

Chapter I

Introduction

The present research is a study of Nilo Cruz's Pulitzer Prize winning play, *Anna in the Tropics* (2003). The study explores the lives of the Cuban cigar rollers who spend their days making cigars with hands at a factory in Florida, America. As they have to work hard for long hours, they feel mechanized and robot like. They desperately feel to have been disconnected from their rich cultural tradition. As an effort to lessen the boredom of their lives and to follow their cultural tradition, they hire a lector in the factory, and listen to him read lines from Tolstoy's novel, *Anna Karenina*. The sweet and melodious sound of the lector and the love story of *Anna Karenina* attract them so much that they forget their hard, monotonous lives, and start to identify themselves with the characters of the novel. This identification brings a change in the characters of the play. Some characters become more enlightened and refreshed and some feel being tortured. Thus, the novel, *Anna Karenina* as a representative text of literature performs dual functions in the play as it gives both pleasures and pains to the characters.

Literature is found to be defined in different ways. Most of the theorists like Plato, Aristotle, Horace and so on portray literature in terms of 'poetry', while Stephen Gosson, in terms of 'theatre'. But the critic, Leo Tolstoy, presents his views on literature in terms of 'art'. Similarly, P.B. Shelley differentiates poetry from the rest of the forms of literature, and defines it separately.

From the ancient time to the present many critics have given their valuable opinions about the functions of literature. But their views contradict to each other. Some critics believe in positive functions of literature and some in negative functions.

The present research portrays their views keeping them in two categories: Plato type and Aristotle type. Under the category of the Plato-type, the present research elaborates the views of the critics like Stephen Gosson and Thomas Love Peacock. They think that literature teaches lies, and thus corrupts human beings. But the Aristotle-type portrays the views of those critics who opine that literature teaches better things by giving them pleasures. The rest of the critics fall under the group of the Aristotle-type. But Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde present a slightly different opinion about literature, though their view can be kept under the second category. He believes in aesthetic functions of literature and opines that literature is for its own sake. So, it neither teaches nor unleashes illicit passions. Rather, it provides pleasures to human beings.

Plato is the first critic whose theory raises questions about the importance of literature for human beings. He considers literature as thrice removed from reality, which cannot give true knowledge to the readers. He thinks that poets should be banished from the ideal state because their works corrupt the minds of the readers, and unleashes illicit passions in them. M.A.R. Habib in *A History of Literary Theory and Criticism* points out Plato's views on literature in the followings lines: "Poetry, [...] teaches young men that appearance "masters" reality and seeming just is more profitable than being just" (26). But Aristotle, a student of Plato, highlights the redemptive power of literature and opines that literature is useful for society. Patricia Waugh in *A Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* writes on Aristotle's views on literature:

Fictional literature offers its readers a unique and valuable experience, allowing its readers to explore alternative and possible lives from a position of aesthetic distance. For Aristotle *mimesis* is a fictional representation that, when composed correctly, improves its readers both intellectually and emotionally (rather than offering a false image of the world that harms its audiences). (41)

These two contradictory views on literature are found to be carried on all through the history of English literature. Though the critics keep their views by giving different "terms", they agree either on Plato's views or Aristotle's views. Horace, Sir Philip Sidney, Leo Tolstoy, P.B. Shelley and Mathew Arnold follow the views of Aristotle. They believe that literature teaches and provides pleasures to the readers, whereas Stephen Gosson and Thomas Love Peacock follow Plato and think literature damages the minds of the readers, and is, thus, useless for society.

Nilo Cruz is a talented Cuban-American playwright. He is the first Latino to win the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 2003. Born in Montanzas, Cuba, in 1960, he migrated to the little Havana, area of Miami in 1970 on Freedom Flight, and eventually became a US citizen. He has written many award winning plays. His famous plays include *A Park of Our House*, *A Bicycle Country*, *Two Sisters and a Piano*, *Lorca in a Green Dress*, *Hortensia and the Museum of Dreams*, *Dancing on Her Knees*, *Night Train to Bolina*, *Beauty of the Father*, *A very Old Man with Enormous Wing*, and the translations of *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *Dona Rositea, the Spinster*.

In the Cuban cultural tradition , literary "reveries" are related to cigar smoke. As literary books provide one an escape form the weight of the world and defy the laws of gravity, cigar workers are able to escape the monitory of manual labor through literary reveries. The art of listening does not offer an immediate solution to the difficulties of life, but to pause over lines of a book can bring a sense of consolation and alleviate reality.

Life has always been monotonous for the workers at the cigar factory because they are compelled to work hard and long hours in the alien land. The practice of hiring lectors to entertain and educate the workers is a typical Cuban tradition. About the importance of the literature in the factory, Cruz writes that:

Lectors were very much part of Cuban American culture and I was interested in these men from the time my father talked about them when I was a child. What fascinated me was the fact that the Cuban-American worker paid for these readings out of their pockets. They loved poetry and novels. (qtd. in Armstrong 13)

Although Cuban - American workers are far away from their native country they still respect their art and culture as much as they used to. If not, they would not pay for the lectors out of their own pockets. It shows how they are fascinated towards art and literature.

The days at the cigar factories were divided into three parts: In the morning the lectors read from the newspaper articles, in the afternoon they read from the proletarian press, and the last part of the day was saved for the sweet delicacy of the novels. Besides, providing escape, the lectors were instrumental in facilitating awareness and mobilizing changes in the workplace and the larger political arena.

Cuba's greatest poet and political reader, Jose Marti, read in the cigar factory of Tampa in the late 1800s. Cruz believed:

people who attended literary events were the ones who promoted ethics in politics and preserved the nation's honor. He was a firm believer that the purpose of literature was to help humanity and that one could not know a country without knowing its literature. (qtd. in "The Alphabet of Stroke 88")

Cruz defines literature in terms of nation's honor and identity. For him, literary events are important as they help raise the positions of society and humanity.

Anna in the Tropics is about literature's power to affect human beings. It shows how literature can change people's ways of lives and perception on lives. It is fully based on the novel, *Anna Karenina*. When the play begins, all the characters of the play engage in non-necessary work. Some characters, like Cheche and Palomo, are seen gambling money at cockfights and some, like Marela, Conchita and Ofelia, waiting for the lector, Juan Julian:

Conchita (Looking into the distance). He's probably going to bring a lot of new books from Argentina and Spain and France, because so many ships make stops in Cuba.

