

**Tribhuvan University**

**John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk* as a Postmodernist Historiographic  
Metafiction**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the  
Degree of M. Phil in Arts in English**

**By**

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## Abstract

This novel explores the personal history of John Fist, the male protagonist and national history of the then America showing the death of grand narratives like American dream, Enlightenment, capitalism, history, patriarchy. The story of John Hersey is the history of a youth who depicts 1970s in his fictional representation, he uses Postmodern philosophy as a critical response to assumptions allegedly present in regarding culture, identity, history, or language as the 1970s are remembered as an era when the women's rights, gay rights and environmental movements competed with the Watergate scandal, the energy crisis and the ongoing Vietnam War for the world's attention. Hersey uses characters like John Fist, Wagner, Breed, Malcom, Fist and Mona, and Margaret to reveal his inner psyche about the changes in society using their personal thoughts. The 1960s were years of protest and reform. Young Americans demonstrated against the Vietnam War. African Americans demonstrated for civil rights through which Academia like Sheldon College of America was not deprived. Women demonstrated for equal treatment as Mona and Margaret reveal their status in society to get freedom of burden being bounded to patriarchal society. The period of change came during the 1970s. For a while, these years remained tied to the social experiments and struggles of the 1960s. This change appeared in many parts of American society. It affected popular culture, education, and politics. Hersey negates official history of American Dream of safety and freedom for ladies and depicts rape as occurred incident in university by the friends of Fist .Hersey by emphasizing the problem of the philosopher cleanly distinguishing knowledge from ignorance, social progress from reversion, dominance from submission, good from bad, and presence from absence in 1970s' American society .

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## Chapter I

### John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk* as a Postmodernist fiction

Writings by American writers have earned worldwide recognition for their writing in English writing. Many of them have been praised for imagination use of non-fictional language in English writing. These writing include the role of English as lingua franca, the impacts on trans-cultural characters in their characters in their texts. They focus existence, identity, patriarchy rooted culture, human relationship, postcolonial and experiences and immigrants experiences .John Hersey was born in Tientsin, China, in 1914 and lived there until 1925, when his family returned to the United States. He studied at Yale and Cambridge, served for a time as Sinclair Lewis's secretary, and then worked several years as a journalist. Beginning in 1947 he devoted his time mainly to writing fiction. He won the Pulitzer Prize, taught for two decades at Yale, and was president of the Authors League of America and Chancellor of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. This dissertation about the novel John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk* published in 1966 employs a close first-person narrator describing the world as it appeals to his senses and leaves the reader with only a suggested, rather than outright, moral resolution. The story opens with the narrator's description of his home and neighborhood, in which we first see Hersey's use of the close first-person narrator to convey the full sensory range of sensory detail - sights, smells, colors, textures - that comprise the setting. The text has as self-defining postmodernist elements like self-reflexivity where death and boredom appear as major chaotic elements of his life which has relationship with life too. His unique style, forceful expression, simple and lucid language, clear message, sharp attack on the decayed social and cultural practices and high degree of satire has made story interesting .Self-reflexivity is one of the basic features of historiographic metafiction, which has the tendency to refer to itself. It

represents the postmodern culture of auto-referentiality, just language is about language, and fiction is about fiction itself. Thus, this sort of self-referential quality is called self-reflexivity of the text; it is also known metafictional quality of the fiction, as it is essentially writing about writing or foregrounding the apparatus. The implication of self-reflexivity in postmodern text is to expose the contradiction and helps to “challenge our entire concept of both historical and literary knowledge, as well as our awareness of our ideological implication in our dominant culture” (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* x). So, it helps to highlight the postmodern contradiction to some extent. Postmodern fiction, on the one hand, raises questions about the very status of reality and the world. What is a world? What kind of world is there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ? What happens when boundaries between worlds are violated?

So, this novel is the reflection of author’s life, so the narrator directly addresses everything around in subjective way, she mocks the writers for being engaged in wrong activities. “You can sound off about those pessaries, I remember when that case came up in Walboro, the fifteen year old girl who mixed up in unusual practices with a dozen of businessman, pillars all how you talked about moral infantilism of American Men” (106). Hersey shows how a girl suffered throughout her life in American land where female issues are raised as rights to live.

Benyei regards that the question arises whether we should consider the texts parodistic, ironical of what seems to be the case both at the same time. The novels paradoxically suggest that stories need to be told, and truths and knowledge need to be discovered, while also illustrating that the past is not closed. Further, an account of the past does not mean that it is complete and that all information is available or accurate—there are multiple interpretations, perspectives, and values that may be



derived from some aspects of the past from which to create a multitude of histories. As characters (and readers) are shown to question or function within this complex space, they engage with meaning construction.

Parodistic, and ironical constructedness of the novel of what seems to in this novel as the case of John Fist, Mona, Breed, Margaret and Fist Family from USA are both at the same time. The novels paradoxically suggest that stories need to be told, and truths and knowledge need to be discovered, while also illustrating that the past is not closed. Further, an account of the past does not mean that it is complete and that all information is available or accurate—there are multiple interpretations, perspectives, and values that may be derived from some aspects of the past from which to create a multitude of histories. As characters (and readers) are shown to question or function within this complex space, they engage with meaning construction.

