

### CHAPTER 3: A Parallel analysis of psychological imbalances in *Madame Bovary* and *Cry, the Peacock*

The women that Desai and Flaubert deal with can be categorized as victims of similar circumstances as the problems in both their lives started after marriage. Their lives are regulated as per their husband's moods and they had to reluctantly adjust to it inspite of being in a no-comfort zone. With a language very simple and an easy narrative style, they have justified the life of these two simple middle class women, Emma and Maya who tame multiple desires inside them but later on are unable to control the growth of these desires. This realistic portrayal gives way to identify them with the real woman of the society they belong to. Though the writers do not belong to the same nation there is a parallelism in their portrayal of similar plights of women across borders.

Anita Desai and Gustave Flaubert deal with the same motive, a woman and her unfulfilled desires, pre and post- marriage lives and the series of events that followed them to their grave. Anita Desai in lieu of the psychological study together throws implicit light on the traditional roles assigned to a woman. Marital discord is one of the many reasons that lead to loss of identity in a female. As they are considered the other sex, they seem to have limited right to speak on any issues. The urge for existence in them is suppressed and thus, unable to patiently follow the man-made norms, some of them fall a prey to neurosis. Anita Desai points this aspect of the Indian society, where the conservative outlook is still rigid and strong in case of a woman. Her desires are buried within the four walls of the house and she has nowhere to go, no one to discuss with because, discussing such things about 'desire' and 'sex' is still not accepted in our

developing society. Desai has taken a dig into these issues through Maya's neurosis. The situations faced by the women in her novel as well as Flaubert's prove Simone de Beauvoir right when she says, "One is not born but rather becomes a woman...." (295). They are no anti-male texts, but portray the sufferings of an one who are depressed because of these males. While Desai tries to give a glimpse of the society-gender issues in the Indian society, some traits of the socio-cultural society of France during the nineteenth century is evident in *Madame Bovary* too. In an experiment done for the treatment of a psychologically affected patient or a neurotic, the doctor requires a good record of the patient's life and any unusual incidents in the past that are likely to affect his mind. Likewise, in doing a comparison of these literary texts, the writer needs to dig deep into the personal and psychological life of the characters by creating changeable situations for them to express themselves. Literary texts of psychological genres have propagated the study of the instinctual drives of the characters which acts as a sub-way to their minds. It provides a path which leads to the unconscious of the person, through various symbols and images. The study of psychology by Freud throws light on what he calls the 'Id, Ego, Superego' model. It is evident in Freud's description of the model with the picture of the ice-berg, how specifically important the working of these states of mind is for the formation of a sound personality. The unique personal experiences of an individual gives rise to unique needs, desires and the breach in these desires leads to neurosis.

Both Anita Desai and Gustave Flaubert's characters, Maya and Emma respectively, belong to the same background, a middle-class home and are married at an early age. While comparing the themes of these two literary pieces, it is important to note that, inspite of the difference in nationality and gender among the writers their intentions and allusions in the texts are somewhat similarly. The narrative plane coincides with each other as there is an intrusion of

the writers in between. The desire for an established identity and true love in both the central characters bring them together. Maya tries to satisfy her desires by addressing her husband again and again and being sweet to him, Emma does the same by searching love outside her husband's arms. The societal norms that Maya was expected to follow, didn't allow Desai to lead her into adultery as Flaubert did revoltingly in case of Emma. Though Flaubert was aware of the consequences he would have to suffer while addressing the issue of adultery existing in the French society, he does so and offers a sarcastic blow to the then societal rules for the women folks.

There are various symbols and indications of the nationality of the characters, their thoughts, dresses food etc visible throughout the narrative. The writer has drawn a picture of Indianness in the twentieth century, the mindset of some who are still engaged in various stereotypical issues regarding women and their right to expression and happiness. Maya, a young girl, unsatisfied in love desperately longs for it throughout her life. Desai, has kept the in her protagonist the Indian flavour and it is evident through Maya's thoughts of the Indian trees and animal(peacock), astrology(the prophecy of the albino astrologer that haunted her), Indian dance and culture(her interest in the Kathakali dances), Indian Gods and mythological figures(Lord Shiva). While she tries every way to obtain her part of happiness she fails. She cannot indulge in anything else which might satisfy her thirst to be loved, unlike Emma. Emma too is a young lass of the nineteenth century French, her dresses, food habits and the meetings and balls she attends explore the French culture that is explicitly rich in style and fashion. The horse-rides, the hat of Charles is an indication of the richness of French fashion. However, Emma enjoys love with two other men, apart from her husband. She has been given the freedom to choose love, and Maya is left with no option. Their psyche is in a sense exploited by their own thoughts, which they could

