Anita Desai's Early Novels: An Interpretation of the Enigmatic Feminine Psyche

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Chapter V
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Taught from infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adorn its prison.

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*

Anita Desai has asserted:

My writing is an effort to discover, underline and convey the significance of things. I must seize upon that incomplete and seemingly meaningless mass of reality around me and try and discover its significance by plunging below the surface and plumbing the depths, then illuminating those depths till they become more lucid, brilliant and explicable reflection of the visible world. (6)

Obviously Desai is not pleased with any superfluous portrayal of women characters. Her female characters are significant studies of the complexity of the mind of the fair sex. She probes into women's mind through the characterisation of Maya, Monisha, Sita and Sarah, through whom she highlights some of the burning issues in women's society, the issues which arise out of the male's supremacy over women.
This study attempts a psychoanalytic reading of Desai's female characters in her early novels. Anchoring on the theories of feminine psychology, the psychic working of the female protagonists in *Cry, the Peacock, Voices in the City, Bye Bye Blackbird* and *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* is explored. The theories of psychoanalysts such as Freud, Jung, Robert A. Johnson, Karen Horney, Erich Neumann and Irene Claremont de Castillejo discussed in the third chapter of this study are made use of to interpret the psyche of the major female characters in the four early novels. This study helps us to gain access to the morbid mind of the female characters of Desai.

This chapter which aims at the study of the four novels—*Cry, the Peacock, Voices in the City, Bye Bye Blackbird* and *Where Shall We Go This Summer?*—is a moderate attempt to establish that the female mind has certain basic characteristics. For this purpose, the female protagonists of the above said novels are taken into account. It has been found that the major female characters in the novels, in spite of all the oppressive forces that they have to encounter in their life which try to question their identity and even the existence itself, they come back to their original instinctive and basic pattern of their mind. As De Castillejo observes in *Knowing Woman*, "Everyone is born with a soul. But women being closely tied to their original instinctive pattern, are less easily separated from their essential soul by the development of intellect and so continue to identify with it" (169). This observation is
proved right by analysing the mental reactions of the female protagonists in various situations in the four novels.

Desai's debut venture *Cry, the Peacock* brings out the mental voyage of Maya and in it "Desai has skilfully given an elaborate description of Maya's mounting agony which makes the novel a fascinating psychological study of the protagonist's neurotic fears and throbbing anxieties" (Ramesh Srivastava 282). An analysis of thoughts that float along the mind of Maya will help us to go deeper into the unseen levels of her mind.

From the very beginning, an oppressive force haunts Maya's mind and she is ever reminded of it: the albino astrologer's prediction. She becomes a victim of this force very easily as she is a slave of another force within her—superstitious beliefs. The impact of these two forces from outside and inside is so severe that it leads her to the murder of her husband, Gautama. Male domination is another force that acts on Maya. Childhood experiences of father obsession and over pampering too make a deep negative impact on her mind. Destructive shadowy elements in Maya are oppressive forces which drag her along to Gautama's murder. The intervention of in-laws and their money mindedness lead her mind to wilderness. The female protagonist's repressed wishes are the inner hostile forces of which she becomes a victim.
Sometimes Maya goes along with some of these forces in accordance with her nature, but sometimes she is an unwilling victim compelled to go along the course or at other times she is entangled in their webs which she does not like but quite unable to resist. Inspite of all these hostile and oppressive forces, she is closely tied to her original instinctive pattern of feminine mind showing that she is less easily separated from her essential soul of a woman. The basic characteristics of female mind to which she shows leniency are craving for love and companionship, longing for sex, mind's recourse to neurosis and ill temper, repression of wishes, emotional dependence on the life partner, special affinity for beautiful objects in nature and the like.

Maya is ever reminded of the albino astrologer's prediction. Guided by the fear of the prophecy she loses grip of her mind and vice versa.

It was all so clear now, so magically clear . . . the disturbing memory, half-remembered, had turned to a vision of albino eyes, of dyed finger nails pointing at my forehead, at the stars and its reality was as unmistakable as that of the white moon. And four years it was now, we had been married for years. . . . I knew the time had come. It was now to be either Gautama or I.

(*CP 32-33*)
Until fourth year of her marriage she keeps the prophecy repressed in her unconscious. In the beginning of her neurotic affection, quite off-and-on she tells herself that it was she who was destined to die. But she was so madly in love with life that she soon begins to wonder if it was not "Gautama's life that was threatened" (164). Throughout day and night the focal point of her thought was the prophecy. She wants to execute her wish and there is continuous struggle within her. In the dust storm she is shown as running "on and on, from room to room, laughing as maniacs laugh once the world gives them up and surrenders them to their freedom" (190). Her ardent love for life pushes her to hysteric outbursts. She wails: "Am I gone insane? Father! Husband! Who is my Saviour? I am in need of one. I am dying, and I am in love with living. I am in love, and I am dying. God, let me sleep . . ." (98). Her troubled mind slips into insanity and she becomes neurotic.

When Gautama and Maya attend the dinner party, Mr. Lal, the Sikh friend of Gautama, made a reference to the word "fate." The word evokes a series of recollections of her past experiences in Maya's mind. She recalls how Gautama "and his sisters would heat with decision at the mention of superstition, with pity and scorn for those who allowed their lives to be ruled by them and ruined by them" (75). She felt that her life was spoiled by fate. She remembered the astrologer's words: "Do you not hear the peacocks call in the wilds? Are they not blood-chilling, their shrieks of pain? 'Pia, Pia,' they cry. 'Lover, lover. Mio, mio–I die, I die'" (96). Her mind was hyperactive
with the superstition. Freud attributes superstitious beliefs to suppressed hostility:

It can be recognised most clearly in neurotics suffering from obsessional thinking . . . that superstition derives from suppressed hostile and cruel impulses. Superstition is in large part the expectation of trouble; and a person who has harboured frequent evil wishes against others, but has been brought up to be good and has therefore repressed such wishes into the unconscious, will be especially ready to expect punishment for his unconscious wickedness in the form of trouble threatening him from without. ("Determinism, Belief in Chance and Superstition" 232)

There is suppressed hostility in Maya's unconscious mind against her husband. She thinks that Gautama, the industrious lawyer is responsible for her unfulfilled wish. She neurotically perceives his death as a solution. It is rightly said that "the prophecy comes as a convenient external justification to her unconscious wish and for that reason she tenaciously clings to it" (M. Rajeshwar 240). Her superstitious beliefs and the intervention of an external force—albino astrologer's prophecy—oppress her mind, and they act as two oppressive forces from inside and outside to pull her away.
Gautama's peculiar masculine characteristics of the psyche—logic and reasonableness—act on Maya's mind which make her mentally alienated from Gautama. This is well illustrated in the incident of the death of Toto. Maya is highly emotional and becomes hysterical due to the death of her pet dog. Gautama's disinterested attitude towards the incident and practical outlook hurt her feelings a lot. Reacting to the death of the dog, she rushes to the garden tap "to wash the vision from her eyes" (15). Her psychic problems are aggravated and drive her to schizophrenia. The dog's death fills her mind with a premonition of some unavoidable tragedy. She exclaims: "It was not my pet's death alone that I mourned today, but another sorrow, unremembered, perhaps as yet not even experienced, and filled me with this despair" (8). The dog lay dead and "she sat there, sobbing and waiting for her husband to come home" (5). Gautama comes back from office and he disposes off the matter: "I sent it away to be cremated, . . . It is all over. Come, won't you pour out my tea?" (6). When a visitor comes, Gautama escapes, "ordering tea to be sent to the study, forgetting her, forgetting her woes altogether" (7). But Maya wants to be the center of his thoughts, attentions and actions. De Castillejo's observation on woman's nature of provoking emotion and man's nature of thinking logically is relevant in this context:

Often a woman will provoke emotion and leave her man floundering in it while she goes off singing. She does this when
she can't stand his cool reasonableness any longer, but although emotion clears the air for her, to the man it can be disruptive, prevent him from thinking, and make work impossible. Conversely the very clarity of a man’s thought can be destructive. A valuable idea which is pushing its way up through the dark in a woman’s mind may be utterly withered and destroyed if an arc lamp of focused consciousness is thrown upon it. A woman who is simply trying to hold on to her diffuse awareness may feel as though she is being punched in the solar plexus by a battering ram if a man hurls a mass of logic at her. In either case the very foundations of our whole attitude to life are threatened. So we shut ears to one another, and vociferously try to shout the other down. (Knowing Woman 24)

Gautama as a man of logic thinks that Maya's emotions are disruptive and "hurls a mass of logic at her."

Applying the Jungian principle of eros and logos, Gautama is a man of logos, man of intellect, reasoning, thinking and logic. But Maya is eros-laden, a woman of imagination, emotion and feeling. Psychologically man stands for intuition and thinking and woman for feeling and sensation. This is true of Maya and Gautama. The death of the pet dog deeply disturbs her nerves whereas he desires for a cup of tea. Maya's sensitivity and his
Detachment represents the feminine and the masculine principles of eros and logos. De Castillejo observes the distinction between the basic masculine and feminine attitude to life:

If we realize that on the whole the basic masculine attitude to life is that of focus, division and change; and the feminine (in either sex) is more nearly an attitude of acceptance, an awareness of the unity of all life and a readiness for relationship, then we can accept a rough division of the psyche into masculine and feminine. But today, when masculine and feminine characteristics are so interwoven in people of both sexes, it may be clearer to speak of "focused consciousness" on the one hand and "diffuse awareness" on the other, knowing that these qualities belong to both men and women in varying degrees. It is important to remember, however, that diffuse awareness more commonly pertains to women. (15)

So the attitudes of Gautama and Maya on the death of Toto emerge from the specific characteristics of the masculine and the feminine mind respectively.

Gautama's detachment and indifferent attitude result in marital disharmony, and this is one of the important factors that will have a negative impact on feminine mind. *Cry, the Peacock* can be viewed as a story of marital disharmony. In the words of Usha Pathamia, "The element of
companionship is sadly missing in the relationship between Maya and Gautama"(14). Their tastes and mental outlooks differ and psychologically they are opposed to each other. Meena Belliappa remarks: "The incompatibility of characters stands revealed—Gautama who touches without feeling and Maya who feels even without touching" (13). In the words of Bharati Ashok Parikh:

Feminine sensibility in Desai's novels has gained preponderance. In depicting Maya's neurosis, Desai delves deep into the sources of marital disharmony in a male-dominated society. She delineates, with great sensitivity, the dissolution of feminine sensibility under the stress of marriage that finally crushes the being of a woman. The novelist conveys this sense of social fatalism with the sensibility of a woman and renders depth and meaning through a highly communicative symbolism.