Likewise, these Postmodernist fictions focus on the process of both the production and the reception of paradoxically fictive historical writing. Linda Hutcheon states, “Postmodernist fictions raise issue of how the intertexts of history, its documents, or its traces, gets incorporated in to such an avowedly fictional context, while somehow retaining their historical documentary” (*Poetics*78). In it, author questions about the narrating a story, and there is the exploration of the literary text, which helps to expose the paradoxes and raise the voice against the rigidity of the historical and literary knowledge.

*Too Far To Walk*, the very term sound so interesting, which signifies the lifecycle of the subject or narrator itself, but its failure explicitly symbolizes the failure of the narrator’s “expectation of having happy and peaceful life” and implicitly symbolizes the failure of “American vision of spending standard life”.

*Too Far To Walk* is concerned with the speed of that life. John has a mind of the

ancients that naturally pulls back and away, which is the source of his ironies. He can write as sentence, for example, that moves in two directions, forcing a standstill.

Everything in else in the novel is going forward in spurts and plunges, too fast even for the celebrants who wish to move with the machines, so that the giddy boy who insists on riding in a brand new speedboat breaks his back from his own excited bouncing.

*Too Far To Walk* as a narrative describes the themes like immigration, cultural clash and cultural diffusion which make this novel postmodern novel. As Yavenditti M J says John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk* as an Anglophile Novel has spawned a considerable literature by survivors, journalists, novelists, scholars, and official government sources. Several films have been made on the development of the atomic bomb (the Manhattan Project), the decision to use it. The characters in the novel start studying in Sheldon College to establish their career and to be a modern man but migration in imperial world creates cultural dualism or confusion to the characters and suffer in between two cultures one their old culture and another desired culture. Like John Fist, Breed also most talked character in the novel .His parents send him to Sheldon school where he learns English culture and English ways .Gibbon is also another character who joins same college with John and Breed who remarks John as son of bitch in front of Breed (4). Though the alienation of these characters the writer expresses the distaste for imperialism of the west which is the reality of contemporary society .It tries to capture what it means to be an immigrant in America as Hersey came from China. It also explores what happens when a western element is introduced into a country that is not the west which happened during the British Rule in America and is happening again. Thus the story resembles the social circumstances from colonial society to global society. The author beautifully presents how anglophiles feel sense of loss of their own countries and among their own family members.

The characters like John and Breed are anglophiles in the novel *Too Far To Walk*. They are completely obsessed with the English culture and English lifestyles. They imitate English people indiscriminately in order to be English people. Anglophilia is a concept has distinctive value for postcolonial literature since the English have left effectible impression over the colonization long after they gone. Anglophilia refers to the tendency admiring that belong to England. Rita Dalal in her journal writing writes,

An Angolphile becomes a prisoner of his own narrow mentality .He leads usually a shallow life in which superficial things holds more importance than the abysmall ones .This causes a sense of a permanent loss in his heart and this loss grows bigger and bigger as the disease called Anglophobia, spreads in his psyche. The life of an Anglophile becomes a futile chase to become like the ones he adores, however, soon either he becomes the original by faking it. Thus, a feeling of worthlessness and inferiority gradually creeps him, with which he keeps on dealing for the rest of the life. (6)

The bias towards English and England creates identity crisis or in-betweenness who is captivated by the English culture and English manners.

According to Julia Kristeva, without the semiotic mode and abjection, developing an identity is impossible. So once more the role of semiotic gets obvious. The semiotic mode should revolt against the symbolic to make subjectivity. She further explains,

The abject has only one quality of the object –that is being opposed to I. The abjection of self would be the culminating form of that experience of the subject to which it is revealed that all its objects are based merely on the inaugural loss that laid the foundations of its own being. There is nothing like abjection of self to show that all abjection is in fact recognition of want on which any being,

meaning, language or desire is founded. (5)

Here, if John Fist does not accede to the semiotic and revolt against the symbolic, he would not be able to get an identity. I have the attempt to follow the concept of identity John Hersey's "*Too Far To Walk*" on the basis of Julia Kristeva's theories how he gets mature voice and feels his identity through narration.

There is a series of LSD nightmares that culminate in a very old-fashioned devil's dance (choreography straight out of the Encyclopedia of Witchcraft) where Fist reneges on his contract renewal by refusing to buss the devil's bottom. Next morning, he decides his philosophy class, presided over by a dim, god-like old party, is really not *Too Far To Walk*. Hersey hurls his symbols without art, but with a preacher's insistence. This is very light compared to the author's cement-heavy *White Lotus* (1107) and *Too Far To Walk* is not too long to read in Everyman's sort of code.

The story of John Fist shows the protagonist John Fist feels abjected, the notion of abjected self is the Kristeva's theory in *The Powers Of Horror: An Essay On Abjection* (5). The main character is not very likable. The text goes from excruciatingly boring in the beginning to terribly confusing in the last third of the book, which consists of the recounting of one, long, bad acid trip. Jane Kroger opines bringing the reference of Kegan's constructive –developmental view of identity formation states that the age of teenager is the age of the growth and loss of interpersonal balance and it is also referred to as consciousness. This is age of balance between self and other. He concludes:

Adolescents gradually make meaning from the interpersonal balance, in which one has rather has relationships and later from organizational balance, in which one is rather than has one's institutional affiliations, or from transitions to or to from each of these balances (48).

