writers. It is seen in her novels and they reflect the tragic view of life through women characters. She represents a psychological woman who fails to adjust to a male-dominated society. Desai's novels explore the human psyche. She more concentrates on inner reality, than the outer world. The protagonists in Desai's novels went through mental trauma and psychological conflict. Some of them lost their existence during the struggle their minds deal with within different situations of life. Her characters are mixture of all types of the human psyche. Most of the socio-psychological conflicts occur due to the clash between inner reality and outer reality.

Desai's protagonists deal with different levels of agony and pain and they go through different levels of trauma which is affected by society. All the women protagonists are sensitive like Sarah and

Maya, but sometimes the case is different. Raman is a sensitive character from 'Where Shall We Go This Summer?' This novel depicts the psychological condition of the protagonist Sita, who is also trapped in an unhappy marriage with Raman, like Sarah in 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' and Maya in 'Cry, the Peacock', she feels alienated. Desai always shows the psychological mind of the characters and the man-women relationship. None of her characters are happy. All go through psychological conflicts in some or other way.

'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts the Socio-Psychological Conflicts, of Indian immigrants in London, and their emotional relationship. The novel depicts adjustment of characters as personal and social. The struggle of the characters that they face in London especially the women and their existence. The women come up with every situation of life as they struggle in life and damage themselves for others. The socio-psychological conflict of characters, the treatment of the characters and the adjustment that they have to face as Indian immigrants in London depict in the novel. She analyses the problem of her characters, Adit, Dev, and Sarah. These three characters face so much problem in finding their identity, they are alienated and it is not easy for them to adjust. Desai shows the conflict between the alienated characters. Dev comes to England but he is ignored and feels isolated in the hands of England people, and consider an outsider. On another hand, at the beginning of the novel. Adit is happy with the atmosphere of England but slowly and gradually he feels alienated and his thinking changes towards England. Sarah, Adit's wife an English lady she suffers from the existential problem and loss of identity, she feels isolated by marrying an Indian immigrant. She is neglected by her own country as:

Meenakshi Mukherjee Said: "Sarah is complex, hypersensitive, and intelligent and the model character of Desai's novel".

The Socio-psychological Conflicts in the mind of Desai's characters are tortured emotionally, Dev suffers because he constantly feels alienated. The novel highlights psychological isolation and emotional disturbance. The psychological disturbance between Adit and Sarah how they feel and are alienated from both the country England as well as India. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' delineates the psychological conflict of Indian Immigrants who are incapable to adjust to the environment and situation of England and shows the existential conflict between Adit and Sarah.

Desai always shows the psychological state of the characters she thinks that the inner-thinking and life of men and women. Her characters are psychologically disturbed by their relationship. The women characters have a psychological breakdown, the characters go through deep into the psyche and find the truth. She depicts the exploitation of women, and chaos inside the mind of the characters that create psychological trauma, depression faced, and individual. She is different from other Indian novelists. Desai takes interest in the inner world and human psyche and its reality, her primary intention is to depict the psycho-emotional and socio-psychological condition of protagonists who lives in isolation.

Mostly her female characters are the victims of the traditional system. Thus, she writes about their psychological experiences. The female characters who face socio-psychological conflict such as marital discord, emotional maladjustment, and existential. 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' depicts the frustration of Dev and Adit and the difficulties faced by them in an alien land. The deeper psychological level of Adit shows her alienation, the change in Sarah's life is not a social and cultural but a psychological change. Sarah is tormented and alienated like Desai's other protagonists. According to Usha Rani: "She peels off, layer after layer, the hidden impression. And experiences of the conscious as well as the sub- Conscious self".

Anita Desai depicts the psychological conflict of the characters. It can be said that "Bye-Bye Black" deals with the socio-psychological conflicts of Indian immigrants in England, who fail to adjust to

the environment and situation of England. They are ignored and feel rootless and cut from people and themselves. Desai's most novels deal with Socio-psychological conflict. "Bye-Bye Blackbird" depicts the social and psychological dilemmas, Adit married Sarah, but due to alienation, he wishes to leave England and return to India for his existence. Desai shows the psychological obsessions of her characters in the novel. She delineates the true nature of the characters in her novels and the conflict and confusion in the mind of the characters.

Concluding Remarks

Anita Desai highlights the problem that emerged in the novel. The mental and psychological problems that characters have to face in the alien land during displacement are in search of perfect life i.e. in the novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' the character Dev decides to go back to India, and Adit settles down to England. Desai's characters are alienated and struggle for existence in society. Her novels also deal with human relationships, conflicts, struggle, physical abuse, and marital discord.