not repair because, there was too much burden on them, the burden of responsibilities, the burden of society and the burden of marriage. Motherhood knocked only Emma's house and Maya was left with her uninteresting husband for the rest of her life. But, though, Emma was gifted motherhood but she was an irresponsible one. She shows no traits of a mother, she keeps a nurse to look after her baby as she was busy dreaming and dating other men. Maya longed for a child, but Gautama's ignorance left her barren till the end. She caressed her pet dog like her own child and projected all her cares and affections towards it.

Another common theme that has been highlighted in both the novels is the absence of 'power' in the hands of the women. By power, it doesn't mean the power to dominate, but the power to express, the power of equalized thoughts. The patriarchy structure endows authority at the hands of the male and they regulate the lives of the females. This powerlessness on the part of women is not a new thing; it is as old as patriarchy. The future of the wives depends on their husband's wishes. Had Charles been a successful doctor Emma could have enjoyed wealth and richness as she wanted, but he was not eligible enough for it. The power to keep Emma happy was in his hands. She was a woman, and she wasn't expected to move to Paris alone without her husband, and so she had to keep an extra-marital affair with Leon to fulfill her dreams. Here appears another male, on whose hands Flaubert laid the key to Emma's happiness. Though, Leon and Emma dreamt of fleeing to France together, he could do it alone too, but Emma couldn't. Kate Millet, a radical feminist in her famous text *Sexual Politics* talks about the power structure that has been laid in the hands of the male, "the ancient and universal scheme that prevails in the area of sex." Sexual politicizing is one of the most serious issues that render power at the hands of a particular sex leaving the other empty-handed. It paves the way to oppression, oppression towards women and other mankind except men. Millet says, "Thus all the mechanisms of human

inequality arose out of the foundations of male supremacy and the subjugation of women, sexual politics serving historically as the foundation of all other social, political and economic structures”(Millet 168). When she was in heavy bankruptcy and begged door to door, she was asked sexual favors in return. In her analysis of Millet’s *Sexual Politics*, Huyink comments, “She believes that sexual identity automatically endows a man with authority but renders a woman powerless because of the prevalence of the system of patriarchy”(Huyink 1). The concept of power addressed by Kate Millet in her text is a take on the stereo-typical structure of the position of women in the society. When Emma went to buy arsenic at the medical shop, she had to use a change of tone, a pleasing and seductive one to get the arsenic from Justin. Justin, the druggist is impressed by Emma’s beauty and thus Emma could convince him that the arsenic was for the rats in her house. He is another male in the novel who had power in his hands, to let her die or to not let her die. Almost all the males that Emma met throughout her short life are seen to assert some kind of power on her, psychic or physical. “Perhaps patriarchy’s greatest psychological weapon is simply its universality and longevity”(Millet 58). A female who does not accept the modes of conduct framed for her by the society is a neurotic says Kate. Her definition of neurotic here differs from what Freud had used in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* for psychoanalysis. Millet tries to shatter this system of power structure that is shedded only on a male’s pocket. Desai’s Maya is trapped into the same power structure mentioned by Millet. She could not experience happiness unless her husband wanted the same. At her father’s house, she was in control of the father, whatever she wears, whatever she eats and whatever she plays with is decided by her father. She has no control over the decisions of her life; the reigns of her happiness is in the hand of a male, be it in any form, father, brother or husband. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Freidan, a second wave liberal feminist talks about the identity crisis in

American housewives. The fear and shame of discussing one's problems with each other is rather a great problem raised by this feminist. Many women were unhappy despite of possessing wealth and children, The feminine mystique has forced women to engage themselves with household works to abstain themselves from over-thinking about their desires. "Many neuroses are seen among women and problems as yet unnamed as neuroses- which Freud and his followers did not predict, with physical symptoms anxieties and defense mechanisms equal to those carried by sexual depression" (Freidan 20).