(33)

Though Gautama quotes Gita and asserts, "He who controlling the senses of the mind, follows without attachment the path of action with his organs of action, he is esteemed," Maya cannot relate herself to his high talk (116). De Castillejo speaks of the man's response towards woman's emotional outburst:

Man has pulled himself out of the unconscious matrix with the effort of thousands of years. But his rational supremacy is
somewhat precarious and he rightly fears to be submerged again. So, as often as not, he avoids emotion and teaches his women folk to do likewise. A man does not understand that a show of emotion on the part of a woman does not have the devastating effect on her that it has on him. (101)

Gautama asks her to be detached like him. He avoids emotion. He asks her to train herself to be a "yogi," a "sanyasi" who can liberate her from attachment and illusion. Around her there was unfeeling environment, and her feminine sensibility could not bear it. There remains even a communication gap between the husband and wife. She says, "How little he knew my suffering, or of how to comfort me. ... Telling me to go to sleep while he worked at his papers, he did not give another thought to me, to either the soft willing body, or the lovely wanting mind that waited near his bed" (9). In the novel the force of disharmonious relationship affects Maya's psyche adversely and it contributes its major share in making her inner self wild as she longs for love.

Childhood experiences leave a deep impression in the human mind. Maya recollects the happy days of her childhood spent with her father at Lucknow and Darjeeling. The thoughts of prophecy take her mind back to her father's house. The thought about her father's house was always a
bondage to her wounded mind. Shifting of thoughts from the past to the present presents the ebb and tide of the tension in her mind. She broods:

All order is gone out of my life, all formality. There is no plan, no peace, nothing to keep me within the pattern of familiar, everyday living and doing that becomes those whom God means to live on earth. Thoughts come, incidents occur, then they are scattered and disappear. . . . (CP 179)

Karen Horney, the great spokesman of Third Force Psychology says that the childhood experiences determine conditions for neurosis and this leads to later troubles (*The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* 21). According to Third Force Psychology, many factors such as dominating, over protective, intimidating and indifferent elders damage the healthy growth of a child. This leads to a feeling of insecurity and a mind full of vague apprehensions (*Neurosis and Human Growth* 19). In the novel, Desai has made a number of childhood images to give an outline of the psychic growth of the female protagonist. Maya's father influences her mental growth into a woman. Early in her life, Maya's mother dies and she grows as a pampered child. Gautama regards her as her father's "pet, spoilt and cosseted" (143). Her close association with her father activated the animus in her psyche. She shows all the characteristics of animus-fixation and hence enters a life of romantic illusions. She is lost in the reveries of her past, and tender and fragile
memories float in her mind. "Wild horse, white horse, galloping up paths of stone, flying away into the distance, the wild hills. The heights, the dizzying heights of my mountains . . . " (180). Her animus tempts her away from active participation in life, and it weakens her libidinal activations. In Freudian terms, what we see in Maya is father obsession. Her father obsession and the memories of an over pampered childhood and the over expectation of the same in life after marriage act as strong distorting forces and they engulf her mind, causing her mental derangement.

Psychologically, it is the shadowy part of her psyche that becomes cancerous and causes her mental imbalance. The fear of death is a shadowy character in Maya. De Castillejo observes that it is psychology which is trying to help people move away from conformity by teaching them to take internal and individual responsibility for their own shadow. She defines and cites examples for shadow:

The shadow is that part of the psyche which could and should become conscious, yet of which we are unaware. It consists of those characteristics we do not recognize in ourselves. Unfortunately people tend to believe that "the shadow" means our bad qualities. But the shadow can be bright and good as well as dark and bad. A real virtue is often hidden in the unconscious. For instance, a timid and shy person may show
courage in an emergency which surprises himself as much as his friends. Or an habitually mean man may have fits of unexpected generosity which he finds a positive embarrassment. The generosity and courage could both be styled "shadow qualities" because they are unknown to their owner, but the shadow here would be bright. It is the habitual unconscious of a quality that makes it a shadow, not its sadness. (30)

The fearful prediction becomes a hidden spring board from which most of the actions from Maya spring forth. "Death—an early one—by unnatural causes. . . .

Four years after marriage, so the stars prophecy . . . " (30-31). The fear of death, as the shadow intensifies her loneliness, creates an estrangement from her husband and finally leads her to the verge of mental imbalance.

Fear of death stems from longing for life. So another shadowy character which is highly destructive is Maya's excessive love for life, and this acts as a powerful force which torments her mind. In her mind, she had a longing for life and was excessively in love with this world. Too much of anything is bad. Maya says, "I don't care to detach myself into any world than this. It is not boring for me. Never boring. . . . I have so much to look at, to touch and feel and be happy about" (118). When her conscious mind reminds her that they are not meant for tragedy, her subconscious mind, as it craves for life, thinks of murder. Psychoanalytically speaking, this is a woman's most
destructive shadowy character. When De Castillejo speaks of woman's destructive shadowy element, says:

All women who have not totally lost contact with the unconscious are in touch with power. Power is not necessarily bad. Its direction is what makes it good or bad.

The life force which surges up through women is a tremendous power, whether employed biologically or in some other way. We have heard a great deal about woman's suffocating quality. She pours out energy on those for whom she cares and does not know she suffocate. . . . It is when a woman actually uses the power with which the feminine is in contact for her own personal ends that she becomes truly a witch. This is real evil which needs all our resourcefulness to fight. (41-42)

Maya uses the feminine psychic power for her own personal ends as she is in love with life and that represents her shadowy character. De Castillejo goes on to say:

She (woman) is consumed by an inner rage which is buried in a layer of the unconscious often too deep for us to recognize. She becomes destructive of anything and everything, sometimes violently but often by subtle passive obstruction.
I believe it is often this inner protest which breaks out in neurotic illness, in sensitive men as well as in women; or turns destructive in places where it was not intended. With more consciousness, feminine anger could be harnessed to a creative end. (42)

Maya is consumed by inner rage which lies in the unconscious psyche and it turns violent and destructive. It ends in the destruction of Gautama. The root of all these is her destructive psychic power—the shadowy element which results from her too much love for life. Johnson says that the shadow compels a woman to question the Paradise and supplies her with two weapons—lamp and knife. All modern women are equipped with these two powers, terrible and wonderful but the knife she rarely uses. In the case of Maya, what she uses is the knife.

The projection of her repressed wishes on to Gautama, that stems from a feeling of insecurity and depression, a characteristic of neurotic feminine mind works as a powerful inner force that drives Maya to the murder. The neurotic Maya has a feeling of insecurity, depression and unhappiness when she thinks that Gautama does not care for her. She asks:

Was it so unforgivable to wish to share in human friendliness?

In companionship? To Gautama it was for a woman, for a light-headed woman, a childish one, like myself. In his world there
were vast areas in which he would never permit me, and he could not understand that I could even wish to enter them, foreign as they were to me. . . . (CP 104)

This leads to the distrust between them, leading to sexual dissatisfaction also. Horney, when writes about the distrust between the sexes, speaks of repression and repressed wishes in women. Some women are unable to relate to the male because of the fear that every male will suspect them of wanting something from him. This is so because she is afraid that he might guess her repressed wishes. She imagines that the male merely wants to exploit her, and what he wants is only sexual satisfaction. She projects her repressed wishes on to him. Horney remarks, "Quite often the repression of aggression against the male drains all her vital energy. The woman then feels helpless to meet life. She will shift the entire responsibility for her helplessness on to man, robbing him of the very breath of life" (Feminine Psychology 111). Maya represses her wish for love. Her repressed aggression towards Gautama leads her to his murder.

The intervention of her in-laws and their business mindedness work as a terrible force on her mind. In leading her mind to utter wilderness, her in-laws' role is not small. She craves for a human touch from them. She says:

Nila, talk to me. Tell me about . . . I hung upon every word of hers, every gesture, all the while watching her mother out of a
corner of my eye, longing for her arms, hating her detachment

... if I could tie them all into one burning knot of contact and relationship with me, nothing not even the fiercest fingers, would be able to extricate and banish me or Gautama. (CP 164)

She says, "In Gautama's family one did not speak of love, far less of action" (46). Her mother-in-law, in the evening draws out her account books and asks, "When will your father send me another cheque, Maya? Tell him I need it urgently" (47). This unhealthy family atmosphere deprived of love and caring makes Maya's mind overburdened with one more terrible force which leads to unpredictable circumstances.

The novelist adroitly employs moon images to bring out the power at various times of the oppressive forces that have driven the protagonist out of home and toward her destiny. The moon images also represent Maya's archetypal feminine self and the personal masculine world. Neumann in *The Fear of the Feminine* says, "Moon is the lord of psychological life and hence lord of the Feminine in its archetypal essence, the human representative of which is earthly woman" (73). The moon metaphor is the expression of Maya's libido with all her passions and emotions.

There was a moon. A great moon of hot, beaten copper, of molten brass, livid and throbbing like a bloody human organ, a great full-bosomed woman who had mounted the skies in
passion, driven the silly stars away from her, while she pulsed, and throbbed, pulsed and glowed across the breathless sky.

(\textit{CP 51})

The demoniac aspect of the moon stands for Maya's demands of instinctual gratification. As the moon grows from a crescent to the full moon, the force of the libido gets softened and refined.

And then we turned again, walking towards the terraced end now, and I saw behind the line of trees that marked the horizon, the pale hushed glow of the rising moon. I held him there, while I gazed at it watching the rim of it climb swiftly above the trees, and then walked towards it in a dream of love. (208)

In Maya's disturbed state of mind, moon is "a demoniac creature, the fierce dancer \ldots accompanied by a deafening roar of silent drums" (28).

Maya's mental state never helps her to identify the meaning of life or existence. She becomes lonely. Prabhat Kumar Pandey, a noted critic rightly opines that "Maya's tragedy is that there is no one to share her feelings. Childless, with an uncaring husband, she is lonely and loneliness is the bane and burden of her psyche" (83). The feeling of loneliness always haunts Maya's mind. Her mind is indeed the one that craves for contact and companionship. From the perspective of feminine psychology, woman's mind is in constant longing for close companionship. Neumann speaks about this:
For woman it is not acting but being in community that bears the sign of life. For her it is not table talk but the shared meal, not discussion and conversation but being together side by side that is decisive.