(Sounds of a crowd at a cockfight)

Eliades: We have a winner! We have a winner!

Unaraja! Unaraja is the winner!

Cheche: Winner here. Unaraja. (12)

But when the lector, Juan Julian, comes and chooses Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, which works as a representative text of literature in the play, to read to them, it creates

contradictory effects in them. The novel, *Anna Karenina*, enlightens the characters like Marela, Conchita and Santiago. It provides them relief from their hard-working, monotonous lives. The childish, Marela, learns to talk in a philosophical way: "Some coats keep winter inside them. You wear them and you find pockets full of December, January and February" (80). The gambler, Santiago, learns to be a responsible man. Similarly, betrayed Conchita learns to seek her rights from her husband:

Conchita: And if I tell you that I want to cut my hair, change the way I dress and take on a lover.

Palomo: say that again?

Conchita: What I just said.

Palomo: You want to have a lover?

Conchita: Yes, like you do.

Palomo: Ave Maria purissima!

Conchita: I have the same right as you do. (35)

But the same novel, *Anna Karenina*, also unleashes illicit passions in the characters like Chechen and Palomo. Readings of the novel remind Chechen of his ex-wife, Mildred, who has fled with another lector, and he becomes restless:

I wake up in the morning looking for her in the kitchen, thinking that she's there making coffee. I look for her in the garden, and then when I come here there's this moron reading the same story every day to remind me of her.

And I hate it ! I hate him ! It's like there is no end to it and I just want to.... (58)

Similarly, this act gives psychological tortures to Palomo as well, because after listening to the lector, his wife, Conchita, starts a love affair with Juan Julian: "At night I cannot sleep. I lie there awake thinking, imagining the two of them together" (66). Thus, it raises the questions on the nature of literature: Is it good or bad to human beings? The present research seeks out all these things in the play, *Anna in the Tropics*.

As a prize winning play, *Anna in the Tropic*, has elicited a host of criticism since its publication. About the style and language of the play, Philip Fisher writes, "The pleasure is enhanced by Cruz's poetic and passionate language and subtle wit as he portrays not only the lives and loves of the immigrants but also a community's battle to survive against modernization (1)". Fisher finds pleasure in Cruz's portrayal of the lives and the loves of the immigrants who struggles to survive against modernization.

Similarly, Bill Gorman also gives similar view on the play:

The play is set in 1929, towards the end of the era when cigars were made by hand, and lectors were hired to read books to the workers as they rolled the cigars. This Ybor City, Florida factory is fighting the advent of technology. While many factories are increasing their production by having the cigars rolled by machines, this factory is holding fast to tradition (by 1931, all the cigar factories had removed their lectors in favor of machinery). (1)

In his views, *Anna in the Tropics* shows struggle between traditionalism and modernism.

Regarding theme of the play, Bryce Hallet writes, "*Anna in the Tropics* is chiefly about allegiance and love. It affirms life's simple pleasures while mapping intricacies of the human heart. It's a world where men gamble and rule, and where women toil and search for men who can match their ideals" (1). Hallet opines that *Anna in the Tropics* shows the ruling and dominating nature of men and toil and search of the suitors of women.

Similarly, regarding the tone and the relation of the play with Tolstoy's novel, *Anna Karenina*, Ben Brantley writes :

Although Mr. Cruz's tone is definitely Chekovian in its sense of a gentle, premodern world on the brink of extinction, the Anna of the play's title refers to a creation by another Russian writer: Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. Mr. Cruz ingeniously builds his drama around the now exotic - seeming profession of the lector, who reads aloud to entertain workers engaged in monotonous tasks. (1)

Brantley expresses his opinion that *Anna in the Tropics* is built around the lector tradition of the Cuban Immigrants. It highlights the importance of the lector in their monotonous lives.

However, the present research will analyze functions of the novel, *Anna Karenina* in the play, *Anna in the Tropics* (2003), which has not been explored yet. The research work will study the play from literary point of view.

The study has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the work, a short introduction to Nilo Cruz and a short critical response. Moreover, it gives a bird's eye view of the entire work.

The second chapter tries to explain briefly different perspectives on literature that are applied in this research work. It discusses contradictory views of these critics who have given their valuable opinions for or against literature.

On the basis of the critics' perspectives elaborated in the second chapter, the third chapter analyzes the text at a considerable length. It portrays how the novel, *Anna Karenina*, as a representative work of literature, changes the lives of the characters in the play, *Anna in the Tropics*. And, the fourth or the last chapter is the conclusion of this research work.

Chapter II

Contrasting Views on Literature

"Criticism asks what literature is,
what it does, and what it is worth".

- Encyclopedia Britannica

Criticism can be said as questioning about nature of literature, finding out its affects and showing the value of it for society. In this wide sense, it includes description, analysis, interpretation as well as the evaluation of specific works of literature and discussion of the principles of those works. Similarly, the critic becomes the person who performs all these activities. As the nature and psychology of the critics varies from person to person, there comes contradiction in their judgments and views. The literary history of English literature shows this fact.

Plato is the first critic in the history who raises questions about literature. His political and moral philosophy dominates what he says about literature. M.A.R. Habib in *A History of Literary Theory and Criticism* makes the following statement about Plato's views on literature:

Poetry[...] teaches young men that appearance "masters" reality and that *seeming* just is more profitable than *being* just. It is this pursuit of a Phantom, this honoring of dissemblance, which has led to social corruption whose symptoms include the organization of secret societies, political clubs, and the sophistic teaching of "cajolery" whereby arts of the popular assembly and the courtroom" are imparted. (26)

Plato does not believe in the positive functions of poetry. He thinks that poetry teaches young men lies and makes them worse than they were. It creates groups of bad people and makes society corrupt.

Plato locates reality in what he calls "ideas", or "forms", rather than in the world of "appearances" that we experience through the senses. He regards objects we perceive through the senses as merely copies of the ideas. Our rational powers acquaint us with the ideas and with truth. The poet, restricted to imitating the realm of appearances, makes only copies of copies, and his creation is thus twice removed from reality. Furthermore, he is probably possessed by a madness and not in control of himself when he writes. Since the poet's activity leads men away from truth, Plato considers him dangerous to society. In this regard Patricia Waugh in *A Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* writes:

Poetry cannot be a vehicle for such knowledge, because it is contaminated with *eros*, or irrational desire, and can never make explicit or justify its insights. Poetry thus offers a dangerous and fallacious model of the world, and must either be banished from the Republic or brought within the control of its guardians to function as carefully contained noble lie subordinated to the purposes of the states. (77)

Plato objects poetry on the grounds of its irrationality. He thinks that poetry appeals to the inferior, emotional part of the soul. Thus, the reader of poetry is seduced into feelings undesirable emotions which are not good for him. In

this way, he comes to the conclusion that poets should be banished from the Republic or kept on watch of its guardians.