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Existentialism in Anita Desai's 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird': A Review of Literature

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Abstract

Existentialism is regarded as philosophy that put emphasis on individual existence, freedom and choice. In existentialism, humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe; mostly it focuses on human existence. It is believed that individual is free to take their responsibility. Existentialism deals with experience, personal concern, commitment and uniqueness of the individual. The theme of existentialism appears to be very prominent in Anita Desai's 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'. In 'Cry, the Peacock' the female character Maya she is victim of many social and psychological predicaments, and this novel depicts modern Indian culture and highlighting the female predicament of maintaining self-identity as an individual woman. In 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' Desai's portrays a realistic picture of men-women relationship. The protagonist Sarah becomes victim of psychic and social alienation. In this background, the present paper explores review of literature on existentialism in Anita Desai's: 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird'.

Keywords: Alienation, Existentialism, Freedom, Fear, and Identity.

Introduction

In the world of existentialist, each person is born, lives, chooses, his or her course, or her own existence, thinkers believe that people search to find where they exist, and are in search of their identity and existence. There are certain themes in existentialism such as theme of alienation, fear, anxiety, freedom and commitment. These themes depicted by many writers in their works. The novelists who portray these themes are mainly R.K. Narayan, Arun Joshi, Kamala Mrakandaya, Jhumpa Lehari, and Anita Desai. Anita Desai is a leading

20th century women novelist and her novels are based on the inner levels of Indian men, and women, known for their compassion, and lucid prose.

Research Methodology and Objective

The present study is based on secondary data, secondary data is collected from various websites, journals, newspapers and reference books. Literature review has shown prior research work done in this area. This paper makes an attempt to discuss Existentialism in Anita Desai's 'Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' through Literature Review.



Cry, the Peacock' and 'Bye-Bye Blackbird': An Introduction

In 'Cry, the Peacock' (1963) she presents a hypersensitive and cultured character known as Maya she is the victim of many social and psychological predicaments. There is no denying that Maya receives a comfortable upbringing but due to high intensity of pain she faces tragic end. 'Cry, the Peacock' engages the complexities of modern Indian culture from a feminine perspective while highlighting the female predicament of maintaining self-identity as an individual woman. Desai makes Maya her mouth piece to express her views about women. In 'Cry, the Peacock', covers themes of alienation, isolation, loneliness, marital discord, and family relationship.

Anita Desai's novel 'Bye-Bye Blackbird' (1971) is a study of man-woman relationship by cultural encounters. The heroine of the novel, Sarah stands for culture the Indian and England. She is weak but possesses steady voice; she becomes a victim of psychic and social alienation. The title of the novel refers to "England's bidding farewell to an Indian Black Bird". The novel is in three parts "Arrival", "Discovery" and "Recognition and Departure." The novel deals with the problem of marital maladjustment which is one of the most recurrent and dominant theme in Anita Desai's work. The novel discusses various themes such as racism, displacement, alienation and so on.

Literature Review

Chaudhary (2013) unfolded that the protagonist, Devan, In Custody suffers existential absurdity, dilemmas, loss of communications, and a complete sense of

isolation which brings in a state of mental crisis where the protagonist is in search of true self.

Sharma Asha (2013) highlighted that Anita Desai holds a significant place as modern Indian English novelist. Most of her critics have focused their attention on the psychological and existentialist approach in her novels. For them 'existentialism' seems to be a favourite subject of Anita Desai where the characters recognize the world as negative and meaningless and feel alienated.

Tyagi (2014) revealed the existence of a normal woman Maya shattered due to the feeling of frustration, lack of belongingness and sense of rootlessness. Existentialism, as a literary theory touched this very soft emotional issue of modern human beings and attracted a large number of authors, critics and philosophers. Anita Desai being a psychological novelist, tried to portray this psychological trauma in her novels at best; Maya the central character of Cry, The Peacock is the best figure representing the existential dilemma of everyday life.

Ghosh Shaswati (2014) remarked that Anita Desai depicts the inner psyche of the characters in her novels especially the life of the middle class women, who silently suffers with mental stress, and unsatisfied desires. The domestic and social situations cause and even aggravate a kind of neurosis. The study and analysis of the mental stress is seen in female characters created in her novels. Anita Desai portrays the inner conflicts of their characters and also they struggle for their individuality and quest for freedom. Man and her dominating



nature is responsible for all violent and disturbing things.

Huda (2015) explained Existentialism as a mode of philosophy as well as of literature may have various interpretations. Existentialism deals greatly with the alienated trepidation, preposterousness, prejudice, escapism etc.

Sheoran Bharatender (2015) discussed that Anita Desai's novel *Cry, the Peacock* signifies the inner spirit, the mood of sensibility that roars like thunder and instantly outbreaks forward like lightning. It is more crucial than the outer climate or the visible action. Since her consociation is with the inner climate of feelings rather than the outer world of action, she has tried to imitate the style to convey the intimate relationship of the protagonist with nature and environment.