In her introduction to *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir says "If I want to define myself, I first have to say, "I am a woman"; all other assertions will arise from this basic truth. A man never begins by positing himself as an individual of a certain sex: that he is a man is obvious" (23). She talks of the woman as the 'second sex' who is always counted after a male. "Humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being" (Beauvoir 25). Maya in *Cry, the Peacock* could never remain the real she and is forced to live life according to her husband's term. She is known by her husband's traits, the wife of a lawyer should also have the philosophical traits like him. Her voice is unheard. Similarly, Emma Roualt is never known by the same name after marriage; Madame Bovary becomes her new identity. Themes of both the novels touch the requirements raised by the feminists from every nation, the needs are the same, the response varies. Psychoanalytic feminists like, Julia Kristeva, Lucy Irigaray slightly differ from Freud's psychoanalysis and state the emergence of gender inequality and not only female psyche from the experiences during the childhood. Thus, recurrence of these experiences leads the woman and men to accept everything as it is and the legacy of equality has been growing through centuries. Both the masculine and feminine genders start accepting this inequality as their

specific traits and thus, men are the one in power and woman nothing but the 'other'. Psychoanalysis feminism is an extended theory from the central point being Freud's psychoanalysis. Maya to some extent can be placed through the eyes of a psychoanalytic feminist. She had been an obedient and abiding daughter for her father (who is a male) since her childhood and thus, her thoughts are modified in the same way that it is the duty of a woman to agree and abide by all males. Thus, these experiences of the childhood remain affective throughout their lives and, women, in one way or the other become the prey to gender inequality.

While discussing the similarities, there are also some points of dissimilarities among these two writers. Flaubert's protagonist is actively fond of chasing her dreams. Emma in every way tries to meet her desires no matter whatever situation she had to undergo. She shows no signs of hesitation while indulging into a socially immoral act, adultery in order to fulfill her desire for love and sexual satisfaction. Her fascination of the charming hero fired the desire for a perfect love inside her and thus, her misfortunes begin. She is active and tries to defy all restrictions on her. Maya, on the other hand is meek and submissive; a passive little girl, who is like the house wife Freidan talks about in her *The Feminine Mystique*. She has made up her mind that, her home, her husband, and his family are the one ones she should care for and serve. They were above all her desires.

Both the writers have unveiled the sensibility of their characters by digging the inner reality rather than sticking only to the outer reality of their personalities. Through reconciliation of past events through her character Maya, Anita Desai has structured her plot to define the comparison between Maya's present situation and her childhood. Stream of consciousness, a modern narrative literary device, like the ones used by Henry James and Virginia Woolf, is one aspect that ties the narrative to a pole because Maya is an embodiment of thoughts and fantasy.

She boggles while she enters into the new phase of her life and thus harms herself by indulging into chains of unnecessary events. The prophecy that kept on haunting Maya is the main cause of her unordinary behaviour towards her husband, and this is something that happened during her childhood. Thus, the nostalgia that Maya experienced haunted her more than exciting her. The narrative of the novel proceeds in somewhat three parts, where the second part occupies greater part of the story. The first and third part show the desolation and pessimism that Maya faces. The second part has a first-person narrator, Maya, who leads the readers to the reasons behind her neurosis. And the remaining two parts are narrated by a third-person narrator, the writer Desai herself. The technique of narration that Desai uses places her amongst the writers like James Joyce, where the characters is tied up with a series of thoughts from her past and that is where the unconscious speaks. As Freud has called the unconscious the key to open a human mind at its depth, Desai has used these modern techniques of narration to provide a modern as well as realistic touch to her narrative. Personification has been used by Anita Desai through Maya's illusions which play a double role in the narrative. They enhance the symbolic essence of the novel in one hand and provide a natural touch to the novel.

Flaubert has used a unique narrative technique in *Madame Bovary* and has played well with the mental features of his character. In most of the works of literature, or take an example in *Cry, the Peacock* itself, the narrative starts with the description of the protagonist, but, Flaubert has introduced his heroine after a prolonged introduction of her to-be-husband Charles Bovary since his childhood days. His family background and habits were a matter of importance for the writer because, at the end of the story, he is separated from all his valuable possessions. To emphasize this loss of the character, Flaubert gives a thorough introduction of Charles from the day he steps into school. Third person narration is what Flaubert uses throughout the novel. The



juxtaposition of scenes has been used by Flaubert to exert importance on Emma's situations. This intermingling of scenes emerges where Emma's past is brought before her a number of times. When at the ball she sees the peasants peeping through the window, she enters into another thought when she was 'one amongst them'. Such situations helped in strengthening Emma's desire to leave aside the middle-class life and move into a bourgeois society. At the agricultural fair too, Flaubert moves the scenes back and forth, expressing the prize ceremony there and Rodolphe seductive attempts towards Emma at the very same time.