Aristotle, a student of Plato, disagrees with Plato's view. He believes that fictional literature offers its readers a unique and valuable experience, allowing them to explore alternative and possible lives from a position of aesthetic distance . By showing contrast between Plato and Aristotle, M.A.R. Habib writes, "In contrast with Plato's, where it is viewed as an obstacle to morality, rationality, and genuine knowledge, poetry would seem to have a positive function in Aristotle's state" (49). Aristotle takes poetry positively. So, he criticizes Plato in his great treatise, *Poetics*.

Plato calls poetry as an imitation of ideas or forms, not truth itself. So it cannot teach people good lessons. But Aristotle finds 'imitation' as a natural phenomena and truth itself. In his *Poetics* Aristotle writes:

First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation he learns his earliest lessons; no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. (qtd. in Adams 51)

Aristotle takes 'imitation' as natural phenomena. It is with human beings since they came to the world. So, it is the natural part of their lives. They cannot separate it from their lives. Similarly, it is also the quality that distinguishes them from animals: animals cannot imitate as wisely and nicely as human beings. Moreover, it gives universal pleasures.

Aristotle does not believe that the world of appearances is mere an ephemeral copy of the changeless ideas. He defines change as a fundamental process of nature, and a part of reality through which a form or an idea becomes meaningful. In Introduction to Aristotle's *Poetics* Hazard Adams in *Literary Theory since Plato* views :

Reality, for Aristotle, is the process by which a form manifests itself through the concrete and by which the concrete takes on meaning working in accordance with ordered principles. The poet's imitation is an analogue of this process; he takes a form from nature and reshapes in a different matter or medium. (49)

Aristotle analyzes 'poetic imitation' in terms of such a change, which creates literary works. Thus, for him, literary works are embodiments of reality and thus of knowledge.

Horace's views on literature represents Greco-Roman attitudes. He is found to be more interested in the practical question of how the poet may delight and instruct a reader than in defining what a poem is. In his famous treatise, "Art of Poetry", instead of defining poetry, he compares it to a painting:

Poetry is like painting, one work will please you more if you stand close to it: the other strikes more if you stand farther away. One shows more to advantage when seen in the shadow; another, unafraid of the sharp view of the critic, ought to be viewed in the light. One will please only once; the other, though looked at ten times, will continue to please. (qtd. in Adams 73)

Horace highlights timeless quality of poetry that pleases always and pleases all. He also believes that poetry is ambiguous like a painting that cannot be defined exactly. Rather, he gives emphasis on true feelings of the poet that come directly from his heart:

It is not enough for a poem to be beautiful; they must be affecting, and must lead the heart of the hearer as they will. As people's faces smile on those who smile, in a similar way they sympathies with those who weep. If you wish me to weep, you must first feel grief yourself. (qtd.in Adams 69)

Horace considers that poetry without true feeling is useless. It cannot affect the reader. Thus, it cannot accomplish its task, i.e. it cannot move the reader.

As regards the function of poetry, Horace follows the general, classical views that poetry should both teach and delight, with greater stress on teaching than on delight. Horace writes in "Art of Poetry", "The aim of poetry is to inform or delight, or to combine together, in what he says, both pleasure and applicability to life. In instructing be brief in what you say in order that your readers may grasp it quickly and retain it faithfully" (72). He considers short and simple poetry as better ones. The readers can easily grasp such poetry, and they can apply teachings in their practical lives.

Stephen Gosson's views on literature represents Puritan ideal of the sixteenth century. He does not believe in the positive functions of literature. Like Plato, he opines that literature has become a vehicle for moral degradation. Gosson in "The school of Abuse" writes that:

[...] For they that lacke customers all the weeke, either because their haunt is unknowen, or the constables and officers of their parish watch them so narrowly that they dara not queatche, to celebrate the sabboth flocke too theaters, and there keepe a generall market of bawdrie. Not that anye filthinesse, in deede, is committed within the compasse of that ground, as was once done in Rome, but that every wanton and [his] paramour, everye man and his queane are there first acquainted, and cheapen the marchandise in that place, which they pay for else where, as they can agree. (25)

Gosson argues that the theatre has been a hunting ground where the prostitutes who lack customers all the week come and make their assignations. As it leads to social degradation and corruption, he suggests that people should shut their eyes to the theatre:

We, which have both sense, reason wit and under- quiescent. standing, are ever overlashing, passing our bounds, going beyond our limites, never keeping our selves within compasse, nor once loking after the place [...] shut uppe our eares to poets, pipers and players; pull our feete backe from resorts to theaters, and turne away our eyes from beholding of vanitie, the greatest storme of abuse will bee overnlowne, and a faire path troden to amendment of life: werenot we so foolish to taste every drugge and buy every trifile, players woulde shut in their shops, and carry their trash to some other country. (33-34)

He opines that the people who have both reason and understanding are also going beyond their limits, let not speak of ignorant people. Theaters have corrupted their minds. Highlighting difficulties of getting escaped, he concludes that there are not other ways except shutting their eyes to the theatres. In this way, he finds moral development of society in the absence of the theatrical performances.