He saw in his chiffonier mirror: a young face. He frowned. Did a somber look give him

any seniority? His light brown hair, slightly curly, was negligently full at ears and nape and now also hung in a loose twist over his forehead .He flapped it back with a hand that might have been going up in a military salute, and he moved with a slight stagger of his slow-starting energies to his dresser and banged upper-right drawer with the heel of this same hand. Sheldon College made a big ado about a forty one thousand dollar endowment standing behind each undergraduate, but the shitty drawers stuck .Shaking the whole chest, he worked the drawer open, only to find no undershoots left (7). John Fist is young adult and he is expected to be trustworthy and himself is the relationships and of very vulnerable to attitudes within the immediate social contact.

Karen Coats critiques Julia Kristeva's work, which also involved discussion of the "Lacanian frame". Coats says that Kristeva defines abjection as marking the stage in the "pre-oedipal development" of the subject. This means the subject has to come to terms with their body and how it functions at the adolescent age or as the Lacanian theory states get rid of the parts that are not part of his or her "clean and proper ego" at that age. Coats goes on to add that for the adolescent to "achieve oedipal stabilization than the subject must find some way to subdue the abject in its proper place outside the functioning of everyday life in the Symbolic" (141). No teenager wants to stand out in a bad way, but they still want to be recognized for their individuality in a good way by their peer group and family and teachers in their life according to the Symbolic structure of pubescent law that has premeditated the boundaries that make or break a teen social status. John Fist is tempted by another student that is really Satan in disguise, gets him to sign a contract with him, and then, pretty much, nothing happens except John Fist does stupid things.

Coats uses many literary examples in chapter seven that deal with the Lacanian theory of a character trying to maintain "oedipal stabilization". Coats has sections that

are called “Abject Heroes in Adolescent Fiction” and another that deals with the “cultural complicity” that teens deal with when they are on the outside looking in on society. Coats states that “adolescence is a time of apocalypse, a last battle to establish one's place or not finally and irrevocably within the symbolic order” (145). John Fist gets the way in English and points out as liberation. His journey from Oedipal status to maturity makes him more independent.

Marks? What had been marks to do with it? Marks were easy .A matter of figuring out what was wanted; catering services. Marks had never been much of a problem. In high school most of the teachers had been women, cinches all. Miss Edith Flan. Mr. Curbelow. A moment's picture in John's mind a corridor of lockers, the floor a design of swoops of a rotary waxer ; a whispered conference against the baffle of an open locker door with Jeremy Ferne about some skulduggery of Jerry (15). John Fist seems unhappy about marking systems in schools as competitive strategy to count human efficiency.

Mike Cadden in *The Irony of Narration in the Young Adult Novel* states, Critics of young adult fiction have good reason to dwell on the nature of narrative authority in young adult novel, especially the authority claimed through consciousness of young characters. That young adult novels are almost always written in first-person. (40)

His idea that while any novel is ideal site for studying the different layers of narrative relationships, the young adult novel features the consciousness of the young characters is especially interesting because of the unique and ironic relationships between author and reader in this aged based genre. The novel focuses on a middle-upper class student, John Fist, at a good eastern university. And he is bored and finds the sanctimonious taint to the staff exceedingly dull. Hersey's portrayal of college students seems WAY

off. So much so that I would call it BS. But John Fist is his caricature of this type of student. And he gets tempted to try life a different way. No, he does not do drugs, or rebel by becoming a hippie. He wandered with glazed eyes and outstretched hands through thickets of college rules, parental permissions, friends' codes, federal and state and local laws, money problems, inner timidities, the pressure of time so strong table and toilet, the contradiction of drive a –sharp –deal and give –a –little, assignment, postponements, papers, tests, a boring system to beat with gimmicks and shortcuts (7). John Fists feels bore at the surrounding he lives.

Roberta Seelinger Trites in her essay *disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* shows the problems in young adult.

Power as it is defined in ways to germane to adolescence, definitions of adolescent literature and the YA novel in the context of their historical evolutions, an investigation into genres that have influenced the development of YA novel, notably the novel of development and coming age of the novel, and influence of such literary movements as romanticism and postmodernism on the depiction of adolescents in Young Adult novels. (53)

The Young Adult novel is ordinarily characterized as a coming-of-age story, in which the narrative revolves around the individual growth and maturation of a character, but Roberta Trites expands this notion by chronicling the dynamics of power and repression that weave their way through YA books. Characters in these novels must learn to negotiate the levels of power that exist in the myriad social institutions within which they function, including family, church, government, and school. Much of the narrative revolves around John Fist's struggle against societal inclinations. However, the theme of individual versus society is briefly broken after his mother is raped. Once out of the area, though, John Fist finds himself alone in country, again one among

many. Power plays vital role in his life as events. John felt like a husband sent off to office –and quite capable, too, of handling the day's business (66).

Thus, John introduces his culture, history, legends, family, and his childhood experience. This novel explores the language of first person narrator depict her viewpoint as young adult in collective form of fiction and his identification process also becomes successful as John Hersey gives very beautiful scenario of America and the lifestyle of people there who are staying there.