Verma (2016) stated that Desai expressed the existential dilemmas of her characters repeatedly in her novels. She used to explore and inquire into the human situation from the existential perspective. He remarked that she focused on alienation, loneliness and routine of her characters and tried to explore the existential condition of modern man in modern scenario. All the protagonists of Anita Desai's novels face the same existential crisis. Her style of writing is entirely connected to her concern with existential problems.

Singh Kamna and Jagdish Singh Somvanshi (2017) remarked that women of Desai's novels become victims of the traditional modes of existence without a strong terra firma, which makes them intensely conscious of their lack of identity. Their protest mostly turns into

frustration, for as an Indian girl, a woman is brought up to be passive, meek and obedient. She tried to depict the oppressive and unfeeling conjugal bond. Hence, Desai presents the unhappy situation of women in Indian society.

Nasreen, and Glory (2017) revealed that Anita Desai protagonists are forced to involve completely in routine life regardless of their interest and tendencies and they are in thrust of justice, security and identity. Security and identity are essential for a woman to develop a better quality of life. It is well known that darkness prevails in the absence of light. In the same way insecurity and depression filled the hearts of women. In *Cry, the Peacock* the protagonist Maya suffered from Neurosis, the feeling of insecurity is one of the symptoms of psychic disorders.

Chelliah (2018) discussed that Desai is greatly obsessed by existentialist dimensions and she explored the existential dimension of adjustment, belonging and ultimate decision in the lives of three major characters Dev, Adit and Sarah in her novel *Bye- Bye Black Bird*. These characters faced their existential problems of loneliness and hollowness, adjustment and sense of belonging that torment them. The researcher concluded that Anita Desai portrays mysterious landscape of the mind whose characters are the terror of facing, single handed, the ferocious assaults of existence and the inward journey of existence.

Swain (2018) stated that man's autonomy, assertion of his subjective self, his flouting of the reason and rationality, his denial of traditional values, institution and philosophy, his exercise of



“will” and “freedom”, and his experience of the absurdity and the nothingness of the life are some of the existential themes which are reflected in the writing of the exponent’s of existentialism.”

Gajeswari. N and Subbulakshmi (2018) unfolded that Anita Desai attempts to underline the existential concerns that are so common to humanity. She chooses her characters that are under stress and tries to peep inside their psyche and come up with an explanation of their actions. All her characters have existential pangs and they are on a spree to find out the root cause and reach at some sort of realization to complete their cycle of search of life. But in her works this existential journey is spoiled by the advent of males into the lives of females and the shift mars the impact of her existential concerns.

Ramya (2019) disclosed that Anita Desai has created a picture of inner psyche of existential characters in Anita Desai fiction she examined the predicament of women in wilderness by placing these characters for removed from civilization, she has consciously examined the difficult situation and psyche of women in isolation.

Concluding Remarks

It can be summed up that Desai further examines women protagonists Maya in ‘Cry, the Peacock’ and Sarah in ‘Bye-Bye Blackbird’, as they both are in search of self-identity and existence. Desai’s works bring out dilemma, tension, agony, isolation, loneliness, and other threats of existentialism. Though in both the novels, the female protagonist are existentialist they crave to have their

independent individuality, the characters of Anita Desai create frustration, depression, and other psychological problems, they burn from inside feelings, unable to express their anguish though they are in search of their existence. She uses various images from nature and contributed various themes in her novels, and in comparison of men, women are more attached to nature and environment. Nature has also been exploited by male-dominated society, for fulfilling their needs. Existentialism contributes a lot in the development and growth of relationship between Men and Woman. Anita Desai as a classical novelist who boldly portrays her characters directly or indirectly influences the growth and development of character. It makes them to understand the real essence of life. In the *Bye-Bye Blackbird* Sarah attains maturity and a sense of responsibility to face the challenges of life. On the other hand, Maya in *Cry, the Peacock* compares herself to a peacock but does not like to be only a piece of beauty but makes all the efforts to maintain dignity of life.

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**GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES
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Authored by

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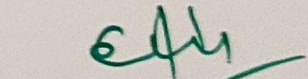
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शीर्षक से शोध पत्र प्रस्तुत किया / भाग लिया।

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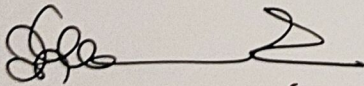
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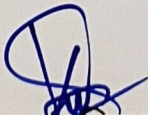
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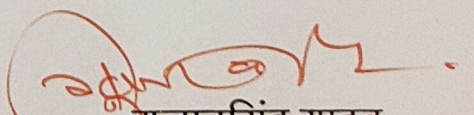
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