The narrative plane of the novel proceeds further with the use of a literary device known as 'pacing'. A stylistic device, that shows how a story unfolds so that the readers escape from excess boredom of too long lines or the encounter towards the same action again and again. It is used to enhance the mood of the readers in case they encounter some boring pages in the text. There is a high and low speed in the narrative; in some places, the writer speeds up with the content and slows down in the rest. Emma's days in the convent are less discussed and he summed them by limiting it only to the reading ability of Emma because, it is the only specific part that ought to have some effects in her later life. He gathered speed in expressing only the reading interests in Emma and skipped all other things related to her convent days. Also, while her love-story with Leon is discussed, somewhere he trimmed the facts and the narrative pace gains speed. In order to maintain the pace, he chooses speak less to raise the intensity of the situation and create a long lasting effect on the readers. The characters' feelings aligns with the narrative pacing, the more interesting the phase is, the pacing speeds up, and the moment the character confronts something uninteresting, it slows down. Flaubert gives a comprehensive explanation of her entire past times no matter whatever she does- read, write, listen to music or

play on the piano. The intention of the writer is to hold the interest of the reader through these feelings of the characters.

The name that Anita Desai chooses for her character embodies a strong significance that runs parallel with her behavioral traits. 'Maya' means illusions in Hindi, which means an object difficult to apprehend. As her name suggests, she is a true illusion, no one, even her husband is unable to read her mind. A young girl with a childlike trait, Maya is sometimes sweet to talk with, but in no time her sweetness changes to violent acts, she shouts and screams and then sits to cry for endless hours. Her neurosis laid her into a totally opposite place, one that she had never been to before. She is not outspoken like Flaubert's Emma, rather she opts to sit quiet and strangle her desires because she knows, the more she speaks of it, the more she would be blamed for being too outrageous. Whereas, Emma fights for her desires, and never gives a damn about anyone. She lived fulfilling her wishes one by one and when needed, almost traded her body for it by indulging into adultery. Both Maya and Emma loved their husbands, but neither of them could adjust with each other. Emma blamed Charles for her misfortunes but Maya doesn't release those thoughts. Both the women were like the two ends of a pole when it came to their reaction towards life. Gautama and Charles had no time to give an ear to what their wives wanted, but nowhere in the novel there is any sign of hatred in the husbands. They indeed loved them, the earlier was philosophical and remained busy in his work, and the latter too wanted a good fortune for his family and gave more time to his work. Emma always seemed victorious because, she thought of herself and kept doing whatever pleased her. Her affairs with Leon and Rodolphe were unethical for a woman of the middle-class society during that time, but she never hesitated to pursue those extra-marital affairs because, they pleased her. She felt like she was one of the heroines of her favourite books with many admirers and a rich life. But, she had to give up

at the end when misfortunes surrounded her. Desai's Maya, different, she keeps struggling with hopes of love and romance as Emma does. She tries to run away from the reality towards the middle of the story because, her sorrows couldn't be shared. "She adopts an escapist path and becomes a 'nature's child' wherein she tries to seek solace in the natural landscapes and gardens. The emptiness in her heart is filled by birds and animals, a space that humans fail to fill in Maya's life" (Prakash and Sujata 38).

Both Emma and Maya commit suicide, but the circumstances are different. Maya kills the only factor that (she thought) kept her away from her desires during the four years of her married life, then kills herself and Emma, on the other hand, surrenders herself to the bad times and commits suicide. Also, when we raise a question regarding the feelings of both the women towards marriage, it is seen that, Maya was putting efforts for a long period of time to make her husband love her. Her multiple efforts to persuade him to love her is shown by Desai as a special trait of the feminine nature, to hold onto relations. Maya's love towards her husband was as pure as the peacock's love towards its mate. But Emma was somewhat different, there was no purity in her love and dedication towards relations. She is not the easy-going kind of wife but a passionate one towards her interest. She did not surrender to the financial situation of her husband and share her love with him. Her desires were too strong to hold her and adultery was just a tiny thing before her long repressed wants. Unlike Maya, she shouts at her husband. At the ball at Vanbeyssard, when Charles tries to kiss her, she says, "Let me alone! You are rumpling me" (Flaubert 56). She had lost all respect for him as days passed. Maya's reality principle (ego) guarded her life because, the societal dominance was the main factor that keep her much apart from what she needed. Neither the societal banalities nor the moral codes of conduct for a woman stopped Emma from living her dreams. At the end, everything goes wrong for Emma