Sir Philip Sidney provides a fairly clean and extensive picture of the Renaissance critical attitudes on literature. In his "Apology for Poetry", Sidney answers to different attacks made on poetry by Stephen Gosson and his followers. His "Apology" defines poetry in the following way:

Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word *mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end, to teach and delight. Of this have been three several kinds [...]. (qtd. in Adams 146)

Sidney shares Aristotle's views on poetry. As Aristotle, he defines it as an 'art of imitation' that represents, counterfeits and speaks metaphorically with an end of teaching and delighting. For him, poetry is not 'a waste of time', and it is also not the 'mother of lies'. Similarly, it is not the 'nurse of abuse', and does not teach sinful things. Rather, he finds poetry superior to history and philosophy which initiates the readers to be virtuous. Marry Ellen Lamb in "Apologizing for Pleasure in Sidney's Apology" writes, "According to the Apology, it is pleasure which creates poetry as superior to history and philosophy, for poetry's ability to delight moves readers to virtue, rather than

subjecting them to tedious discussions or ambiguous examples"(1). Thus, Sidney opposes Plato's idea that the poets should be banished from the Republic. He says that in the early societies poetry was the main source of education which exercised a moral influence on the culture. At that time also, the poet was revered by all, and he still teaches and delights by going beyond nature to offer visions of better things. Sidney in his "Apology" writes that:

Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done-neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too much loved earth more lovely. Her world is brazen, the poets only deliver golden. (qtd. in Adams 145)

Sidney finds the poetic world richer than the natural world. The poet lives in the natural world and fashions a perfect lover, perfect friend and a perfectly valiant man of the ideal world which teaches and delights common people. So, poetry is very important for him.

Leo Tolstoy's views of art reflect the very idiosyncratic and independent nature of his personal interpretation of Christianity. He defines art as an expression of a feeling or experience in such a way that the audience to whom the art is directed can share that feeling or experience. He writes in "what is Art" "Art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them" (681). He treats art as a conscious act of sharing feelings and experiencing them.

Tolstoy's concept of "universal" art affirms that art is relevant to everyone and every aspect of human condition. He says that art is "universal" if it expresses thoughts and feelings, which can be experienced by every human being. As Christianity is common to all, art should be Christian.

Christian art, that is universal, and therefore it should unite all men. And only two kinds of feeling unite all men: first feelings flowing from a perception of our son ship to God and of the brotherhood of men; and next, the simple feelings of common life accessible to everyone without exception-such feelings of merriment, of pity, of cheerfulness, of tranquility, and so forth.

(qtd. in Adams 689)

Tolstoy highlights the importance of two types of feelings in art: religious feelings and common feelings.

As Christianity has these two qualities, he thinks, art should be Christian in nature, which alone can express the feelings of brotherhood and sisterhood in society. It alone can create harmony and understanding, and thus the well-being of humanity. In this way, he keeps religion, especially Christianity, at the center of everything:

Religions are the exponents of the highest comprehension of life accessible to the best and foremost men at a given time in a given society-a comprehension towards which all the rest of that society must inevitably and irresistibly advance. And therefore religions alone have always served, and still serve, as bases for the valuation of human sentiments. (qtd. in Adams 682)

Tolstoy calls religions as the bases of human understanding. For him, religions are storehouses of knowledge from which art can be benighted. So, he thinks art must be inspired by this storehouse of knowledge, Christianity.

Thomas Love Peacock's views on literature represent the nineteenth century anti-romantic sensibilities. He attacks, especially, the romantic poetry for its lack of social concern. In his " Four Ages of Poetry, " he divides all poetic production into four ages, the iron age, the gold age, the silver age and the brass age. To him, poetry originates in the iron age; the golden age is the age of noblest poetic productions, then sets in the artificial silver age which in its turn is followed by an age of decay and decline, the age of brass. Their own age was the brass age of poetry:

A poet in our times is a semi barbarian in a civilized community. He lives in the days that are past [...] The march of his intellect is like that of a crab, backward. The brighter the light diffuse around him by the progress of reason, the thicker is the darkness of anti-quoted barbarism in which he buries himself like a mole, to throw up the barren hillocks of his Cimmerian labours. (qtd. in Adams 513)

Peacock compares the Romantic poets with semi-barbarians who live in the past and think of the past. They condemn rational aspects of lives and burry themselves in the dark feelings which make their movements backward like those of crabs. Thus, to him, the Romantic poets are useless persons, and their poems are the most worthless of all intellectual exercises:

It can never make a philosopher nor a statesman, nor in any class life a useful or a rational man. It cannot claim the slightest share in any of the comforts and utilities of life, of which we have witnessed so many and so rapid advances ...But though not useful, it may be said, it is highly ornamental and deserves to be cultivated for the pleasure it yields. (qtd. in Adams 514)

Peacock does believe in the positive functions of the Romantic poetry. He thinks that it cannot create a good, useful man for society, and it does not have any shares in the social developments of the world. Yet, he believes it deserves to be appreciated as it provides pleasures to the readers.

Although Peacock condemns the Romantic poetry on its lack of social concerns, he appreciates the poetry of Homer and Milton whose poetry show social concerns. He calls the age of Homer as "the golden age of poetry" (510) and Milton as the greatest of English poets who "stands alone between the ages of gold and silver" (512).

Peacock believes that poetry was useful for the infancy of civil society, but it is not necessary for a matured (civilized) society like the nineteenth century:

Poetry was the mental rattle that awakened the attention of intellect in the infancy of civil society: but for the maturity of mind to make a serious business of the playthings of its childhood, is as absurd as for a full grown man to rub his gums with coral, and cry to be charmed to sleep by the jingle of silver bells. (qtd. in Adams 514)

Here, Peacock calls the poetry a lullaby song and the society, an infant who needs it to be awakened and sleep. He also says that these things are meaningless or absurd for a mature person. He cannot enjoy these things. Thus, poetry has been absurd or meaningless for the grown up (civilized) society like the nineteenth century.

Percy Bysshe Shelley's views on literature reflect the nineteenth century Romantic sensibilities. He writes "Defense of Poetry" (1821) as response to the attacks made against poetry by Thomas Love Peacock. In this essay, he refutes most of the claims Peacock has made on poetry. He does not believe in Peacock's statement that poetry is the most worthless of all intellectual exercises. He says that poetry exercises imagination, and thus it makes people morally better than they were. To quote his own words he writes in his "Defense":

A man to be greatly good must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own [...] Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb. (qtd. in Adams 519-20)

Shelley accepts Plato's theory that things in the world are only copies of divine ideas, but he claims that poetry gets behind the copy and images directly the idea. For him, poetry is the revelation or expression of the idea itself. He writes in the "Defense":

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth.

There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other connection than time, place, circumstance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the Creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. (qtd. in Adams 518)

For him, poetry is better than not only stories, but also history, philosophy as well as all science. He believes that science also takes help from poetry.

Again to quote his own words from his "Defense", he writes:

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thoughts; it is that from which all spring[...]. (qtd. in Adams 526)

Thus, Shelley keeps poetry at the centre of all activities and all knowledge.

In contrast to Peacock's views, he opines that poetry is the cause of all developments in the world.