Name is the primary identity marker of an individual . Every individual receives a name or set of names as they enter into a new community through birth, immigration of any other process. According to Alford, there is not sing society which does not bestow personal names on its members (1).

In an ethnographic research conducted among sixty different cultures from around the world, Alford writes, "to know a child's name is in a sense to know who that child is (29). And when the child is old enough to know his name as a child from the parents, relatives or priest according to their own rituals .In every culture naming is the first ritual in someone's life. It indicates the name becomes bearer of one's gender, culture, class and even national identity. Peg the name to Margaret the whore symbolizes so. As Richard D. Alford find in his ethnographic research that the names changes are more than just linguistic markers of changes in society. He states that name changes actually to affect identity change. Assuming a new name encourage a person to regard himself of herself as a new, or substantially changes, person and others are encouraged to see his person as changed and to alter their expectations accordingly (85).

That's why name changing is symbolic in society. After changing name Margaret as Peg for family she keeps referring herself with same name. There are so



many examples of distorting, mispronouncing and the politics around the novel *Too Far To Walk*.

In the novel *Too Far To Walk* characters are employed as their class and hegemony in the society. The hierarchy between the characters can be easily seen in the novel. The author has employed the categories of participants in the novel. English people are regarded as Lord though there is not direct presence of these people we can feel their presence in every pages of the novel like omniscient characters.

Modernization enforces the characters towards the frustration and frustrated characters behave cruelly towards the people they love, rejects the traditional ways of life and values, desire to be part of modern society. The author refuses the faceless government of empire by this literary genre creating fragments in the novel. Dealing with all the level of society and different cultures Hersey tries to capture all type of human emotions dismantled by the imperialism. *Too Far To Walk* most of the characters have attracted towards the west to promote their career, social position and to be a modern man. But after entering into a new world these characters get alienation, sense of loss, cultural confusion and become marginal. Their anglophilia does not let them to assimilate in their own culture and desired culture does not accept them that's why their positions like John and Margaret. In the novel marginalized suffered in dreamland America.

Benyei in his essay, "Ironic Parody or Parodistic Irony? Irony, Parody, Postmodernism and the Novel" regards that the question arises whether we should consider the texts parodistic, ironical or what seems to be the case both at the same time (89-123). The novels paradoxically suggest that stories need to be told, and truths and knowledge need to be discovered, while also illustrating that the past is not closed. Further, an account of the past does not mean that it is complete and that all information

is available or accurate—there are multiple interpretations, perspectives, and values that may be derived from some aspects of the past from which to create a multitude of histories. As characters (and readers) are shown to question or function within this complex space, they engage with meaning construction. Breed the student projected by Hersey names the students when Gutwillig is teaching is seminar of evil spirits as assumed by John Fist (207).

Sam Moskowitz in his essay Nils Frome in "The Golden Atom" regards that meditations these, but in the form of fiction, in the style of a consummate narrative art that is conscious of being at once fantasy and reality, that is conscious of being artifice, constructed and socially produced, yes, but no more so or no less so than human life is and, for that matter (98-107). The narrators in novel discussed here reflect on their own intentions to write a story, through an understanding of the past and the history of specific individuals, they also experience the processes of constructing a past and concerns with constructing a sense of self in relation to the past. In turn, each of the texts offers positions from which to derive other or multiple meanings, thus engaging readers in the production of meaning and valuing acts of narration and interpretation as highly as their products. Bring the Odi et amo, Greek statement John Fist, the first person narrator depicts understanding of past in Hersey (218).

Y.P. Caesar opines that to be a parodist is to wear a mask, but there are other masks which do not affix a writer to a clear, stable relation with a previous writer or a previous style (227-237). The novel of Hersey paradoxically suggests that stories need to be told, and truths and knowledge need to be discovered, while also illustrating that the past is not closed. Further, an account of the past does not mean that it is complete and that all information is available or accurate—there are multiple interpretations, perspectives, and values that may be derived from some aspects of the past from which

to create a multitude of histories. Hersey brings the parody of going in journey of philosophy in class as he has to be in class to listen lectures which are unlimited (216).

Frank J. D'Angelo explores the ideas through his text "The Rhetoric of Intertextuality" and says that in this essay he discusses and exemplifies a wide range of nontraditional concepts and texts as they relate to the rhetoric of intertextuality (31-47). As a result of this inquiry, he hopes to give teachers of writing and their students new strategies for understanding and producing discourse. More specifically, he hopes to give readers new ways of thinking about the rhetorical situation, invention, genre, arrangement, and audience. As characters (and readers) are shown to question or function within this complex space, they engage with meaning construction which is portrayed through John Fist. He believes as Hersey depicts that in Postmodernism as applied in this novel. Hersey includes letters as intertextual text to three pages addressing Fam 'the missing one ' using the first person narrator John Fist (135).