when her ego curses her for not being able to repay her borrowed money and the shame that she would face when the court would confiscate her husband's property kills her from inside. The pleasure principle inside her dies at the end. Her Ego played the main role in her suicide. Maya on the other hand, turns strong towards the end and follows her Id, her desire to live, to live freely on her own terms. Also, the prophecy that one of them would die, gave her more power to take the step because, according to her, she was the one who deserved to live and not Gautama. Following the pleasure principle of living life, which Freud says, is the fulfillment of what the heart desires she consoles herself. Though late, Maya followed her Id and justified Gautama's death. The working of, Id, Ego and Superego in the case of Anita Desai's protagonist Maya and Gustave Flaubert's Emma is as stated by Freud a case of psychoanalysis because they showed varied turns in emotions. Unless their fantasies, right from the childhood is studied, a reader cannot study what they had been going through, what the unconscious wants. Their smallest reaction, thoughts, dreams, day-dreaming, talking habits etc contribute to their neurotic situation fulfilling Freud's paradigm of neurosis and the study of the unconscious.

*Madame Bovary* and *Cry, the Peacock* both portray the psychological instability of their central characters and probes into the psyches rather than their outward personality. The characters in these texts exhibit unfavourable symptoms of isolation and indifference which indicate the readers' existence of another side which needs to be explored. While focusing on the inner psyche, both the writers have maintained simultaneously the burden of the society and family and gender roles that contribute to the disharmonized psychology of the characters. Maya and Emma's fantasies were unstoppable and as the novel progresses they turn more aggressive to listen to their heart. Paul Kidder opines:

Emma's romantic imagination is filled with visions of the strong and genuine lover who will inspire her to a truly devoted domestic bliss, but no real person seems capable of matching this ideal. She longs for the majesty of aristocratic culture, and as such she offers an indictment of the bourgeois mediocrity that she is forced, by her status as a middle-class woman in a patriarchal society, to endure. One can admire her aspirations and creative imagination, yet at every turn it is embroiled in manipulative strategies that are sometimes comical, sometimes depressing, and usually tinged with an element of cruelty. (Kidder 1)

The disturbance in her heart regarding the wish to live like a bourgeois destroys her as she fails to maintain her own dignity. The mediocre life to her seemed stagnant and filled with flaws and thus she did not hesitate to love other men, for the sake of a jubilant life. Memory played a significant role in Emma and Maya's life. Emma loved to recall her days at the convent where she read books and create her own world of imagination. Her convent days helped her to get accustomed to the book reading habit and develop a taste for some. Based on the stories that she read in her book, she had made up a picture of life portrayed there and thus desperately longed for it. Maya's childhood contained only her father and herself. She missed him every moment as missed the fatherly love and affection from Gautama. Moreover, she was never taught by her father how life outside home could be and so she saddened herself by comparing Gautama with her father. Towards the later part of her married life, the reconciliation of her memories with her father was the only one that made her happy. Emma turned neurotic by following her ambitions of settling in a rich, bourgeois household and Maya, while waiting for the fulfillment of her love and sensual desires.