Mathew Arnold's views on literature reflect humanistic attitudes of the Victorian era. A work of art, for him, is the product of certain social forces, which must be studied in relation to human beings. So, he takes 'human actions' as the proper subjects for poetry. In " his Preface to the 1853 Edition of Poems", he writes that:

What are the eternal objects of poetry, among all nations and at all times? They are actions; human actions; possessing an inherent interest in themselves, and which are to be communicated in an interesting manner by the art of the poet. Vainly will the latter imagine that he has everything in his own power [...]. (qtd. in Adams 587)

Arnold says that poets should choose common human actions as subjects for their poetry because they can be shared by all people, irrespective of the difference in nations and cultures. But the actions must always please and please all. The actions having these qualities are the fittest subjects of poetry for him.

Arnold believes that best poetry makes men moral, better and nobler. But it does so not through direct teaching, but by appealing to the soul, to the whole. He writes in "The Study of Poetry" that:

The best poetry will be found to have a power of forming, sustaining and delighting us, as nothing else can...And yet in the very nature and conduct of such a collection there is inevitably something which tends to obscure in us the consciousness of what our benefit should be, and to distract us from the pursuit of it.(qtd. in Adams 604)

Arnold believes that the poet gives in his poetry what he really and seriously believes in, he speaks from the depths of his soul, and he speaks so beautifully that he creates a thing of beauty, and so a perennial source of joy. Such a poetry makes life richer, and has the power of 'sustaining and delighting us, as

nothing else can'. Such poetry provides a bulwark against the mechanistic excesses of modern civilization. In "The Study of Poetry", he writes that:

In poetry, as in criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty, the spirit of our race will find, we have said, as time goes on and as other helps fail, its consolation and stay. But the consolations and stay will be of power in proportion to the power of the criticism of life. (qtd. in Adams 604)

It is in poetry, which is a criticism of life that the spirit of our race will find its last source of consolation and stay. He believes that one day "religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry" (604). Thus, like Shelly, Arnold keeps poetry at the centre of each and every activities of life.

Walter Pater represents the typical antithesis to Arnold. Arnold was a moralist, who believed in the principle Art for life's sake. But, Pater is not a moralist. He believes in the principle of art for art's sake. His methods of criticism are romantic impressionistic as contrasted with the objective-or classical methods of Arnold. As a matter of fact, he was closely associated with Aesthetic Movement in England whose followers believed in the cult of 'Beauty', or the enjoyment of beauty for its own sake. They regarded the worship of 'Beauty 'as the highest goal of life.

Both Arnold and Pater believe in the art's power to relieve human beings from the mechanistic excesses of modern civilization. But they do in two different ways. For Arnold, art does so by educating 'how to live' in the

world, but for Pater, giving an escape from the humdrum of social life. In his "Studies in the History of the Renaissance" Pater writes that:

We have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spends this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest in art and song. For our one chance is in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. (qtd. in Adams 643)

In Pater's view, life is very short. We should not let it escape as foolish people do. We should feel its pulsations as many times as possible. It is a chance that needs to be celebrated.

For Pater, the function of poetry is not to teach lessons, or enforce rules, or even to stimulate us to noble ends; but to withdraw the thoughts for a little while from the mere machinery of life:

While all melts under our feet, we may well catch an any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange flowers, and curious odors, or work of the artist's hand, or the face of one's friend. (qtd. in Adams 643)

Our body is melting fast like an ice-cream. We cannot stop it. But we can celebrate it by getting ourselves involved in beautiful things like flowers, odors, literature and so on. These things set us free from the mechanistic excesses of the world. In this way, Pater treats literature as a medicine for the sufferings of the world.

Chapter III

Dual Functions of Literature in Nilo Cruz's *Anna in the Tropics*

When Cuban immigrants brought the cigar making industry to Florida in the nineteenth century, they carried with them another tradition. As the workers toiled away in the hot factory hand-rolling each cigar, the lector, a well-dressed man with beautiful voice, would read to them. It was the lector who informed, organized and entertained the workers until the 1950s, when the rollers and the readers were replaced by mechanization. York city, a section of hot Tampa is the center of the cigar industry, and it serves as the setting for Nilo Cruz's *Anna in the Tropics*. Set in 1929, the play tells the story of the families of cigar workers whose lives are irrevocably changed after the arrival of a new lector, Juan Julian.

The play begins with the portrayal of absence of the lector in Santiago's factory. As the old lector, Teodore, is dead, and the new lector, Juan Julian, is to come, the workers are seen engaged in non-necessary work. The male characters, Santiago and Cheche, are seen betting money at a cockfight, and Eliades calling out the names of combatants:

ELIDES. Cockfights! See the winged beauties fighting in midair!

Cockfights! I'll take five, ten, fifteen, twenty dollars on

Picarubio. Five, ten, twenty on Espuela de Oro. Picarubio against

Espuela de Oro. Espuela de Oro against Picarubio.

SANTIAGO. I'll bet a hundred on Picarubio.

ELIADES. A hundred on Picarubio

CHECHE. Eighty on Espuela de Oro .

ELIADES. Eighty on Espuela de Oro .

SANTIAGO. Ten more on Picarubio.

ELIADES. Ten more on Picarubio .Ten more on Espuela do Oro ?

CHECHE. No, that's enough. (9)

From the beginning of the play, we see contrast in the natures of Santiago and Chechen: Santiago bets money at cockfights carelessly, while Chechen does the same thing carefully. So, at the cockfights Santiago loses money and shares of the factory to Cheche who is very much interested to mechanize the factory:

SANTIAGO. I'm borrowing two hundred more.

CHECHE. No. You can't. You're jinxed tonight.

SANTIAGO. I'll pay you back .It's written on your shoe already.

CHECHE. Then cross it out.

SANTIAGO. I can't cross it out. I've got my totals there. If I don't pay
you, parts of the factory is yours

(Immediately Cheche takes off his shoe)

CHECHE. Then write it down .Write it down. I want it in writing.

SANTIAGO. I'll write it down. (Takes the knife and carves out his
promise) There you go. (16)

Ofelia does not like Chechen because he is interested to introduce machine in the factory.

Ofelia is rather interested in the lector tradition, and is waiting for the new lector, Juan Julian, with her two daughters: Conchita and Marelia. They are curious and nervous about him, and sees his photograph time and again. They talk and discuss how he looks and how his voice is:

MARELA. Is that the ship approaching in the distance?