Wherever it truly happens, wordlessly knowing one another is a form of togetherness more complete and more essential to the Feminine than the Masculine face to face stance that, ego to ego and consciousness to consciousness, more often divides than binds together. (*The Fear of the Feminine* 53)

The craving for intimate companionship is a basic instinct of feminine mind and Maya is tied to it even in her state of mental derangement. To be shared and cared is one of the characteristics of feminine sensibility. Love is said to be the governing human emotion of the feminine mind. Brownmiller says:

A celebrated difference between men and women (either women's weakness or women's strength, depending on one's values) is the obstinate reluctance, the emotional inability of women to separate sex from love. Understandably, love makes the world go round, and women are supposed to get dizzy—to rise, to fall, to feel alive in every pore, to be undone. (216)

To women human relationships are paramount and fulfilling, and for men, emotion is only secondary. Maya longs for expressions of emotions and
affections. In the party, she wants to touch and feel her husband. She tells him: "All I wanted was to be outside with you. . . Near you, . . . But you made me go away . . ." (111). Her mind is deprived of love and affection. Her words bring out the crying feminine need for a harmonious relationship with the life partner. As said by Horney and discussed in the third chapter of this study, "Qualities like emotional dependence on the other sex, absorption in love, inhibition of expansive, autonomous development etc. are regarded as quite desirable in women . . ." (231).

Through Maya, what Desai does is presenting a psychic portrait of a neurotic. Gautama is ignorant of Maya's mind. Her mental struggle for love is too strong for Gautama to handle. Even her neurotic behaviour is not alien to female mind but characteristic behaviour of such women. Horney explains the psychology of neurotics:

While it is important to the healthy person to be loved, honoured and esteemed by those whom he esteems or on whom he is dependent, the neurotic need for love is compulsive and indiscriminate. . . . Among all the manifestations of the neurotic need for love, I want to emphasize one that is very common in our culture. It is the over valuation of love. I prefer particularly to a type of neurotic women who feel unhappy, insecure, and depressed as long as they do not have someone devoted to them,
who loves them or somehow cares for them. (*Feminine Psychology* 246)

As Maya is neurotic, she overvalues love and her behaviour is characteristic of neurotic women's mind.

The novel presents Maya as a disappointed woman because of Gautama's age and attitude to sex. Several passages reveal her disillusionment in sex:

In a sudden impulsive longing to be with him, be close to him, I leapt up, full of decisions to make haste in undressing, preparing myself, then joining him at last; so that we could go out into the garden, together, where the beds had been made for the night and were cooling in the moonlight. But when I went to rouse him from the couch, with a touch, I saw that he had closed his eyes. . . . It was of no use. After all I sighed—and once more, was sad. (*CP* 93)

Her mind is overcrowded with bird and animal imagery. Desai, with her pen makes the dumb creations speak volumes and act the way she expects or her characters do. The image of fighting and mating peacocks stand for Maya's sexually frustrated life.
But sleep was rent by the frenzied cries of peacocks pacing the rocks at night—peacocks searching for mates, peacocks tearing themselves to bleeding shreds in the act of love, peacocks screaming with agony at the death of love. The night sky turned to a flurry of peacocks' tails, each star a staring eye. (175)

Her emotional and sexual life which were not healthy lead to the decay and disintegration of her mind. Freud views sex as the prototype of all pleasurable experiences of life. Freud's observation on the sexual interest of women is quite relevant in this context:

Experience shows . . . that women, who, as being the actual vehicles of the sexual interests of mankind, are only endowed in a small measure, with the gift of sublimating their instincts, and who . . . when they are subjected to the disillusionments of marriage, fall ill of severe neurosis which permanently darkens their lives. (Civilized Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness 47)

As women are supposed to be the real vehicles of sexual interest, Maya's sexual urge is quite justifiable. Though marital unfaithfulness is a viable cure for the ailment, it entails severe indictment in a rigidly organised society. Freud further says:
The more strictly a woman has been brought up and the more sternly she has submitted to the demands of civilization, the more she is afraid of taking this way out; and in the conflict between the desires and her sense of duty, she once more seeks refuge in neurosis. Nothing protects her virtue as securely as illness. (47)

What Maya seeks is also a neurotic solution. This pathetic situation originates from Gautama's scant regard for love and emotional intimacy which act as wild forces that have a negative impact on her mind. Maya's sexual interest and her solution to the problem—neurosis—are also characteristics of feminine mind.

Gradually her mind was becoming unapproachable to others. Gautama's inability to distinguish between the smell of lemons and petunias is sufficient to drive her to ill temper and anger. She gives vent to her pent up fury: "'Oh no,' I cried dismayed, 'Not at all!' The blossoms of the lemon tree were different, quite different: of much stronger, crisper character, they seemed to cut out of hard moon shells,... I tried to explain this to Gautama, stammering with anxiety" (CP 19). An observation by De Castillejo throws light on this context:

From early life the small girl tends to delight in everything that concerns life and living while the small boy shows passionate
interest in what makes the wheels go round, or why the kettle steams when it boils. Wheels and possible uses of steam usually leave little girls cold. Similarly most women feel akin to trees and running water, and a sense of belonging under a night sky, and all of them are linked with the rhythm of the moon. It is men who want to go there and explore its extinct volcanoes. However, the man in love will have been temporarily inspired by the realm of diffuse awareness and may perhaps voice it later in a poem. The woman who looks through the telescope will for the time being have her mind clearly focused and may even write a scientific treatise. (15)

So according to feminine psychology, it is the characteristic of feminine mind, not the masculine, to have a special affinity for trees, water, moon and the like. The realization that his tastes are not in accordance with hers, as well as the difference in his attitude combined with his indifferent nature makes her ill-tempered and wild natured.

*Cry, the Peacock* pictures the diseased mind of a woman who is on the brink of insanity. "I am torn between two worlds—the receding one of grace, the approaching one of madness. My body breaks in the battle" (177). In the words that ring with sadness, she reveals the literal insanity rapidly gripping her being. She unfolds the mystery of feminine psyche in several ways. She
is neurotic, at the same time sensitive as well as imaginative. She asks questions of life and tries to elicit the answers from experience. Certain forces related to evil and mortality haunt her mind throughout her life. She fails to control her mind, and that leads to its imbalance. "My body can no longer bear it, my mind has already given way . . ." (179). Narendra Kumar rightly remarks that "by connecting Maya's neurosis to her marriage, Anita Desai transforms the conventional story of marital disharmony into a stimulating study of Maya's psyche" (12). As Johnson says, "Forces and powers in the depths of the unconscious can overwhelm the conscious ego if they are not handled correctly" (59). Maya's powers of the unconscious and the forces from the outside overtake her conscious ego and that marks her tragic destiny.

Several hostile forces such as father obsession or spoilt childhood, over expectation of love from life partner, social intervention in determining the fate of a woman, shadowy elements in the psyche, marital disharmony, the loveless attitude of the in-laws and the like make Maya's mind a wilderness. But she clings to her original female instincts of the psyche such as repression of wishes, emotional dependence on husband, sexual interest, interest in the objects of nature, resort to neurosis and ill temper and longing for expressions of emotions, affection and love. She is tied to these characteristics till she reaches the border of insanity and thereafter.
In *Voices in the City*, it can be found that the female protagonist, Monisha, is pulled away by various hostile forces in the form of disharmonious marital life, oppressive atmosphere in the patriarchal joint family, social attack on childless woman and humiliation.

In such highly distressing situations, the female protagonist retreats to her basic feminine mental patterns such as repression, resignation, masochism, alienation and tolerance. She thinks of avoiding hostile environments and as a new level of consciousness she urges for suicide.

Monisha's suffering is as old as her marriage, and she is not happy in the uncongenial atmosphere of her in-laws' house. Horney explains women's situation after marriage on the basis of the psychology of women. She says:

> For years she (woman) may feel quite contented. The reverse side only appears if eventually she comes in contact with men, and particularly if she marries. One may then observe that her contentment and self-assurance break down rather suddenly and the contented, gay, capable, independent girl changes into a discontented woman greatly troubled with inferiority feelings, easily depressed, and refraining from taking an active share in the responsibilities of marriage. She is frigid sexually, and instead of a loving attitude toward her husband, a competitive attitude towards him prevails. (*Feminine Psychology* 242)
Monisha is controlled by the needs of others. As Bharati Ashok says:

Desai's heroines are not allowed to have adult self-respect. Their peculiar predicament neither gives them any "hope of advancement nor recognition." More often than not they are, as Friedan discerns, "controlled by the needs of others" (382). Their works do not emanate from women's own personality. It is not at all an expression of the self. (60)

She is not recognized in her in-laws' house, and her biological deformity is discussed by her relatives right in her presence. She senses it as an onslaught on the integrity of her total being and she is mentally tortured.

When Nirode falls ill and is hospitalised, she takes some money from Jiban's purse to meet the hospital expenses. Her in-laws accuse her of theft and she experiences mental oppression due to this. She says, "The pettiest of people, they regard me as meaner than they. They think me a thief. To be regarded so low by men and women themselves so low, it is to be laid on a level lower than the common earth. . . " (VC 136). Her voice in the joint family is completely choked. Her mental crisis becomes too severe with the theft-incident. She is driven to repression and masochism. For Freud, masochism is a truly feminine trait. Freud says:

The suppression of women's aggressiveness, which is prescribed for them constitutionally and imposed on them socially, favours
the development of powerful masochistic impulses, which succeed, as we know, in binding erotically the destructive trends which have been diverted inwards. Thus masochism, as people say, is truly feminine. But if, as happens so often, you meet with masochism in men, what is left to you but to say that these men exhibit very plain feminine traits. (*Complete Psychological Works* 123)

This masochism makes Monisha alienated and she keeps this as her own. According to Jung, in such situations,

> We do not merely keep a content consciously private, but we conceal it even from ourselves. It then splits off from consciousness as an independent complex, to lead a separate existence in the unconscious, whether it can be neither corrected nor interfered with by the conscious mind. (*Modern Man in Search of a Soul* 36)

When Monisha undergoes oppression in the patriarchal joint family set up of her in-laws, she resorts to alienation, the outcome of masochism, a truly feminine trait.