‘Motherhood’ and ‘sexuality’ are two terms that both Maya and Emma are associated to. One asseverates her desire to be a mother while the other runs away from it. Both of them adopt a pet each to amuse themselves and feel them as the best company. Maya’s dog Toto dies, and then she is left alone. As she was desperate for a baby, she saw in the pet her child and took care of it in the same way. But, Emma inspite of having a daughter did not change and went on with her affairs gradually ignoring Berthe and the motherly duties towards her. The feeling of motherhood that Maya was craving for was a burden for Emma. “Further, when Emma spends the entire night with Leon in Rouen, Berthe refuses “to go to bed without her mama, [and] sobbed as though her heart would break” (Flaubert 217). Emma's interior sexual imaginings, too, are constructed at odds with her child who interrupts her mother's ‘dreams’ by coughing in her cot.”(Flaubert 158). While Berthe asks for her mother in the evenings, Emma spends her time alone in her bedroom, reading “scenes of orgies” in her “lurid novels” (Flaubert 227). “It is during one of her night time sexual reveries contemplating the ‘tumult’ within” (Flaubert 95) that Emma pushes her imploring child away with her elbow, resulting in a small wound on Berthe's cheek as the child falls into a chest of drawers. Emma “seemed very stupid to herself, and very kind to have been so worried just now at so little” (Flaubert 296). Emma's acknowledgment of her “motherly” posturing positions her at odds with the mid-nineteenth century maternal ideal and its requirement of mothers' single-minded devotion to their children”(Rooks 3). Emma’s motherly conscience had already died an artificial death under the pressure of her desires. The ignorance towards the only child was not bothering a mother and this emphasizes how far the mother had gone in her craving towards desires. Flaubert’s portrayal of the ignorance towards motherly duties by Emma is an indication to the real situation of nineteenth century France, where lavish parties and meetings influenced some to such an extent that, they seemed to lose the

attachment towards their children. Anita Desai, like Flaubert, placed Maya in the image of a good wife as per the Indian tradition, who feels incomplete in the absence of a child. Motherhood makes a woman complete is what Maya believed in and after the death of the pet dog Toto, she severely mourned for months, as one would have done on the death of their child. She had lost interest in everything following the death of Toto and took time in recovering from the sorrow. Though there is a difference in portrayal in the theme of motherhood in both the novels initially, towards the end, Emma too lies on the same plane. She regrets whatever she had done to her husband and daughter, for not fulfilling her duties of a responsible mother and debarring the little girl from all motherly care and affection. The families of Maya and Emma were differently affected after they had turned neurotic. Along with the husbands, the other members of the families were sufferers too. Emma had given up taking care of the household works, ignored her duties towards her home, stayed aloof and slowly, guests were unwelcome at their house. As a new bride, she was very eager to look after the house, but that attitude of hers gradually deteriorated. Maya but was more attached to her home and in laws. Though she didn't take proper care of her health, she didn't show any kind of ignorance towards her duties as a daughter-in-law. She was more attached to her in laws and didn't want them leave when they visited her house. The neurosis had affected her personal and social life as well.

The series of events in the lives of the protagonists are the preliminary reasons that turn them neurotic; the main driving force being their understanding of the situations. Emma's attraction towards fanciful and wealthy life had started right from her days at the convent and thus she drew picture of what kind of a life she would want to live. The following years of her life she tried to acquire all that she desired and this led her to marry. But when she found that Charles was not the key to her dreams she became more depressed and lost insight of all good

and evil. Thus, the recreation of these unsatisfied thoughts in her dreams, day and night haunted her and Emma gradually gave up to the temptations. She had lost all reasoning power and thus, the craze for wealth and sexual pleasures drove her to all odds. Her traits resembles those of Dr. Faustus, a character in Christopher Marlowe's famous Renaissance play *Dr. Faustus*, who surrenders himself to Lucifer to enjoy black magical powers for some twenty-four years. Emma too surrendered her heart and mind in the race of being wealthy without giving a double thought to the consequence. Dr. Faustus listened to none and when the death comes to him, he asks pardon to the evil, but it was already late. Emma is late too till she realized that all she was doing was a fantasy of her minds and her family was to suffer the rest of their lives. She could not face her ego and superego now. They seemed to be in conflict with other as, till that time she had listened only to her id, the pleasure principle. While she hankered behind love and other pleasures, she had turned herself blind to all relations in her life and thus, unable to bear the shame, takes away her own life. Her actions that followed while she was pursuing her dreams would be seen with a gaze full of curse; she would be blamed, defamed and called a fallen woman, a cheat. To her, death felt better than the pain of bearing the sign of adultery the rest of her life.