CONCHITA. I think it is.

OFELIA. It's the only ship that's supposed to arrive around this time

MARELA. Then that must be it. Oh, I am so excited! Let me look at
the picture again, Mama.

OFELIA. How many times are you going to look at it?

MARELA. Many times. We have to make sure we know what he looks
like.

CONCHITA. You just like looking at his face.

MARELA. I think he is elegant and good looking. (10)

The different tastes of Santiago and Ofelia create a gap in their married life. Later, when Cheche shows his shoe to her, she becomes very much angry and leaves talking to Santiago.

Then, Santiago and Ofelia start talking with their younger daughter Marcela's intermediary:

SANTIAGO. Ask your mother for some money to buy me a pack of
cigarettes. She's not talking to me.

MARELA. Papa wants money for a pack of cigarettes.

OFELIA. Ask him when is he going back to work.

SANTIAGO. Tell her as soon as I get money from Camacho to pay
Chechen.

MARELA. He says as soon as he gets money from Camacho to pay
Chechen.

OFELIA. Tell him to give up smoking till then, that I'm not giving him
any money. (36)

It makes Santiago angry, and soon they pass rude words to each other. Marela is irritated and she leaves the room in a burst of anger.

Then, in an effort to mollify his wife's wounded sensibilities, Santiago comments on the lector's performance: "I've been listening to the new lector from up here" (38). Temporarily reconciled by their common interest in *Anna Karenina*, the couple discusses the quality that makes Levin "a dedicated man":

SANTIAGO. Yes, the one that has the farm. What is his name?

OFELIA. His name is Levin.

SANTIAGO. That's right, Levin.

OFELIA. The one that lives in the forest surrounded by trees.

SANTIAGO. That Levin reminds me of when I was young and my father left me to run the factory. It seems as if Levin has dedicated his whole life to his farm.

OFELIA. Yes, he's a dedicated man.

SANTIAGO. I used to be like him.

OFELIA. Yes, you used to be like him. (38)

Then, Santiago asks Ofelia about the woman, Kitty, whom Levin loves. Ofelia explains the triangle love that prevents Levin from winning Kitty's love.

Santiago, drawing inspiration from Levin's fidelity to one woman, expresses his true feelings for her:

SANTIAGO. But for Levin...For Levin there's only one woman.

OFELIA. Yes, for him there's only one woman.

SANTIAGO (full of love, he looks at her). Ofelia

OFELIA. Yes.

(Santiago swallows the gulp of love)

SANTIAGO. No. Nothing. (40)

The above extract portrays the change that comes in their conjugal life when they discuss about the character of the novel, Levin.

In the second act, Santiago appears as an honest and responsible man. He pays Cheche his money back, and announces the name and plan for a new cigar brand, *Anna Karenina*:

Tomorrow we will start making plans for production. We have much work ahead of us, workers. But I promise that we will all benefit from the fruit of our work. I'm glad to be back.

(Applause from the workers. They exit. Chechen pulls Santiago aside. Santiago hands him an envelope).

This is for you, Chechen. Here's your money. (55-56)

In this way, *Anna Karenina*, a representative text of literature, brings reconciliation in the conjugal life of Santiago and Ofelia.

The novel, *Anna Karenina*, helps Conchita and Polomo to create a harmonious relation. In the beginning of the play, Palomo is portrayed as a careless husband enjoying a secret love affair with another woman and Conchita leading a passionless life. When the lector reads lines from the novel, *Anna Karenina*, the spirit of Tolstoy's novel about love, betrayal and family wafts through the factory like blue smoke from a perfectly rolled cigar. Conchita observes a civilized Russian society in the novel and identifies herself with the heroin of the novel, Anna Karenina. It provides her lessons, and she learns to talk in a civilized way being more bold and

assertive than Anna herself: "I just want to have a civilized conversation. The same way the characters speak to each other in the novel" (33).

The love triangle of the novel inspires her to seek for new triangular love in her real life. Then, as a bold assertion for her husband's infidelity she openly starts talking about her future love affair with the lector, Juan Julian:

But with this book I'm seeing everything through new eyes. What is happening in the novel has been happening to us.

No. Don't look at me that way, you might not want to admit it, but Anna and her husband remind me of us. Except I'm more like the husband. (33)

Before the lector's arrival to the cigar factory, Conchita was not conscious of her rights.

The lector and his novel make her aware of her rights. She becomes bold and strong, and raises questions on her husband's secret love:

PALOMO. And what's the use of talking like this ? What sort of things do you want to ask me ?

CONCHITA. Things that you wouldn't tell me, afraid that I might not understand.

PALOMO. Like what ?

CONCHITA. I'd like to know what she's like. And what does she do to make you happy. (34)

Then, she asks for her rights with her husband, Palomo: "I have the same right as you do" (35).

In the novel Conchita finds Anna exceeding the boundary of society for the sake of love. It inspires her to have a love affair with the lector, Juan Julian, and love her husband in a different way as she tells her husband: "I can try to love you in a different way" (35). Then, she becomes open in her love affair and her husband asks her questions as she has asked previously:

PALOMO. At what time do you meet your lover ?

CONCHITA. At the agreed time.

PALOMO. And what time is that ?

CONCHITA. It changes like the moon.

PALOMO. Where do you meet besides this place ?

CONCHITA. I can't tell you these things.

PALOMO. Why not ?

CONCHITA. Because that's the way it is. (62-63)

In this way, the lector, Juan Julian, changes Conchita's vision of life through the novel, *Anna Karenina*.

When Palomo finds Conchita being more infidel than himself, he becomes conscious and considerate. It makes him serious about his wife's desires and expectations. Then, he asks her to teach him the new way of loving and living she has learnt from the novel:

PALOMO. Show me... Show me what he did to you and how he did it.

CONCHITA. You would have to do as actors do.

PALOMO. And what is that ?

CONCHITA. Actors surrender. They stop playing themselves and they give in. You would have to let go of yourself and enter the life of another human being, and in this case it would be me.

PALOMO. Teach me then.

CONCHITA. Here, in the factory ?

PALOMO. Yes, back there, where you meet him. (65)

This craze for learning the new way of loving and caring each other creates a new relation in Palomo and Conchita.