Martin in his essay, "Intertextuality: An Introduction" says about the intertextuality, which has occasionally been used somewhat blithely to designate interdisciplinary and comparative investigations of various sorts, may, in its theorization and historicization, not be blithe at all (148-151). Hersey depicts historiography went through some considerable changes; not only because of new approaches to contemporary literary criticism, such as the New Historicism, but also because of new approaches to writing fiction about, or else on the basis on historical events .In the postmodernist era the status of reliability of historical knowledge, and thus, truth and subjectiveness, came under close scrutiny as did the fiction that was concerned with (re-)writing history, i.e. historiography depicting mental status of John Fists. Hersey uses the example of Sheldon College of USA where he relates with Kenney Airport and population explosion, absent-minded professor with The Journal

of Existential Psychiatry to let the reader to be responsive about historicization (81).

Lisa .in her essay, "THE MAGAZINE THAT IS CONSIDERED THE BEST IN THE WORLD": MURIEL SPARK AND THE "NEW YORKER" says that material demands a fearless approach, for it is nothing less than a celebration of death. Death, implies, is a god-devil and the basic paradox of human life (595-616). Hersey reinstalls historical contexts as significant and even determining, but in so doing, it problematizes the entire notion of historical knowledge as basis of death only through the characters presented in the novel. Hersey mentions civil rights, Peace Corps, neurotics and Uganda through mouth of John Fist and Margaret which reveal that like Hersey they do not enjoy any of the terminology as it is paradox of life to bear such problems occurred in life (67).

Donaldson in his essay, Writing the "Cheever" says that such fiction has recognizable people and mundane places, often burnished upper-middle-class suburbs seemingly impervious to any hint of disorder ( in one such fictional town, it is illegal to die in Z (527-545). Focusing on such explanations about barrenness of lives, Hersey relates label this specific mode of postmodernist writing: the concept is composed of the terms "historio- graphic", i.e. the discourse of writing history; and of "metafiction", i.e. fiction written about fiction. The most noticeable features of Historiographic Metafiction are its intertextuality, often used parody and most im- portantly its self-reflexivity and its self-consciousness as Hersey through John Fists reveals his inner psycho. John worries about paying Mona (65). He does not get the answer of seduction to have enjoyment or fashionable blanket thrown on him by Hersey using inputs in black alphabets.

Davis in his essay "When Was Postmodernism"? explores about the writers who got older, and when that happens, it's hard to be entire- ly open to indeterminacy

and undecidability (295-298). Hersey shows that reflects upon its own strategies of writing and constructing histories by drawing attention to the constructedness [and] subjectivity. Hersey opines that it points out that the official account, written by humans for humans, has not documented everything. Here, the woodworm sounds quite didactic towards humankind, even condescending. Hersey projects Mona the character as restless character (95). Her saying was that she was a witch which reveals the indeterminacy of Hersey to do caricature through lexical items available in printing media without having nonstop typing on the broad monitor.

Matthewman and Douglas in the essay, "What Happened to Postmodernism?" explain about postmodernism, that Western culture is in the middle of a fundamental transformation (529-547). Over time as Hersey regards, it gave way to today's current "dominator model" of civilization. ... A society where each individual is accepted as equal and feminine values are given just as much importance as masculine values. Hersey regards commercial purpose of women as prostitute as Margaret states through John Fist (63).

Norman Bryson says in his essay, "Intertextuality and Visual Poetics" says that the more a poetic text tries to describe the visual or to generate an image, the more it displays its constitutional inability to achieve the simultaneity which is the image's essence (183-193).

Hersey revolves the journey to Humblesmith as a matter of discussion in long narrative or poetics creating visual panopticism relating newspaper as intertextual images to prescribe continual inability of oddness of sound image of lexicography when he repeatedly says that's so far (17).

Snyman, Gerrie in essay "Who is speaking? Intertextuality and textual influence" depicts that dialogicity serves to unmask the power of any word or text (

427-449).

Hersey depicts that the character the old man with no name nearby John Fist suggests that the time is August of year 441 and Dynosia and poets are interrelated which reveals the inner psyche of Hersey expressed as dialogicity to unmask the power of any lexical items or so called texts exist around him (24).

Tom in his novel named, "A postmodern novel?" views that for want of a better word, what one might call a view of the world. The more one reads, despite the enthusiastic exploration of the sensuality of language and the complexities of rhythm, what one finds oneself reading are opinions, colourful, enigmatic, suggestive, bad-tempered and so on (97-101).

Hersey begins the novel with the journey of four boys who passes throughway down the valley where John Fist sitting in back keeps on commenting which reveals author's mental status of narration as the reason of explanation of his hidden truth that he suffers most throughout life (3).

David in his essay "Intertextuality versus Genre Theory: Bakhtin, Kristeva and the Question of Genre" reveals that the term intertextuality seems permanently suspended between opposed meanings and uses. For many, it has come to serve as an umbrella word for any critical procedure or creative practice involving a relation between two or more texts (54-73).

## Chapter II

### Self-Reflexivity in John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk*

Self-reflexivity helps the postmodern readers even to critique self-reflective part of the text as well as that of the writer. Linda Hutcheon says, “The text’s self-reflexivity points in two directions at once, towards the events being represented in the narrative and toward the act of narration itself. This is the precisely the same doubleness that characterize all historical narrative” (*Politics* 72). In postmodern narrative novel, the writer self-consciously highlights the basic fictional reality of the text. Such fiction tends to deconstruct the structural notion of meaning, by presenting the overtly controlling narrator.