The marital discord that prevailed between Maya and her husband Gautama, the inability to adjust to the relationship that had been attached to her fate by her father paved the path to Maya's neurosis. The ignorance towards her sexual needs was another reason that gave rise to the devil in Maya who was otherwise a real definition of 'naïve'. Also, the albino astrologer's prophecy regarding the matter of life and death disturbs her more. Her inability to balance her married life and her fantasies denote how far she had been from understanding the responsibilities and the real image of the world. Her interaction within herself can be ascribed to



the presence of what Homi K Bhabha terms as the *third space* (55) in his thoughts on the post-colonial identity. It represents the real self and originality of a person, the personal space and how one acts and reacts in the space. The first and second spaces contribute to the formation of the third space. In case of Maya, it can be assumed that, her reaction towards Gautama forms the first space, the familial involvement is the second space, and her unconscious, what she thinks and dreams when alone is the third space. In the novel, there are many places where she even talks to herself and in hints towards her more neurotic behaviour. While Gautama accused her of being a unnecessarily dreamy woman, she kept her desires inherent. These instances led Maya to believe that she would remain unheard and towards the later part of the novel, Maya's demanding habits undergo a huge transformation and she gets into the habits of persuading herself. These incidents of Maya's life lead her to a dilemma about the nature of life itself. She had encountered two completely different live before marriage and after marriage. Thus, the inability to adjust to these circumstances gives birth to the neurotic in her. Her nightmares constituted of nothing but horrific scenes, though she loves the moon, it taunted her sometimes, her visuals of the starry night made her more neurotic. The significance of her dreams play a major role in understanding her psyche because, they were dark, as dark as the moonless nights which seemed like they came to humiliate her more. Had Gautama been a more passionate and understanding husband Maya's chances of turning neurotic even after the prophecy would be very less, she would have someone who would understand the reasons of Maya's childishness. Though Gautama understands that all her childlike traits is the result of her father's love and pampers, he doesn't try to introduce the real world to her. His ignorance plays the major role in turning Maya from a romantic to a freak.

Desai's intention of exploring Maya's psychic imbalances is followed by another main motive, to portray the plight of women in the Indian society. The fictional character Maya seems to exist in real because, the hurdles that she face in her married life, the adjustment she had to make, her dumbness even after being so hagridden is all true. "Like Lady Macbeth, she becomes a victim of hallucinations which speed up the process of disintegration of her consciousness" (Bai 144.) Lady Macbeth's illness was wholly a consequence of her own over-thoughts and the same happens to Maya. Though she jeopardizes herself through these hallucinations, the situations and events that lead her to that condition is not unreal. Maya's "psychological frustrations and abnormal sensitiveness" is not self-made, it is due to her inability to make concrete her desire, both mental and physical, that she becomes a victim of neurosis. "The quest of Desai's protagonist is not only one woman's quest but the quest of a human being towards some understanding and acceptance of her predicament"(Sharma 20). Desai's Maya presents a clarified example of how the under varying circumstances the plight of the oppressed is the same and the domination and suffering continues.

Flaubert presents Emma as a representative of the woman of Nineteenth century France, trapped into the prison called society. The novel is written as an expression of the trials and tribulations undergone by a person of the 'other' gender in the society which never seems to unleash its strictness. Emma's marriage to Charles wasn't her own decision, she was a minor, as were all women who were set to marry in France during that time, and so she had no right to decide who would be her husband. Fathers or brothers handed them over to any man who succeeded in pleasing them. Emma's marriage to Charles was her father's decision and then onwards her husband was her legal guardian. Like a possession, she was being transferred from one hand to the other. The complexities in her own vision towards life made her bored and the

grudge of deserving a better life than Charles gave her disturbed her. The difficulties of womanhood and the restrictions laid by the society ultimately indicates to the fact that, a woman should have limited ambitions and desires and these again should never come in between her duties towards her husband and children. Her daughter's birth rather makes her sad because she thinks:

A man, at least is free; he can explore the whole range of the passions, go wherever he likes, overcome obstacles, savor the most exotic pleasures. But a woman is constantly thwarted. Inert and pliable, she is restricted by her physical weakness and her legal subjection. Her will, like the veil tied to her hat with a cord, quivers with every wind; there is always some desire urging her forward, always some convention holding her back.(Flaubert 123)

These characters confirm that Freud's idea of personality development plays a very significant role in interrogating the grounds that may force a person towards neurosis. Also, not only the outer elements, but some amount of madness arrives from the personal thoughts of an individual too which no one else can control. Self-control is the basic thing that refrains one from being neurotic. Various small and large, internal and external factors joined together to form the series of events which brought everything to an end. The constant budding and repression of desires in the unconscious are the initial steps towards psychoanalytic issues. The writers' effort in pointing towards the psychological realm is evident in the circumstances they frame around their protagonists.

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