Palomo and Conchita become conscious of each other's desires and expectations, and get reconciled into a happy married life. It becomes clear at the end of the play. When the lector, Juan Julian, is shut out by Cheche, Palomo replaces him in the request of Ofelia, and reads the remaining lines from the novel, *Anna Karenina*, looking lovingly at Conchita's face:

Anna Karenina. Part 3. chapter 14:

By the time he arrived in Petersburg, Anna Karenina's husband was not only completely determined to carry out his decision, but he had composed in his head a letter he would write to his wife.

(He looks up from the book and stares at Conchita)

In his letter he was going to write everything he'd been meaning to tell her.(83-84)

Thus, as in the conjugal life of Santiago and Ofelia, the novel, *Anna Karenina* performs positive function in the married life of Palomo and Conchita as well.

The lector, Juan Julian, also believes that he learns many things from the novel *Anna Karenina* : "I learn things from all of them" (63). He does not think his illicit

relation with Conchita as wrong. He believes that she comes to him to learn a new way of loving and living. In the play, he justifies Anna's love affair with Vronsky, which symbolically signifies his relation with Conchita:

JUAN JULIAN. She came to him because she thought that he could help her.

PALOMO. Help her how ?

JUAN JULIOM. Help her to love again. Help her to recognize herself as a woman all over again. She had probably known only one man and that was her husband. With the lover she learns a new way of loving. And it is this new way of loving that makes her go back to the lover over and over again. But that's my interpretation. (68)

Juan Julian considers that Conchita needs lessons for a new way of loving and living. It is this lesson that makes her see him again and again.

It becomes possible through the lector tradition, which Cheche wants to end. Highlighting the importance of the lector tradition for their lives, he tells Cheche and the workers:

My father used to say that the tradition of having readers in the factories goes back to the Taino Indians. He used to say that tobacco leaves whisper the language of the sky. And that's because through the language of cigar smoke the Indians used to communicate to the gods... The workers are the oiders. The ones who listen quietly, the same way Taino Indians used to listen. And this is the tradition that you're to destroy with your machines. Instead of promoting and popularizing

machines, why don't you advertise our cigar? Or are you working for the machine industry? (52-53)

Here, Juan Julian points out the cultural values of the lector tradition. He thinks that as they are rich in the cultural heritage, they should follow it. They should not destroy it with machines. If they want more profit, they must advertise their cigars.

In spite of Santiago, Palomo and Juan Julian, the novel, *Anna Karenina* also educates Marela, the younger daughter of the factory owners, Santiago and Ofelia. At the beginning of the play she has been presented as a child-like-character who wets her clothes when she suddenly sees the lector, Juan Julian in front of her. When she listens to the lector read lines from the novel, she realizes that she is learning lessons from it: "We learn things" (52). This new lesson makes her serious and she starts talking in a philosophical way:

Oh, I don't want this night to end. I could stay up all night. I don't want to sleep. We sleep too much. We spend more than a third of our lives sleeping, sleeping. Darkness descends and everything is a mystery to us. We don't know if trees really walk at night, as I've heard in legends. We don't really know if statues and spirits dance in the squares unbeknown to us. And how would we ever know if we sleep? We sleep and sleep[...]. (76)

The novel also makes Marela more conscious about her get-up. She becomes very much interested in Russian dresses worn by Anna in the novel: "Some coats keep winter inside them. You wear them and you find pockets full of December, January and February" (80).

Marela feels glad when she gets a chance to wear the Russian dress in the inauguration day of the new cigar, *Anna Karenina*:

(Marela enters wearing the elegant coat and fur hat. She does a turn, feeling the smooth material of the coat, enjoying the warmth it provides)

MARELA. How do I look, Papa ?

SANTIAGO. You'll make a great Anna. But you have to wear a flower in your hair and make her look like one of our women. I'll get you a flower, my dear. (58)

When the lector, Juan Julian, is shut out by Cheche, all the workers remain silent mourning for his immature death.

After three days they return to work, and show their love for the lector in different ways. Marela expresses her deep love and respect for him in the following way:

I should write his name on a piece of paper and place it in a glass of water with brown sugar, so his spirit knows that he is welcomed in this factory, and he can come here and drink sweet water. And nobody better tell me that it's wrong for me to do this ! You hear me, Mama!
(For the first time tears come to her eyes). (62)

The above extract shows her independent decision which she does not like to be corrected by her elders . She receives this maturity through the novel, *Anna Karenina*.

Apart from educating the characters of the play, the novel, *Anna Karenina*, also provides pleasures to them. It helps them forget their hard monotonous lives, and they talk about interesting things like love stories:

CONCHITA. Well. I don't know about you, but ever since he started reading *Anna Karenina* my mind wanders to Russia.

MARELA. Me, too. I have dreams and they are full of white snow, and Anna Karenina is dancing waltzes with Vronsky. Then I see them in a little room, and all the snow melts from the heat of their bodies and their skin. And I just want to borrow a fur coat from my friend Cookie Salazar and go to Russia. (28)

The lector, Juan Julian's love story transfers them into an imaginative world. They visualize Anna and Vronsky making love in a small room and sweat coming from their bodies. It unleashes illicit passions in them and they wish to do as the characters in the novel. In this way they become dreamy. Marela says to Conchita, "No, everything in life dreams. A bicycle dreams of becoming a boy, umbrella dreams of becoming the rain, pearl dreams of becoming a woman, and a chair dreams of becoming a gazelle and running back to the forest" (30).

Ofelia, Conchita and Marela also start comparing the lector with different interesting things. Marela calls him a 'breeze' that breaks the monotony of the factory, and Ofelia, 'the Persian canary' and listening to him "hearing a bird sing" (26). Ofelia also gives her opinion about the novel: "He chose the right book. There is nothing like reading a winter book in the middle of summer. It's like having a fan or an icebox by your side to relieve the heat and the caloric nights" (28).

But Conchita offers a slightly different views. She does not compare the lector, Juan Julian, with the earthly things. In an answer to Juan Julian's question as to why he should cut her hair, she says:

CONCHITA. Because you offer to. And you are the reader of the love stories, and anybody who dedicates his life to reading books believes in rescuing things from oblivion.

JUAN JULIAN. So is there a story in your hair?

CONCHITA. There will be the day I cut it, and that story will come to an end. (44)

Conchita adores love stories. She believes that they rescue people from oblivion.

Juan Julian reads love stories to the workers, she chooses him to cut her hair short.