Each of these inserted, largely self-contained narratives is a story in miniature John saw all too clearly in her face the horror she felt at all the standardized notion the word Mom evoked, sexual frigidity, rejection of her children and a methodical grinding down of her husband (106).

She, mother of John, represented family, motherhood, and respectability. The British middle-class women were at home taking care of the household and the family. Women also spent much time being pregnant but the image of a sexless woman was a part of the domestic ideologies. These ideals kept women from the public sphere. The above sentences have incomplete sentences which create complexity to generate any meaning, such narrative technique is one of the features of postmodern novel.

Along with it, another form of grand narrative we could see is patriarchy. It works by creating binaries between male and female. It gives stereotypes for a female as if they are emotional, weak and sensible. But this granted meaning has been challenged in feminist movement during the late 1960s and 70s. Linda Hutcheon says, “While feminists may use postmodern parodic strategies of deconstruction, they never

suffer from this confusion of political agenda, partly because they have a position and a truth that offer ways of understanding aesthetic and social practices in the light of the production of –and challenge to –gender relations” (Politics-149). It questions traditions, patriarchy; it shows the subversion in thought and activities in the people by defining a new position of the woman who runs beyond the line of the traditional.

John wondered what they were really squabbling him about. His bringing a woman home? The passage of years ? The struggle between creativity and decomposition his once wonderful mother? A lady guest is never wanted with son in American society. They arrived at the house with the glass wall unannounced by letter of phone call (91). Hersey questions the presence of woman as guest at home. Being a prostitute was very low status in the society and the high class people saw prostitutes as a problem instead of giving them social support. Fallen women did not get a second chance in life. In the same way, feminist movements severely assault the binaries like male and female, rational and irrational, strong and weak and so on. Feminists regard writing as an instrument to raise the voice against women position and even for the unseen issue of the life. Writing is about writing, it is a kind of self- referentiality, and self- reflexivity as it helps to points out the issues in life. Linda Hutcheon in her book *The Politics of Postmodernism* states, “Writing is a ‘duty which surpasses all others, even if it means reopening questions about which everything seems to have been said, and about which the rows of book spines in the libraries are no longer measured in yards, but in miles” (Politics-161). Thus, writing is the means of presenting unrepresentable issues, which cannot be addressed or solved within the existing discipline like history.

Surely this was it. The sense of melting of gliding into a warm presence fusion. There had been impression of his a garden, a maze of boxwood and then the measured



green rooms of an orchard and weeds and a young girl climbing apple limbs, blue cotton cloth, the gold of her thighs. Then he was stepping filtered sunlight a dim shape of marvelous sensuality, womanness, feminine hands were raised offering his something (108).

As soon as women are mentioned, what emerge into our mind can be their beautiful appearance, engagement in heavy housework and too much talk. As these stereotyped images of women prevail for centuries, we cannot blame anyone who believes of these traditional virtues of women.

Likewise, when we talk about the subjectivity either in historiography or in fictional writing, it is always entangled with power and subjects' personal ideologies. The issues raised by those postmodern novels is either subjective or product of ideology not all in all exact representation and historiographic metafiction helps to put all those ideas under erasure. So, subjectivity also remains under erasure because it is also instable in nature. Linda Hutcheon also argues, "Postmodernist fiction problematizes the entire notion of subjectivity, which seems less confident of his/her ability to know the past with any certainty" (*Poetics*118). So, narrator does not seem stable to narrate the incident with full confident and there seems the perplexity what the narrator wants to generate to the reader. He realized how cold he was (108). He feels loss at the momentary awakening of world.

In fact, literary domains are such platforms where critics challenge the canon, to expose the system of power which authorizes some representations while blackening others. In according to Linda Hutcheon, "Postmodernism raises the uncomfortable question of the ideological power behind basic aesthetic issues such as that of representation: whose reality is being represented" (*Poetics*182). Postmodernism also raises the historical issue of female representation in society.

Actually, postmodernism is usually accompanied by a grand flourish of negativized rhetoric, we hear of discontinuity, disruption, and dislocation.

“Postmodernism is fundamentally contradictory, resolutely historical and inescapably political” (*Politics*1), it takes the form of self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement. The effect is to highlight and to subvert and the mode is there a knowing and an ironic –one. Postmodernism’s distinctive character lies in this kind of wholesale nudging commitment to double-ness or duplicity. Thus, paradoxes are part of postmodernism.

John represents a postmodern man who has no attachment with his friend, and his explanation about the writer depicts the scenario of late-capitalistic society, which is full of contradictions. Breed cheated had cheated him had promised and welshed (110). Now John realizes his immaturity to view the world including all human psyche around him.

In fact, the self-reflexive nature of the text helps to make apparent about the hidden histories of the characters, which is interlinked with the national history. Linda Hutcheon states, “ In Postmodern novels self-reflexivity asserts the fictionalizing of a historical event that has gone on : the actual historical personages who appear in the novel are said to be almost all invention beyond their names” (*Politics*79). Postmodern fiction questions about the status of reality and the world, what is the world, what kinds of worlds are there, how they are constituted and how do they differ what happens when different kinds of world are placed in confrontation or when boundaries between are violated.