Jiban's question "Why didn't you tell me before you took it?" makes her support less (138). Jiban communicates with Monisha without the aid of his feminine feeling, and this paralyses her mentally. De Castillejo's
observation in *Knowing Woman* on the impact of man's communication with woman without the help of his feminine feeling throws light on Monisha's mental working:

A man who tries to communicate with a woman without the aid of his feminine feeling to make the bridge and enable him to meet her on her own ground, is likely to produce a dry intellectual dissertation which either paralyses her or make her angry, according to temperament. Similarly, the woman who assumes that her man will know what she is feeling without her telling him, because to her it is quite obvious, has omitted to utilize her own inner masculine clarity to convey the message and leaves her actual man bewildered and in the dark. (104)

De Castillejo observes that woman is more tolerant of man's moods than he of her irrelevant vocal outburst. She assumes that it may be because woman understands irrational moods and caprices. She suggests that men are unaware how often they too just off the mark themselves (104). De Castillejo is right in her observation of masculine and feminine psychology. In the novel, Monisha tolerates Jiban's moods and she keeps mum. Tolerance is a feminine mental characteristic and the female protagonist does not move away from it.
The relationship between Monisha and her in-laws is the best illustration of what can happen in many joint families in India. It is the unwritten rule in many family circles that a daughter-in-law should be submissive and subservient. The situation gets aggravated when the husbands also support this kind of demands. They never think that she is also a being of a mind of her own. Mentally Monisha is far away from the people around her. Jiban advises her to "be a little friendly to them . . . that is all they ask of you—a little friendliness" (118). As well explained by Neumann (which has been discussed in Chapter III of this work), in the patriarchate, as men create a vicious circle for the Feminine and women to limit them to a strictly feminine domain, woman finds it difficult to participate authentically in patriarchal culture. So Monisha's resignation is quite justifiable from feminine psychic perspective. As she is ill treated and humiliated at her in-laws, she fast develops a sense of alienation. Fear creeps into her troubled soul. This fear is natural and it is the basic characteristic of a very feminine woman because Johnson says that when a very feminine woman at the beginning of her life looks at the modern world to make her way through it, she will have the fear of being killed and the identity being lost by the fierce nature of the patriarchal society. Monisha wants to be free from the clutches of the joint family and as it does not work, she took recourse to resignation.

Monisha fails to have a harmonious relationship with her husband. They are poles apart in their sense of values and perceptions of life. Her
father marries her off to Jiban against her will. Her aunt tells Amla that Jiban is "completely unsuitable to Monisha's tastes and inclination. So your father decided he was the right man, that it was a right family" (199). Jiban is a "boring non-entity" and a "blind moralist." Horney observes that the conflicts in marriage may generate dislike for the marriage partner.

We may hold against him (man) his inability to give us what is essential to us, while taking for granted and devaluing into meaninglessness his very real gifts. All the while the unobtainable becomes a fascinating goal, brilliantly illuminated by the notion that it is the thing that we really craved from the very start. On the other hand we may even hold against him that he did fulfill our wishes, because the very fulfilment proved to be incompatible with our contradictory inner strivings. *(Feminine Psychology 124)*

Monisha doesn't get support and acceptance from her husband, and this leads to marital disharmony and thereby develops a dislike for the partner. As Neumann says in *The Fear of the Feminine* that the root cause of modern marital problems is the complications from the patriarchal symbiosis. He further says that in the development of a modern woman, her disappointment in a personal partner who represents patriarchal culture and canon leads to a surrender of the personal relationship to a particular man or to men in general.
So Monisha's dislike of Jiban under such circumstances is a genuine tendency of female psyche. Jiban lacks emotional involvement. He treats his wife as a complete outsider. She doesn't feel at ease in Jiban's home and finds herself planted in the suffocating atmosphere of the joint family. She says, "What a waste, what a waste it has been, this life enclosed in a locked container, merely as an observer, ... All the intervening drama has gone by, unwound itself like a silent, blurred film that has neither entertained nor horrified me" (VC 240). She harps on her feminine need to be loved and understood or at least not to be misunderstood. Johnson interpreting the story of Psyche, observes that it is a woman's psychic nature to say, "Nobody understands me." This can be noticed in Monisha also. To quote Shantha Krishnaswamy, "Her marriage is the excruciating, destructive and negative of all social institutions that trap and torture her isolated sensitive psyche" (250).

Even her suicide is not alien to the mental framework of women. The suicide points out another characteristic of the female mental pattern. Monisha's injured self-esteem and the wounded psyche are exposed when she makes a comparison between herself and her younger sister Amla: "I grow smaller everyday, shrink and lose more and more of my weight, my appurtenances, the symbols of my existence that used to establish me in the eyes of this world. I am already too small to be regarded much by anyone. I will be invisible yet" (VC 139). She is always haunted by her "confused despair." She says, "If I had religious faith, I could easily enough renounce all
this. But I have no faith, no alternative to my confused despair, there is nothing I can give myself to and so I must stay" (121). These words come out of her confused mind. As her life was unbearable for her, she commits suicide. As Bidulata Choudhary puts it, "through her reaction she disregards the idea that 'women place themselves in bondage to men, whether in marriage or out'" (71). Her mind in despair tries to acknowledge the male world that though a woman has no freedom of choice in life, she is bold enough at least to choose either life or death as she cannot tolerate being victimized anymore. Her suicide is actually her desperate feminine need to redeem herself from her humiliated life and an attempt to make it materialize though it is through her self-destruction. Driven by hostile forces, she revenges herself by committing suicide. Johnson's interpretation is worth noting here. He says that in human life, the urge for suicide symbolises a new level of consciousness and it points towards the self-sacrificing nature of women (She 47). To come out of the patriarchal world, she resorts to suicide. Neumann observes, "In the case of woman it is the Psyche itself that forces her out of the patriarchal world and into what is properly hers . . ." (Fear of the Feminine 56).

She shows another basic quality of feminine mind—repression of emotions. The circumstance that forces her to return to her original characteristic pattern of the mind is the loveless circle around her. In love also, Monisha's expectations go wrong. For her, love must be offered
"by itself, silent, discreet, pure, untouched, untouchable" (VC 197). It should be "free of rules, obligations, complicity and all strings of mind or conscience..." (35). But contrary to her expectations, in her married life, there are nothing but obligations, constraints and extortions. Thus she is forced to retreat behind the barred windows. She says that "what separates me from this family is the fact that not one of them ever sleeps out under the stars at night. They have indoor minds, starless and darkness. Mine is all dark now. The blessing it is" (139). She adjusts with the darkness and stillness in her mind, but she is denied even her monologues in the family. So she represses her emotions. On repression of emotions, De Castillejo observes:

Women are most at home when ankle-deep in the unconscious. They can handle emotions. For them a burst of anger clears the air, and a flood of tears is the storm which releases thunderous tension and leaves them calm. The woman, who, in her desire for identification with her man, represses emotions as he has done, deprives not only herself but him as well. (101)

Though she wants an outlet for her emotions, Monisha represses them. Even the loveless atmosphere tortures her mentally, she represses her emotions—shows the basic quality of feminine mind.

Monisha adopts feminine mental trait of resignation as the force of sarcasm on infertility grips her mind. Her inability to bear children causes her
predicament and mental break up. "Like a burst of wild feathers, released full in my face, comes the realization that they are talking of me, my organs, the reasons I cannot have a child" (VC 113). The observation of Sudhir Kakkar is very relevant here:

The prospect of motherhood holds out a composite solution for many of her difficulties. The psychological implications of her social status as a bride and a new comer, the tense, often humiliating relationship with others in her husband's family; her home sickness and sense of isolation, her identity confusion, the awkwardness of marital intimacy, and thus often, the unfulfilled yearnings of her sexual life—these are tangled up in a developmental knot, as it were. With the anticipation of motherhood, this knot begins almost miraculously to be unravelled. (76)

Monisha is devoid of this miracle. When she is subjected to humiliating remarks on this lapse, she feels that she is the rejected one. Her husband also plays a major role in driving her into agonised state of mind. So she has decided to "stand back, apart, in the shadows . . . not to take part" (136). From the perspective of the psychoanalytical theory of Horney, what Monisha adopts is resignation. According to Horney, a person who shows the symptom of withdrawal tries to relieve his tensions by alienating himself from
the "inner battlefield." He loses aspirations and the will for achievement. He reaches a state of non-attachment having no expectations from life. He lives in a world of his own and at the same time tries to save his individuality. As his detachment is not so healthy, it causes disintegration. Finally he becomes alienated from himself. He does not realize that an individual "cannot grow in a vacuum, without closeness to and friction with other human beings" (Neurosis and Human Growth 276). Horney says that resignation in true sense is worth emulating and it can lead to wisdom. But for a neurotic, resignation means "giving up struggle" (260). This may lead to curtailing of life and growth. This is what happens in the case of Monisha.

For Monisha love is an "awake condition of the conscience." She discovers that her conscience "has withered and died away" (VC 136). To quote Virender Parmar, "Finding herself drained of the vital living element, her efforts to energise her to fight the dark confusions in her psyche are aborted" (39). Horney says about the psychic condition of both husband and wife if there is lovelessness in marriage. She rightly observes that marriage is not only a union of two minds, but also a sexual relationship between two individuals of the opposite sex. So naturally, if there is clamour and tumult in this relationship, it can be the deepest source of hatred between the sexes. Then the turbulent psyche of both sex think that nothing of this kind could have happened to us, had we chosen a different mate (Feminine Psychology 144). Her observation of the female psychology is absolutely right. This is
what Monisha thinks when there is marital disharmony. Her thought corresponds to the very basic thought of females when they face such situations in marriage.

It is only towards the end of her life that Monisha loses power of her instincts and she is well aware of it and laments over it. Neumann says that the instincts are the "psychic dominants, which of all unconscious contents are the most important for the psychological totality . . ." (The Great Mother 4). Monisha laments: "If I won a war over the mind, then they lost a war to their instincts and it seems my victory has less value than their loss" (239). The people around her are capable of desires and feelings and hence looked superior to her. Her realization that she is losing her instincts, causes a split in the mind. The image of darkness projects her split psyche:

I will have only the darkness. Only the dark spaces between the stars, for they are the only things on earth that can comfort me, rub and balm into my wounds, into my throbbing head, and bring me this coolness, this stillness, this interval of peace. . . .

This, this empty darkness, has not so much as a dream. It is one unlit waste, a desert to which my heart truly belongs. (VC 140)

This shows the darkness and chaos in her mind that resulted from the realization of the loss of instincts.
The function of a Hetaira is to "awaken the individual psychic life in the male and to lead him through and beyond his male responsibilities towards the formation of a total personality" (De Castillejo 65). Monisha has the qualities of a Hetaira. She wants Jiban to free himself from his imago but he could not liberate himself from his psychic bondage. She has all the qualities of the feminine. She has a tremendous animus transference to Nirode. Jung's observation on instinct and consciousness is apt in this context:

It is just man's turning away from instincts--his opposing himself to instinct--that creates consciousness. Instinct is nature and seeks to perpetuate nature; while consciousness can only seek culture or its denial . . . . As long as we are still submerged in nature we are unconscious, and we live in the security of instinct that knows no problems. (*Modern Man in Search of Soul* 98)

Monisha calls upon consciousness to replace nature. When fear overpowers her psyche, she finds her instinct incapable of responding to the song of the street singers. Her mental turmoil is caused by her awareness of the loss of power of her instincts.