In this way, the novel, *Anna Karenina*, works both as ‘an ice-box’ and ‘a theatre’, where the characters of the play forget their sufferings and enjoy in an imaginative world of Russia.

In comparison to female characters, the novel, *Anna Karenina*, provides psychological tortures to the male characters like Cheche and Palomo. When the lector, Juan Julian, reads lines from the novel, it brings a change in Conchita’s behaviours: "And if I tell you that I want to cut my hair, change the way I dress and take on a lover" (35). She finds her problems being reflected in the novel and starts acting according to the lessons of the novel.

The bold decision of Anna, the heroine of the novel, for the sake of love inspires Conchita to have love affair with the lector, Juan Julian, and talk about it openly. It makes her husband, Palomo, thoughtful and he expresses his sufferings to Cheche:

Sometimes I think ... I keep wondering if they’re still together, if they see each other. I can feel it. Or it’s just me my mind. At night I can’t sleep. I lie there awake thinking, imagining the two of them together.

I can still smell him on her skin, her clothes and her handkerchief. I can see him on her face and her eyes, and I don't know what to do [...]

(66)

Conchita's illicit relation with the lector, Juan Julian, makes him very serious. He thinks of them all the time which makes him restless.

In contrast to all the characters of the play, Cheche is the lonely character who does not change. He does not believe in the positive functions of literature, and he does not take literature positively. So, he learns nothing from the novel, *Anna Karenina*. Though Ofelia says that it is because, "he is from another culture" (21), Marela knows the fact, "His wife ran away from home with a lector" (21). When the lector, Juan Julian, first time reads lines from the novel, all the female characters start talking about the lector and his love story, but Cheche keeps himself aloof and makes the following remark about them: "Oh, Lord. Exactly what I expected. Now they will sigh and talk about the love story for hours" (27).

Cheche tries a lot to mechanize the factory, and thus do away with the lector and the love story. At first, he tries to convince Marela, the younger daughter of Santiago, by pointing out her mistakes she has done in the rapture of the novel:

Yes, when your mind wanders away from your work and you go for to your own little Russia. You forget the paste jar and you lick the last tobacco leave, as if you were sealing a letter to a lover or playing with the mustache of a Russian man. Is that what it is, little Marela, you're playing with some man in your mind and you forget that you're bringing a cigar to your mouth and licking it, instead of pasting it ?

(60- 61)

By doing so Cheche wants to hate the lector, Juan Julian, and start loving himself. But she does not do so, and it makes him very sad. Then, he expresses his problems with the lector and the love story to Santiago:

I wake up in the morning looking for her in the kitchen, thinking that she's there making coffee. I look for her in the garden. And then when I come here there's this moron reading the same story every day to remind me of her. And I hate it. ! I hate it ! It's like there's no end to it and I just want to [...]. (58)

Cheche thinks that literature corrupts human beings, and thus makes them worse than they were as was done to his ex-wife, Mildred.

In his suggestion to Palomo, Cheche clearly expresses his views on literature:

You should move up North to Trenton and start a new life. Take her away from here. That's what I wanted to do with Mildred. I'd figure we could live up North. The two of us could work in a cigar factory. There are plenty of them in Trenton. And there are no lectors and no good-for-nothing love stories, which put ideas into women's head and ants inside their pants [...] (66-67)

For Cheche, literature is completely useless. It puts false ideas into women's head and they start having immoral relationships with other people.

Chechen also blames literature for the loss in the factory:

We are stuck in time. any why are we stuck time? We are operating in the same manner that we were twenty, thirty, fifty years ago...

(Interruption from the workers). Hold on ...Hold on...And why are we stuck? We are stuck because we are not part of the new century.

Because we are still rolling cigars the same way that Indians rolled them hundreds of years ago. I mean we might as well wear feathers and walk half naked with bones in our noses. There are machines that do tobacco stuffing at the speed of light: bunching machines, stripping machines. (51)

Cheche doesn't find any benefits of the lector tradition. He thinks that they are at loss because they are not parts of the modern world. They are still rolling the cigars as the Indians used to do. He advises the workers that if they bring machines in the factory, they can earn lots of money.

When Cheche realizes that he cannot distract the attentions of the workers from the lector and the love story, and another tragic love story is not far, he enters the working room unnoticed and shuts out the lector, Juan Julian, while he is reading the novel, *Anna Karenina*, to the workers. But soon, Palomo replaces him realizing the importance of literature in their lives. Thus, the play ends with an assertion that literature plays a vital role in educating and providing pleasures to the human beings.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

Literature in itself is neither good nor bad. It can be taken as an object. Its positive and negative aspects depend on the readers because they are the subjects of literature. If they are good by their hearts and honest by their actions, it can teach them lots of lesson, and thus make them better than they were. If they are not, it can initiate them to do worse things, and thus can make them worse than they were. In the play, most of the characters, excepts Cheche, are innocent immigrants who are pure by their hearts. So, the novel, *Anna Karenina* provides them lots of lessons for their practical lives. After listening to the novel, the factory owner, Santiago, learns to be a responsible man. He gives up betting money at cockfights and starts investing money in the factory, which makes him very close to his wife, Ofelia. Conchita learns to demand her rights from her husband, Palomo . Palomo realizes psychological tortures of the betrayal and becomes faithful husband to Conchita. Similarly, the childish, Marela, learns to talk in a philosophical way, and be serious about different things.

The novel, *Anna Karenina*, also provides the workers pleasures. It works as a cooling breeze in their lives. They work in a hot place, Tampa, Florida. When the lector, Juan Julian, reads lines from the novel, they forget their hot and hard-monotonous lives of the cigar factory, and start discussing about interesting things like love stories.

Besides, educating and providing pleasures, the novel, *Anna Karenina*, also gives psychological tortures to the characters like Cheche and Palomo. It reminds

Cheche of his ex-wife, Mildred, whom he tries to forget, and Palomo, of his duty to his wife, Conchita.

Cheche is the lonely character that does not change after listening to the lector, Juan Julian. He foreshadows the tragedy of the play. He is from another culture and does not take literature positively. He thinks literature corrupts human beings as was done to his ex-wife, Mildred. So, he kills the lector to end the lector tradition and thus to purify humanity from literature. But Palomo becomes ready to continue the tradition realizing the importance of literature in his life. Thus, the play ends asserting the significance of literature in human life.

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