In reality, there is a two –way involvement of the postmodern with the feminist :on the one hand feminisms have successfully urged postmodernism to reconsider –in terms of gender –its challenges to humanist universals called “ man” and have

supported and reinforced its denaturalization of the separation between the private and the public, the personal and the political; on the other hand, postmodern parodic representational strategies have offered feminist artists an effective way of working within and yet challenging dominant patriarchal discourses. Linda Hutcheon says, “Feminism go beyond making ideology explicit and deconstructing it to argue a need to change that ideology, to effect a real transformation of art that can only come with a transformation of patriarchal social practices” (*Politics* 163). The feminist right to be heard is the voice for challenge to patriarchy too. “The essence of witchery is maleficium (*Politics* 163). Hersey brings the debate about the witchery to refer Mona and mother both female characters.

In point of fact, feminism resists incorporation into postmodernism, largely because of their revolutionary forces as political movements working for social change. In according to Linda Huthceon, “Feminist artists may use postmodern strategies of parodic inscription and subversion in order to initiate the deconstructive first step but they do not stop there” (*Politics* 164). Actually, feminism continues the resist incorporation into postmodernism for social change.

Similarly, feminism has transformed art practice: through new forms, new self-consciousness about representation, and new awareness of both contexts and particularities. Linda says, “Both feminist and postmodernist art deploy the postmodern parodic use and abuse of mass cultural representation of women, subverting them by excess, irony and fragmented re-contextualization” (*Politics* 148). These female brings new perspective to the subject and gives a variation to know these things of daily life. Feminism have made postmodernist think about female desires, both as socially and historically constructed through representation. “The essence of witch does her power to inflict damages ” (111).

The above example is a sort illustration of how the writer has used the conversation to avoid the responsibility to narrate each and every incidents of his novel. There are some gaps after some sentences which reveal that there is silence or some sort of technical disturbance in telephone so proper listening is not in a pattern of non-novel she includes many techniques of postmodern novel such as the absence of authorial voice, inclusion of dialogue, pastiche, prose, poems, notices, letters and varieties of sentences which make the text more interesting. It's a postmodern text which presents a character who questions the traditional notion of love, sex and marriage.

In fact, postmodernism challenges our mimetic assumptions about representations, so ideology is production of ideology. Linda says "Postmodernism's relation to late-capitalism, patriarchy and the other forms of master narrative is paradoxical" (115). It deliberately shatters the false mythology like "American dream" even John an American citizen but his life is not so easy. Postmodernist fiction also deconstructs metanarrative of capitalism. Capitalism is also considered as an essentialist .It promises to enrich life in society with the help of capital, but promises never became true. In this sense, it is a false metanarrative of emancipation. "The trouble with you Christian or ex Christians is you still believe in Hell but you do not believe in Heaven any more" (112). Hersey uses the sentences to historic condition of Americans.

Likewise, the interaction of the historiographic and the metafictional foregrounds the rejection of the claims of both authentic representation and inauthentic copy alike and the very meaning of artistic originality is as forcefully challenged as is the transparency of historical reality. Even Linda Hutcheon says, in his "*A Poetics of Postmodernism*" Historiographic metafiction refutes the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical fact and fiction (93). The writer blurs the

demarcation between fact and fiction and creates the metafiction to depict the inner reality of so called history, like the history presented by this novel from the perspective of a journalist John Hersey.

John is not telling a story *in Too Far To Walk*; instead he is trying to create a feeling through incidents and odd happenings that occur to the presence at the entry of his book by dealing with the various subjects like values of 1970s, New York, journalism, traveling, politics, alienations, social life, pregnancy, city life, popular culture, reporting and Americans when he questioned by all his friends Mona, Margaret, Breed, Wagner, and Spinter about Puritans, Calvinists and Catholics (112).

Actually, history and fiction share social, culture and ideological contexts as well as formal techniques, novels incorporate social and political history to some extent, though that extent will vary. Historiography, in turn, is as structured, coherent and teleological as any narrative fiction. For Linda Hutcheon “Postmodern historiographic metafiction refuses the view that only history has a truth claim, both by questioning the ground of that claim in historiography and by asserting that both history and fiction are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems, and both derive their major claim to truth from that identity” (*Poetics* 93). In postmodern fiction, we can find metafictional quality which is essentially writing or foregrounding the apparatus. This kind of fiction also refuses the relegation of the extra textual past to the domain of historiography in the name of art, both fiction and history unavoidably construct as they textualize that past.

In it, author questions the nature of telling story. In this sense, it is the term given to the exploration by literary text of its own nature and status. That’s why the author Hersey uses anti-narration as for telling story, as there is no linearity among the minute stories.

The autobiographical memory has a long history to autobiography has a long history in fiction as a form of asserting the primacy of individual experience and the postmodernist novel by trying to make the individual experience of source of public history as well, subverts both this traditional inscription of male subjectivity and at the same time, the traditional notion of history as a non-contradictory continuity. Linda states “The postmodernist fictions are to reveal very overtly that they are indeed closely related to postindustrial consumer society with its social fragmentation and obliteration of historical memory” (Poetics-215). People in this age are highly frustrated with New York life, where money, power and position are highly prioritised in life .People do seem less social and less interested to each other due to their busy life, and the postmodern novel is not only the critique of grand narrative of capitalism, but also modern man’s quest for money, power, capital and so called success in their lives. John feels that he with his friends were playing union, playing underdog, playing negro (113).