In *Voices in the City*, Monisha, inspite of all the destructive and tormenting forces on her mind, is attached firmly to her basic feminine mental
attitudes, outlooks and instincts. She encounters the attack of the uncongenial atmosphere in the in-laws' house, humiliation of the in-laws, disharmony in marriage, complications of the patriarchal symbiosis and neurotic resignation. All these forces torment her mind. In various situations of confusion, dilemma and mental oppression, Monisha clings to her fundamental characteristic pattern of feminine mind such as tolerance, constructive anxiety, repression of emotion and the need to be loved and understood.

*Bye Bye Blackbird*, Anita Desai's third novel, which presents the predicament of immigrants, is different from her other early novels because unlike her other novels, it has a larger canvas with male characters. Moreover it does not attempt to fathom the female mind in as much depth as has been done in her other novels. As Usha Bande says, "Anita Desai's *Bye Bye Blackbird* is different from her other early novels in the sense that its emphasis is on the cultural factors that shape the individual psyche" (*The Novels of Anita Desai* 119). The novel is the articulations of people who happened to pass through the agonizing and amazing cultural experiences due to the welding of two cultures through marriage.

It is observed that Sarah's psyche is caught in the web of a great force—the impact of cultural difference. The consequences of experiencing this gigantic force torture her mind. She suffers acute mental torture from her disconnection with the parental home. She becomes a victim of anxiety,
insecurity, sarcasm of the public, fear of being uprooted and inferiority complex. Moreover, adjustment problems in marriage and identity crisis haunt her life after marriage. Till the very end of the novel, Sarah is tied to her basic characteristics of the feminine mind—withdrawal, repression of emotion, submission and sacrificing mentality.

The novel revolves around two male characters, but the main story focuses on Sarah who lives in two incompatible cultures. Yasodhara Dalmia makes a valuable comment about Anita Desai that she is interested in people, who are not average, but have retreated, or been driven into some extremity of despair and so turned against, or made to stand against the general current. It is easy to flow with the current; it makes no demands, it costs no effort. But those who cannot follow it, whose heart cries out the "the great No," who fight the current and struggle against it, they know what the demands are and what it costs to meet them. (23)

This comment is absolutely true of Sarah. She marries an Indian and sails against the current.

Adit was attending a party, where Sarah had also been invited and then it was "her shyness and rectitude that brought out the protective in Adit whereas all other guests and the hostess had only made him feel uncertain and possibly even humiliated." In the first meeting itself, he expresses his love
towards her, complementing "you are like a Bengali girl, Bengali women are like that–reserved, quiet. May be you were one in your previous life" (*BBB* 73). But later on he reveals what he actually likes in her: "These English wives are quite manageable really, you know. Not as fierce as they look–very quiet and hardworking as long as you treat them right and roar at them regularly once or twice a week" (29).

Sarah's mind oscillates between reality and unreality. She doesn't have any assurance in her native land. When she is sent to London for a secretarial course her connection with the mother land is cut off. The severance intensifies with her marriage to Adit. She is not at all anxious to visit her parents.

He had begun by wanting to be an exemplary, an affectionate, an attentive son-in-law, but found that this picture of himself simply did not fit in with the pattern Sarah had made of her life in which family counted for so little. It never occurred to him that her marriage to him might be the reason for this severance–or, rather, the silent, barely perceptible drift away from them towards an island independence. (*BBB* 146)

Her disconnection with the parental home is her perennial and constant tension which makes her life unreal. Anxiety and insecurity rule her mind. This is evident in the monologue: "In the centre she sat feeling the waves rock
her and the fear and questioning began. Who is she . . . Both these creatures were frauds, each had a large shadowed element of charade about it . . . her face was only a mask, her body only a costume" (39). Her dilemma in the mind is deep rooted for it is of her being uprooted. Her harmonious life is shaken by her contact with the foreigner Adit. She is forsaken by her parents and her chosen land has no claim on her. Her father "did not rush out and embrace the daughter whom he had not seen since last Christmas, but kept himself out of her way as though he was avoiding her" (142). Her very existence itself is under question. To belong to nowhere is a state that creates psychic confusion and turbulence.

She tries to avoid personal questions and is ashamed of her Indian spouse. Her seclusion is self-imposed and her anonymity is its reason. She tells Adit that if he had not married her or if he left her, she would be a lunatic like Miss. Moffit. As her introverted and brooding nature is scared of this situation, she submits to Adit. Her personality disintegrates and she likes to be in solitude. She feels lost and anonymous. This frustration leads to a painful outcry: "If only she were allowed to keep her one role apart from the other, she would not feel so cut and slashed into living bleeding pieces. Apart, apart. That inevitable, cool, clear, quiet state of apartness" (43). She takes recourse to withdrawal. The force that acts on Sarah throughout her married life is cultural difference, and right from the very beginning she approaches this with a quiet mind of withdrawal, a feminine characteristic.
She had to suffer the consequences of inter-cultural marriage. The ill-effects of her marriage attack her mind as wild and powerful forces to torture her. She does not join the group discussions of her colleagues. "Sarah made no effort to join them. She was still breathing hard at having so narrowly escaped having to answer personal questions. It would have wrecked the whole day to have to discuss Adit with Julia, . . . She was willing to listen . . . " (BBB 36). When she stammers on their queries, they commented, "If she's that ashamed of having an Indian husband, why did she go and marry him?" (37). So she learnt to keep others talk of themselves rather than refer to her. After her marriage she is unsure of herself in white society. When others enjoy themselves, though she doesn't like the talk, she never expresses her feelings. But her state of mind is conveyed, "She did not hear their laughter or understand their language. She seemed to hear nervousness and shame and sadness, if such things can be said to have speech. Shame. The shame of it all" (22). Her deliberate efforts to keep her personal world away from external world make her torn, mentally and emotionally. She becomes a schizophrenic person who is in search of identity. Her uneasiness intensifies when anybody tries to know her. She labels Philippa as "an aggressor" and "a spy." She has been undergoing the pressure of the force of sarcasm from the society due to her marriage.

The repressed emotions in her psyche lead her to a sense of alienation in her own land. She tries to avoid the fearful moments when her colleagues
pester her with personal questions regarding her Indian husband and the preparation of cooking curry. Her two diverse roles in school and in house impart mental torture and disturb the psychic structure. Her play acting with the masked face causes loss of mental energy which leads to a split between her ego and persona. She likes her role as a secretary. The copy books and registers are like a fortress for her. Her anxiety and fears disappear when she takes up her role of the Head's secretary. But it seems that in the inner core of her heart, she suffers from guilty consciousness. She is compelled to do what she hates most. All these troubles are forces which stem from cultural difference and they oppress her mentally.

In order to have a sense of belonging, one can unite with the outside world in a number of ways. Sarah adopts masochistic passion (submission) to find unity with the outside world. Another way is the sadistic (domineering) one. In submission, the individual becomes a part of somebody. Here Sarah, when rejected by her parents and the society around, quietly submits to Adit. Masochism turned submission has been found as a characteristic of the feminine mind. She does not protest to him and is ever ready to sacrifice anything to save her marriage which is the only way she can transcend her separateness. Johnson says that a woman is often embarrassed to discover that though marriage is a total commitment for her whereas it is not so all encompassing for her husband. Sarah embarrasses when Adit shouts, "my son will be born in India," but she suppresses her protest and turns to her
household duties (*BBB* 204). According to Freud, the basis of psychical conflict lay in repression of ideas, impulses, wishes and phantasies. In order to accompany her husband to the East, she refuses a promotion in her job. Johnson remarks that in the present century more women are ready to take up the task of evolution—personal growth. On the way there will be man-made towers that represent cultural legacy of our civilization. But women are left with their own tower and solitary way to personal growth. On the way to fulfill their task, they should not show their usual feminine mental characteristics. Johnson further says that the personal growth of a woman is a real task and it is equally disastrous if she undertakes or refuses the task. In the novel, Sarah opts for the latter and it proves disastrous—loss of integrity. Erich Fromm interprets such symbiotic relationship:

> Both persons involved have lost their integrity and freedom, they live each other and from each other, satisfying their craving for closeness, yet suffering from the back of inner strength and self-reliance which would require freedom and independence and furthermore constantly threatened by the conscious and unconscious hostility which is bound to arise from the symbiotic relationship. (19)

As Sarah represses her emotions, as Freud says, it creates a psychic conflict. Moreover, Sarah loses her integrity and freedom. From this symbiotic
relationship, there develops conscious and unconscious hostility between them. Social sarcasm on cultural difference acts as a strong force that curtails her freedom and the feminine instinct forces her to repress her emotions, and the repression leads to hostility between she and her husband. As Neumann says, "The cultural symbiosis of the patriarchal marriage works out much less favourably for the Feminine and for women than it does for the Masculine and for men" (FF 33).

Sarah makes sacrifice for the sake of the family. Because of this she suffers mentally, and ultimately she becomes a slave to her husband and is on the verge of a neurotic symptom. "She was experiencing an unsettling wave of that intermittent schizophrenia that Adit said was a result of her having been an Indian in past incarnation . . . " (BBB 139). Horney observes that suffering as a neurotic symptom is one of the conditions under which marriage can hold its own against a very strong incest prohibition. Conditions in the domestic as well as professional life of some women force them to make undue sacrifices for the sake of the family. Finally one partner becomes a slave to the demands of the other. In such cases marriage is purchased at the cost of neurosis (Feminine Psychology 240). In the novel, Sarah sacrifices her freedom and integrity at the altar of her husband's demands. Sacrificing the basic human rights of freedom and integrity at the feet of family is more a feminine mental quality than masculine.
De Castillejo observes that the worst kind of confusion occurs when a woman unconsciously hands over herself to the spokesman of the level of masculine focused consciousness. "She then allows him to pronounce all sorts of collective opinions which are not quite relevant to the situation and are not what she herself thinks or feels" (Knowing Woman 20). De Castillejo says that it is "animus possession." In the novel, Sarah has animus possession which allows Adit to express his opinions regarding her which are not what she thinks. As discussed in chapter III, Neumann remarks, "Affiliation with the patriarchal form of our culture has made it possible for woman to separate herself from the state of nature in the primal relationship and has led to her relationship to the Masculine as father and husband, animus and guide" (FF 25). The root of all these is her confused psyche. What Sarah does or allows is quite normal for a woman's mind, for Irigaray observes, "To inhabit is the fundamental trait of man's being. . . . Of women, who, it seems, remain within perception without need of name or concept" (An Ethics of Sexual Difference 141).

Sarah is hypersensitive, complex, unique and at the same time intelligent. Her alienation is because of her cross-cultural marriage. Her psyche is totally disintegrated after her marriage due to the cultural difference. Culture plays a pivotal role in the development and working of the mind. An observation by Freud is very relevant:
The child's super ego is in fact constructed on the model not of its parents but of its parents' super ego; the contents which fill it are the same and it becomes the vehicle of tradition and of all the time–resisting judgements of value which have propagated themselves in this manner from generation to generation. . . . Mankind never lives entirely in the present. The past, the tradition of the race and of the people lives on in the ideologies of the super ego, and yields only slowly to the influences of the present and to new changes; and so long as it operates through the super ego it plays a powerful part in human life, independently of economic conditions. (*The Future of an Illusion* 66)

Sarah and Adit have adjustment problems in several matters especially in customs. It is due to the cultural differences. Sarah doesn't like his Bengali music. She cannot join him and his friends in their conversation and jokes and remains a foreigner in their world. She was quite alone in the madding crowd. She had problems in wearing the Indian sari and jewellery. When wearing the sari she says, "But now I feel like a Christmas tree," he flares up in anger—"I suppose all Indian women look like Christmas trees to you—or perhaps like clowns, because they wear saris and jewellery" (193). All these demonstrate male chauvinism and the variation of individual super ego due to cultural difference, and Sarah becomes a victim of these forces.
The maladjustment in her married life, the outcome of her cross-cultural conjugal bond contributes its own share to her disturbed psyche. When Adit receives a letter from his parents, he does not take pains to translate it to Sarah. When she insists that they must go to India, he rebukes her remarking, "Have we the money? . . . or the time?" (46). When Sarah's cat puts its nose in the rice and she does not bother to change it, he is greatly disturbed. Also she does not like him enter in her personal world. Rajiv Sharma rightly observes, "Her unconscious mind is badly disturbed by this marriage because this has alienated her from her friends, mother and society. But she is a devoted wife, and that is why she accompanies her husband to India and bids goodbye to England forever" (115). She was willing to accompany him. Throughout her married life, we can notice a conflict between acceptance and rejection. Still she is well aware of her individuality. Inspite of all the adjustmental problems, she is willing to accompany him to India. She does this out of her concern for the family and that too through sacrificing her existence and individuality. This mentality is a fundamental quality of the feminine mind.

After her marriage, she faces an identity crisis. "She had become nameless, she had shed her name as she had shed her ancestry and identity" (BBB 31). Sarah searches for her self-identity. Just like any other woman she tries to explore her self. A woman has to play a number of roles in her life and in that complicated process she loses herself. Sarah had to play different
roles—"one in the morning at school and one in the evening at home, that she could not even tell with how much sincerity she played one role or the other" (34). This identity crisis confuses her. In the novel, we are told of the concealed hostility that Sarah has generated among her colleagues by marrying a "wog." On the road, she is greeted with expressions like "Hurry, hurry, Mrs. Curry!" and "Where's the fire, pussy cat?" (37). She walks "drawing across her face a mask of secrecy" (35). This loss of identity torments her mind. De Castillejo opines that today's women are confused about their identity. This confuses everyone who is around her. She suggests that what woman wants at this juncture is inner clarity. By inner clarity she means, "conscious awareness of being on one's thread, knowing what one knows, and having an ability quite simply and without ostentation to stand firm on one's own inner truth" (Knowing Woman 137). If Sarah had this inner clarity—know herself and stand firm—she could have overcome this situation. But when the double life causes inner struggle, she is confused. She asks herself:

Who was she—Mrs. Sen who had been married in a red and gold Benares brocade sari one burning bronzed day in September, or Mrs. Sen, the Head's secretary, who sent out the bills and took in the cheques, kept order in the school and was known for her efficiency?" (BBB 35)
She oscillates between two selves—private and public life. The stress and strain of these two forces cause inner struggle and confusion.

Sarah suffers because of inferiority complex regarding her Indian husband. Adit does not consider her feelings. The mental gap between the husband and the wife becomes very wide. As there is a wide gulf between them, she hides her tensions and feelings from him and withdraws to herself. As a part of her withdrawal, she wants to keep emotional distance. She exposes this when she receives her mother's letter, advising her to think seriously before leaving for India. She is impatient with the letter and asks Adit not to call her Sally, which reminds her of her mother. She wants to proclaim her individuality rejecting all emotional ties. She asks him, "Don't you treat me the way she always does—as though I'm not an individual with my own life to lead . . .?" (217). It seems that she values her individuality above her affection for her parents. But this is a part of her self-negation and self-hate. This kind of behaviour and attitude is often observed among women.

Another terrific force that takes hold of her mind is from her own inner self-fear, anxiety and apprehensions of an unknown land, India. The dream of gigantic water mammoth signifies the terror in her unconscious because of self-hate which symbolises her mental split. She wishes to hide her identity, move away from her real self. She wonders, "If she would ever be allowed to
step off the stage, leave the theatre and enter a real world—whether English or Indian, she did not care, she wanted only its sincerity, its truth" (BBB 39). When Adit decides to leave for India, Sarah's mind is full of uncertainties. She becomes doubtful whether she would regain warmth and personality there or whether Adit would help her to emerge out of her alienation. When Adit decides to go back to India, her psyche is caught up in three dimensional crisis—"one pursuing Adit on his voyage to the East, one holding back to cradle and comfort the uneasy, unborn child, and the third tackling the exigencies of a career that had surprisingly revealed a future" (207). Ultimately, she overcomes her psychic problem of fear, though she passes through a painful experience while bidding adieu to her native place. When it is time for her to depart, she realizes:

It was her English self that was receding and fading and dying, she knew, it was her English self to which she must say goodbye. That was what hurt—not saying good-bye to England because England, would remain as it was, only at a greater distance from her, but always within the scope of a return visit. English, she whispered, and then her instinctive reaction was to clutch at something and hold on to what was slipping through the fingers already. (221)
Finally she recognises what the situation demands: to forego her cultural identity to adopt a new culture. Here anxiety, as it is natural, is constructive and so helps her to encounter the ultimate reality. When Adit prepares to leave for India, she accepts the situation. "Everyone about her had decided, suddenly, to dump their surplus on to her. It was becoming an avalanche" (BBB 206). Her decision gives him inspiration. Jung's observation on feminine mind is apt in this context:

Woman, with her very dissimilar psychology, is and always has been a source of information about things for which a man has no eyes. She can be of his inspiration; her intuitive capacity, often superior to man's can give him timely warning, and her feeling always directed towards the personal, can show him ways which his own less personally accented feeling would never have discovered. (Aspects of the Feminine 87)

Sarah is different from Desai's peculiar female order. She undergoes mental torture, but she sacrifices a lot to maintain the harmony of family life. "She would sacrifice anything, anything at all, in order to maintain, however superficially, a semblance of order and discipline in her house in her relationship with him" (BBB 200). Virender Parmar's interpretation of the characterisation of Sarah is worth quoting:
Sarah's eros enables her to establish a healthy rapport both with husband and Dev; her logoic credentials inspire her to seek identity, authenticity, or self-actualization. It is true that after marriage, Sarah experiences a psychic clash at the ego-persona level; but survives those external and internal onslaughts primarily because of a refined consciousness. It appears ironical that Adit despite his roots in the Indian matrix, where anima is richly laden with eros, does not exhibit such dimensions in his relationship with his wife. (132)

It is mainly the psychic problems of immigrants that Anita Desai projects through her characterisation of Sarah, the non-Indian woman who has a will of her own. Her problem is the attack of hostile forces of cultural difference on her mind. But with her truly feminine characteristics of the mind, she accepts the situation and adjusts with the problem. She is tied to her basic feminine instincts.

We can conclude that the negative impacts of cultural difference—identity crisis, lack of freedom and integrity, impediments in the progress of professional life, problems in family life, inferiority complex and social sarcasm—are the various forces that drag and torment Sarah's mind. Inspite of all these, she shows a leniency towards her basic feminine characteristics of
the mind such as sacrificing mentality, habit of remaining within perception, total commitment for marriage, withdrawal and repression of wishes.

As Mani Meitei remarks:

*Where Shall We Go This Summer?* is a subtle psychological study of human personalities which are at war. At a deeper psychological level Sita's quest for her identity is an outcome of the husband-wife conflict. The strange and overtly insensitive nature of Raman causes serious libidinous problems to the mental life of Sita. (36)

It is observed that Sita's psychic struggle is caused by certain hostile forces such as unpleasant childhood experiences, sarcasm and the indifference of life partner, rage and the adjustment problems in loveless marriage. When these forces torment her mind, she resorts to her basic qualities of the feminine mind—awareness of individuality, repression, isolation, introversion and dependence on life partner for love and affection.

Sita goes to Manori "in order not to give birth" (*WSWGTS* 31). She had two protests to express through this act. One is the protest against the society and its violence: "More and more she lost all feminine, all maternal belief in childbirth, all faith in it, and began to fear it as yet one more act of violence, and murder in a world that had more of them in it than she could take" (56). The other is her protest against the role her husband and children
had designed for her: "She had four children. . . . Her husband was puzzled, therefore, when the fifth time she told him she was pregnant, she did so with a quite paranoiac show of rage, fear and revolt" (32). She is unwilling to give birth to the fifth child. The opinion of De Castillejo regarding the sacredness of life is worth quoting in this context:

To the Church and to the civilized man the destruction of a life that has already begun seems to be more heinous than to prevent conception. But I am not at all sure that this is true of woman's basic instincts. Doubtless, men resent the casting out of their seed by a woman. But to her the sacredness of the man's seed only applies if she loves him. The deeper her love, the more total is her acceptance of the new life. But where there is no love she is singularly unsentimental about life. . . . It is man who has evolved principles about the sacredness of life (which he very imperfectly lives up to) and women have passionately adopted them as their own. But principles are abstract ideas which are not, I believe, inherent in feminine psychology. Women's basic instinct is not concerned with the idea of life as such, but with the fact of life. The ruthlessness of nature which discards unwanted life is deeply engrained in her make-up. (93-94)
Sita has every right to decide whether to give birth or not to the child. If a woman is capable of creation it is only she has the right to decide to do or not to do. Quoting Jung, Johnson opines that the shadow, the repressed potentialities in a person remain in the unconscious and gather energy and ultimately erupt into the conscious lives (44). In the case of women, the demand for growth in consciousness often comes from the shadow at a critical time. In the novel, for Sita, the idea of not to give birth and to be away comes from her shadow—her repressed rage. So Sita's thoughts and action are not alien to feminine psyche.

Her rage is the externalisation of her psychic turmoil. Desai says, "It was as though for seven months she had collected inside her all her resentments, her fears, her rage and now she flung them outward, flung them from her" (WSWGTS 33). Within her mind there is self-tormenting elements. She wants to continue her suffering and so she is reluctant to give birth to the child. In Horney's terms, it is a vindicative satisfaction at the self-inflicted pain. She is angry towards all—Raman, her children and even to Moses. Sita's mind is in the grip of rage, an inner force.

She is a victim of loveless marriage. She says, Raman marries her "out of pity, out of lust, and out of a sudden will for adventure, and because it was inevitable . . ." (99). Her husband ignores her instincts and she couldn't bear the indifference of her husband. Her dreams of love and affection from her
life-partner are shattered. As Neumann observes, for woman, the masculine presses forward and signifies redemption to consciousness. Woman's seemingly greater dependence on man and the Masculine is related to this basic situation. So Sita's dependence on Raman for love and affection is a truly feminine mental characteristic. The husband-wife relationship turns out to an identity crisis. She is an introvert quite contrary to her husband. She goes to Manori as a kind of self-exile in her search for identity. When she goes to Manori, Raman does not try to dissuade or console her. "He found her unbearable in her distress, the drama of her distress." He remarked lightly: "So you're running away—like the bored runaway wife in—in a film" (WSWGT 36). Moses, the caretaker of the island house is shocked to see her plight. He knew her as a spirited and cheerful girl. The extraordinary brilliance that was on her face has now become dry and worn.

When the story progresses, we get glimpses of Sita's mental working. To quote Madhusudan Prasad, "Unlike legendary Rama and Sita, Raman and Sita in this novel do not represent an ideal husband-wife relationship; instead they are ill-assorted couple, lacking altogether in harmony in their lives" (65). She looks for her husband's companionship which he fails to provide. De Castillejo speaks of today's women, their psychology:

More and more they (women) are becoming conscious individuals, no longer content to be solely occupied with
procreation. They are conditioned and educated to play their part in society as a whole; and within their marriages tend to be as much concerned with being their husband's companion as mother of his children. (95)

What a woman needs is a harmonious working of mind and body. What man thinks is that a woman has only body and no mind. He wants her to think through his mind. Sita becomes aware of her individuality when she bears the fifth child. She is no longer contented with being the mother of four children of her husband. She longs to have the company of her partner, and human relationship is the very quintessence of feminine sensibility.

Sita keeps her feelings repressed. Repression of emotion and feelings is very peculiar to women's mind. Sita hates her husband and at the same time in the inner core of her heart, she recognizes him: "He never hesitated—everything was so clear to him, and simple: life must be continued and all its business . . . that was why the children turned to him, sensing him to be the superior in courage in leadership" (WSWGTS 138-39). Her unchanged and insensitive husband causes great agony in her mind:

He had nothing more to give her, or he was just unaware of her needs and demands. He raised his hand and stroked Karan's hair with a gentleness she herself ached to attract, and she stared at
him, bored into him with her eyes, wanting and not being given what she wanted. (132)

Sexually repressed Sita wants to lead a life of isolation. She wants to seek satisfaction from a world of phantasies. According to Freud it is characteristic of introversion.

Introversion describes the deflection of the libido away from the possibilities of real satisfaction and its excessive accumulation upon phantasies previously tolerated as harmless. An introverted person . . . is in an unstable condition; the next disturbance of the shifting forces will cause symptoms to develop, unless he can yet find other outlets for his pent-up libido. (Complete Psychological Works 382-83)

Sita's mind exhibits the very basic trait of feminine mind-repression, isolation and introversion.

Sitting in a balcony, Sita laments, "life would continue thus inside this small, enclosed area, with these few characters churning around and then past her leaving her always in this grey, dull lit, empty shell" (54). She looks for a mingling of body, mind and soul completely. Horney's observation on the biological difference between the sexes is relevant here:
Now one of the exigencies of the biological differences between the sexes is this: that the man is actually obliged to go on proving his manhood to the woman. There is no analogous necessity for her. Even if she is frigid, she can engage in sexual intercourse and conceive and bear a child. She performs her part by merely being, without any doing—a fact that has always filled men with admiration and resentment. The man on the other hand has to do something in order to fulfil himself.

(Feminine Psychology 145)

Raman has to prove his manhood, and she bears the fifth child though she starves for love. She "performs" well for his fulfilment and resentment and thereby she is once again showing her characteristic feminine mental pattern.

Raman often mocks at and some times ignores Sita completely and this is due to sadism on the part of him. This sadism in the form of mockery works as a powerful force causing her mental pain and agony. A few instances from the novel will throw light on this observation.

On their way back from Ajanta, Sita admires the foreign tourist's bravery. But Raman does not like this and comments that the tourist is not brave but only foolish to wander about India. Raman's total dismissal of her opinion disturbs her as she is sensitive, and sensitivity is predominantly a feminine trait. Quite often he mocks at her. We can attribute this difference
in attitude to the difference in masculine and feminine psychology. Hannah More rightly writes in the introduction to her *Essays Designed for Young Ladies*:

Women have generally quicker perceptions; men have just sentiments—Women consider how things may be properly laid. . . . Women speak to shine or to please, men to convince or confute—Women admire what is brilliant, men what is solid. . . . Women are fond of incident, men of argument—Women admire passionately, men approve cautiously. . . . Men refuse to give way to the emotions they actually feel, while women sometimes affect to be transported beyond what the occasion will justify.

(9-10)

More argues that the mind of each sex, has "some kind of natural bias" and it is the difference in mind that form the "distinction of character" (4). Raman and Sita react differently and to some extent it can be due to their psychic difference, but not to the full.

Once she reacts very strongly to a quarrel between Rosie, her maid servant and other servants. But Raman disapproves of her reactions and accuses her of being melodramatic. Such responses from her husband make her psyche wounded. Such incidents make her more and more alienated from him. Not only Raman, her children also ignore her. Reacting differently is
quite understandable, but accusing and ignoring off and on are sadistic and hence intolerable for her.

On another occasion, Sita sees an eagle being attacked by a few crows. She tries to save it but in vain. Raman is well aware of Sita's sensitive nature and how the incident had troubled her mind. But the next day he draws her attention to the mutilated dead eagle and purposely remarks: "They (the crows) have made a good job of your eagle" (41). His intention is very clear—to make her mind mutilated like the dead eagle. This is nothing but sadistic pleasure. Because of all these incidents, Sita yearns for a life of peace. So she goes to Manori in search of her true self and identity. As Gajendra Kumar comments, "Sita and her husband receive and react as if they were the denizens of different worlds" (4).

Sita is deprived of love and affection and this creates self-alienation. The Third Force Psychologists Karen Horney and Abraham Maslow give explanation for self-alienation and self-actualization respectively. According to Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of basic needs, all have psychological survival needs such as need for safety, for love, for self-esteem and self-actualization. These needs are arranged in an order of hierarchy. Second to the safety need is the feeling of belonging, of love. These lead to self-esteem. Once the fundamental needs are fulfilled, other needs rise up till one reaches self-actualization. Deprivation of these will produce neurotic
conditions and the person will be alienated from his real self (14-15). This is what really happens in the case of Sita. Even at these odd situations, Sita reacts not against the usual order of female mentality but exhibits a true feminine trait.

Unpleasant childhood is another force that torments her mind and affects her future life. Sita is motherless and neglected by her father. She suffers hypocrisy and partiality from her father. Her childhood experiences had a vital role in influencing her mental state. The experiences of childhood lie embedded in the individual's consciousness and later they influence the person's behaviour. Her father's unusual attachment towards her step-sister kept repressed in her mind. This creates a sense of rebelliousness. Later her father died and he could not provide her a home. She did not feel a sense of belonging. According to Maslow, human beings have a fundamental desire to "belong." If a child has a feeling of safety and security, he grows into a healthy child. Otherwise it will lead to self-alienation. Sita was desperately in need of someone to belong to. At this juncture Raman appears on the scene:

He looked exactly like a tired manager drawing the curtains together, locking up the empty theatre. . . . It was as though he had been expressly sent by Providence to close the theatrical era of her life, her strange career and lead her out of the revived
theatre into the thin sunlight of the ordinary, the everyday, the empty and the meaningless. (*WSWGS 100*)

The union with Raman does not contribute much to her emotional life. Sita's dream to get love from Raman is never realized after their marriage. Her rebelliousness is further aggravated by her husband's mechanical attitude towards her. She is alienated from the world around her and dreams of a world of fantasy. She suffers from mental confusion. Raman did not recognize her self-effacing drives and longing for love. She expects idealised love from Raman. She tells: "I thought I could live with you and travel alone—mentally, emotionally. But after that day, that wasn't enough" (148).

Unhealthy childhood experiences and its after effects such as sense of lack of belongingness, shattering of expectation of married life and the frustration thereafter all act on her mind as unpleasant forces.

Unpleasant childhood experiences had a strong and wild effect on Sita's mind. They torture and torment her mentally. Sita's father who had been a saint to his disciples, a wizard to the villagers, led a strange life as far as his relationship with women was concerned. He had an affair with a mistress and an unusual tenderness towards her step sister Rekha. This childhood memory fills her mind with confusion and she kept her feelings repressed. Here Usha Bande's remark is worth quoting: "Sita cannot corroborate her father's dubious ways. It seeps down her psyche as a bad
human experience" (Indian Women Novelists 107). She suffers from mental disorder and it is worsened by her husband's matter-of-fact attitude towards her.

She lost her mother's affection in her childhood, the most essential thing a child, especially a female child longs for. It is a universal fact that a mother plays a pivotal role in the mental make up of a child. Psychologically, it is the mother who gives the psychic knowledge of differentiating the conscious and the unconscious urges and guides to selfhood. Sita's incapability to relate to her in-laws and children may be because of her lack of instructive training from her mother. Sita's mother revolted against the defined parameters of the father and discarded him. But her mother's absence has caused serious repercussions in the mental growth of Sita. In an interview with Jasbir Jain, the novelist herself says:

Sita has had an unusual childhood, she is led to expect life to continue to be an extremely unusual, full of large, meaningful happenings, whereas life comes to her as very trivial, full of disappointments, it comes as a tremendous depression to her. Really her will is not to give birth to a child in such a world. There is no sense of contentment at all, it is a rebellion right through to the last moment. When she realises what she has to live to, she has to compromise. (Stairs to the Attic 11)
Sita's mind is controlled by, in Freudian terms, "pleasure-principle." Desai delineates this psychic state of her protagonist through objective correlatives. The pathetic sight of an old man and a fatally tubercular but beautiful woman looking lovingly at one another suggests the pathetic mental plight of Sita in the harsh world. She tells Raman:

Her head lay in the lap of an old man. Much older than her. . . . He looked down at her and caressed her face. . . . One does not see such an expression on human faces over. Quite divine—or insane. . . . She was ill, dying perhaps. . . . they were like a work of art—so apart from the rest of us. (WSWGTS 106)

This kind of love is the one that Sita looks for. In her perverted state of mind Sita derives pleasure out of the sight of strangers. The sight of a foreign tourist, the young Muslim woman in the lap of an old man and a perfect work of art give her much pleasure. They are sources of aesthetic pleasure, stimulating and also an outlet from boredom and loneliness. Freud says, "It seems that our entire psychical activity is bent upon procuring pleasure and avoiding pain, that is automatically regulated by the pleasure-principle" (A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis 365). Sita's mind is no doubt governed by the pleasure-principle.

The incident of the crows' attack on the eagle is an objective correlative to Sita's psychic trouble. Eagle symbolises "the animus, the
ambitious feminine intellect. . ." (Jolande Jacobi 116). The eagle incapable of flight is Sita's infantile psyche incapable of soar in the higher realms. Lacking positive pull and thrust, it remains on the earth. It symbolises Sita's need for security and love. Her attempts to save the eagle reflect libidinal energies. The eagle-crows fight in the novel symbolises the subtle personality clash between Sita and Raman. The "scimitar beaks" that pierce the eagle represent Sita's fight against the masculine world (39). Moreover, the beaks also stand for male chauvinism unleashed against the feminine instinct.

Sita wishes to withdraw into an illusory world. But later she realised the futility of her illusion and compromised with the harsh realities of life, returns to Bombay. Sita's journey to Manori leads her to self-discovery. As soon as she lands on the island, her illusion of the romantic life collapses. Her search for authenticity on the island proves to be faux pas. It is true that the island had an impregnable impact on Sita. Finally she comes out of her alienated island as a new woman. Sita's life saga which represents the struggle and final evolution is a normal and natural characteristic of oppressed female life. Johnson says that a woman often lives some part of her life under male domination in outer life and if she tries to avoid it, she will fall under the domination of her inner man, the animus. This is the chronicle of a woman's life (She 27). Sita's struggles in life demonstrate this observation.
The novelist portrays what her heroine feels, how her mind works at each and every moment when Raman visits her. When she hears the news of his likely visit, she first experiences a sense of sadness and after that a "warm expansion of relief, of pleasure, of surprise" (128). The working of her mind is well pictured in the novel:

She went into her room and shut the door on their giddy, whirling excitement and then—strangest of all—felt rising in her a positive cyclone of feminine instinct, a mental reckoning of the cloths she had with her, preferring this, rejecting that, seeing herself thus. Then, with a swift onslaught of shame, she rejected such thoughts and did not change, on purpose. . . . (129)

She wants to hear that he has come to see her. But he has come because Menaka had called him. This creates a sense of emptiness and mental shock:

Their betrayal had torn her open with such violence, now violence poured from her like blood. In it was also the shame, the disappointment, he had not come to fetch her, as she had supposed; he had come because Menaka had called him. He had betrayed her too. They had all betrayed her. Why? (132-33)

She becomes a split personality. She does not know "which half of her life was real and which unreal? Which of her selves was true, which false? All she knew was that there were two periods of her life, each in direct opposition
to the other" (135). This shows her psychic ambivalence. We can also feel the fluctuating emotions in her mind. She is divided within herself. From aggressiveness and revolt, she turns to withdrawal. She neglects her dress. She is disinterested in life. A psychic inertia rules her spirit. From the island she moves back to the mainland. All these mental reactions and emotions of Sita are normal basic reactions of feminine mind at similar situations.

Thus Sita comes back to Raman compromising with life. Usha Bande says:

This compromise with life is gained after a prolonged period of inter-psychic conflicts. Sita shifts from compliance to rebellion and then to withdrawal, again coming back to compliance. Since she vacillates between her changing strategies, her behaviour is inconsistent and leaves much scope for disparity between her thinking and actions. (The Novels of Anita Desai 106)

But Sita's return to her husband doesn't mean her failure. She is well-equipped to live in this world. Her fight is against the male dominance. Sita attains what Elaine Showalter calls "female phase"—"a phase of self-discovery, a turning inward free from the dependency of opposition, a search for identity" (A Literature of Their Own 13). As Sharad Srivastava puts it:
Her perceptions of her husband and society have not undergone any change . . . Sita returns not because she thinks that to be "accepted" is significant to a woman. She returns because she has learnt that inspite of the attitude of society the "new woman" must not escape from it. (66)

She comes back as a brave new woman to face the challenges and the realities of the brave new world.

Robert A. Johnson in *She*, interpreting the myth of Psyche, tells us how Psyche overcomes the obstacles in life. He rightly observes:

The earth bound individual may look down in to the crashing, swirling confusion and feel that there is no way to sort it all out. From this narrow point of view she cannot see clearly enough to have a workable perspective. It is at this moment that she needs her eagle vision, which has a much broader perspective and can see the great flow of life. When the small bit of river bank looks impossible, the eagle perspective opens up the next step—probably a small step in light of normal ambition, but a necessary step for progress in personal growth. (63-64)

When Sita reached Manori, she was in utter confusion. She wants to overcome it but couldn't see clearly a "workable perspective." At this juncture, her eagle vision which has a much wider perspective comes to her
rescue—to see "the great flow of life." It provides her the very essential step in personal growth—compromise and facing the reality. Johnson goes on to say, "The deepest interior mystery for a woman may not be named or given any label. It is the essence of that feminine quality which must remain a mystery, certainly to men, and hardly less so for women. It is not less than the element of healing itself" (71). Sita compromises with the feminine quality of compromise which ultimately heals all her psychic problems. As Johnson says, for a woman, often whatever has wounded her becomes instrumental to her healing.

When Sita is joined by Raman, she tells him that in their married life, happy occasions were so rare that she can recall only one such occasion. He retorts:

Any woman—any one would think you inhuman. You have four children. You have lived comfortably, always, in my house. You've not had worries. Yet your happiest memory is not of your children or your home but of strangers, seen for a moment, some lovers in a park. Not even your own children. (WSWGT S 147)

Sita is not understood by Raman. He never tries to understand her mind. He simply exclaims: "Don't be silly" (33). Thus instead of providing psychological assurance, he leads her psyche to some kind of barrenness.
There takes place a transformation in Sita. When she goes to Manori, she discovers the shadow in her psyche. The island does not offer her anything which was once very glamorous. She confronts with the hard realities there. She recognizes the dark side of her psyche—the ego-complex. She discovers her real self. Finally she rejects the negative feminine, clears shadow residues and accepts life with its entire natural stride.

Sita questions the role which women have been taught to accept. They have been taught that motherhood is the climax of womanhood. She tells Raman, "Children only mean anxiety, concern, pessimism, not happiness" (107). She comes to realize that "escape" is cowardly. She says, "I was saying No—but positively, positively saying No. There must be some who say No, Raman!" (48-49). Horney's observation on the mental working of frigid women is very apt here. She observes that when one peeps into the unconscious psychic life of the frigid women, one can meet a very determined rejection of the female role. The conscious ego of frigid women does not show any signals of such an active rejection of femininity. The general appearance and the conscious attitude can be altogether feminine. This can be due to factors such as social discrimination against women and by accusations against the husband or men in general. Sita rejects the female role of giving birth to a child. Horney again says:
To the extent that the envy of the male is in the foreground, these wishes express themselves in resentment against the male, in an inner bitterness against the male as the privileged one—similar to the concealed hostility of the worker against his employer and his efforts to defeat the employer or to weaken him psychologically by the thousand means of daily guerilla warfare. (*Feminine Psychology* 75)

This picture can be observed in innumerable marriages. Horney opines:

Such an unconscious attitude of envy renders the woman blind to her own virtues. Even motherhood appears only as a burden to her. Everything is measured against the masculine—that is, by a yard stick intrinsically alien to her—and therefore she easily perceives herself as insufficient. (75)

She says that even in some gifted, talented and recognized women we can notice such kind of uncertainty. The source of this kind of nature is their masculinity complex. In the novel, for Sita, motherhood is a burden—a cause of anxiety. She thinks so because of her unconscious bitterness towards Raman. This attitude is deep rooted in her masculinity complex.

Sita demonstrates through her life that female mental life is not free of oppressive forces, but full of them and they make the feminine psyche a mess and confusion. Inspite of all the hostile forces, women should show a
leniency toward the original basic pattern of their psyche and this will lead them to ultimate victory. The rebellious protagonist Sita faces very strong forces such as indifferent and unsympathetic family, male domination and traumatic childhood and its dangerous consequences in future life. Sita rebels against all these and reacts to them in her feminine way and finally retreats to a sense of compromise, a truly basic characteristic of feminine mind. Throughout her life saga, Sita is firmly attached to her various fundamental and original characteristics of feminine mind.

While psychoanalytically interpreting the female protagonists of Anita Desai, within the purview of their roles in family, society and culture, certain facts emerge out regarding their psyche. The range of reactions of the female protagonists at various situations reveals explicitly their mental make-up. Their inner crisis splendidly bespeaks the psychic problems that have torn the whole fabric of their mental balance. *Cry, the Peacock, Voices in the City, Bye Bye Blackbird* and *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* are Desai's novels which embody the fact that feminine psyche is capable of self-sacrificing qualities which lend them grandeur and gravity. It is found that Maya, Monisha, Sarah and Sita, even when they encounter vicious forces of life from outside and inside, return to their original feminine instincts. These instincts include all factors—physical, psychological and emotional—towards which women spontaneously lean and which they naturally desire.
If the early novels of Desai are viewed from a psychoanalytical perspective, we can see that the mind of the female protagonists is an arena where opposing forces both biological and psychological are eternally battling with the characters' very existence itself. The protagonists, despite these wild forces that attack their mind, show their spiritual will to return to their original feminine instincts and they cling to their natural and basic characteristics of the feminine psyche such as repression of emotion, sacrificing mentality, submission, awareness of individuality, isolation, introversion, tolerance, constructive anxiety, sexual interest, dependence on life partner for love and affection and the like. The oppressive forces working against the original characteristics of the mind often lead the protagonists to mental struggle.