It also raises the issue of identity which is instable in postmodern character as in novel. The world depicted is that of unattached youngish people for whom money is not a serious problem but finding a purpose in life is. They crawl into another’s beds; less it seems out of passion than out of need for comfort and solace against a cold world. They are distanced from life. Boredom is among their deadliest enemies.

The chapter has arrhythmic, jarring. The bones of a self-contained narrative show though in the way that demonstrates, reinforces, the sense of dislocation, terror, absurdity that haunts the tenants of the brownstone he lives in. Except for a significant sentences in the final pages, this world-weary narrator describes his anxious urban lifestyle, his journalistic tours through territories of pain and folly, even his sexual experience with the natural dispassion of Mona sitting alien fragments .

In fact, knowledge, language and truth are not fixed, rigid and permanent one

because they keep on changing along with historical, social and cultural ups and downs, language help to point out the then ideologies, different perspectives, knowledge and discourses. Even Brian McHale in his book *Postmodern Fiction* says, “Language in the novel is a point of view, a social-ideological conceptual system of real social groups and their embodied representatives...any point of view on the world fundamental to the novel to must be a concrete, socially embodied point of view, not an abstract, purely semantic position, it must consequently have its own language with which is organically united” (164). Postmodern text refuses the omnipresence and omnipresence of the third person and engaged instead in a dialogue between a narrative one and a projected reader. It also works with the conventions of both literary realm and journalistic fictively, the text is accompanied by photographs of the author and the subject.

*Too Far To Walk* is a postmodern text, where the narrator transports the reader, and himself, through a system of first and third –person vignettes –high- level and low-level disturbances that upset the sense of rationality, of ethical order that she seeks.

Postmodernism is discontinuity from modernism and it subverts the traditional forms, styles and techniques of writing. Simon Malpas in his book *The Postmodernism* says, “The end of a sense that art has a single purpose of can change the world, and it also indicates a democratization of art coupled with a continuing expansion of the forms and techniques that might be counted as artistic as well as the involvement of sections of the community who had hitherto appeared to be marginal to the art world” (20).

The above memory depicts auto-fictionality of the fiction, his childhood experiences deals her family scenario. The fiction combines both fact and fiction as in the novel where John feels that all real things are material even the soul which is a sort

of atomic gas and when we die all that disappears (117).

Actually, postmodernist fiction includes previously exclusive issues, so such postmodernist treats both high and popular equally as it blurs the demarcation line between them. Simon Malpas in his book *Postmodernism* says, “Postmodernist art refuses the modernists distinction between the high and the popular, it retains a sense of art’s mission to confront everyday beliefs and assumption” (21). The space of postmodern is to space of debate, betrayal or reconciliation but it is not the space of coherence, unity or resolution.

The novel has multiple origin narratives for example *Too Far To Walk* is not the only narrative from the middle of the 20th century that serves as an investigation of storytelling including action, dialogue, description, inner monologue, exposition and narrative. The narration consists of memory and change as elements of permissivity which focuses on transient aspect of cities which John Fist visits. But it can stop seeming totally offbeat or totally baffling when considered in this wider, international context of self-conscious writing. The postmodernist elements like self-reflexivity depict performativity of the text as interesting fact of the cities too. Intertextuality is one of the central element here, actually it reminds us that all texts are potentially plural, reversible, open to the reader’s own presuppositions, lacking in clear and defined boundaries and always involved in the expression or repression of the dialogic voices which exists within society. There are various intertextual and parody in *Too Far To Walk*.

In fact, postmodernist contradictory texts are specifically parodic in their intertextual relation to the tradition and conventions of the genres involved. Fredrick Jameson, Marxist literary theorist argues that postmodernity has replaced conventional parody: “Pastiche is thus a blank parody, a state with blind eyes the producer of culture



have nowhere to turn but to the past: the imitation of dead styles, speech through all the masks and voices stored up in the imaginary museum of a new global culture” (qtd in Allen’s *Intertextuality* 184). Actually, pastiche is the imitation of styles, pasting one genre in another genre by blurring the demarcations as in novel where Hersey uses all caps letters to indicate the notice (120).

Moreover, postmodernism restudies the past events, and examines those incidents. In according to Linda Hutcheon, “Postmodernism aims to be accessible through its overt and self conscious parodic historical and reflexive forms and thus to be an effective force in our culture” (Poetics-13). Postmodernism has influenced every aspect of daily lives. In fact, postmodernity is the matter of ironic imitation of past, so late-capitalistic lifestyle is the example which shatters the so called Enlightenment theory which believed that education makes people civilized and moral.

*Too Far To Walk* fiction consists of is the story about urban society where people are highly affected by late –capitalism, bourgeoisie society and the development of mass culture. We find the narrator describing his lifestyles.

He enjoys parties and wines. During the Eighteenth century it was the assumption that enlightenment, rationality, capitalism, social and economic development would bring a lot of change in human life. They were regarded the basis of happy life, but Hersey shows the lifestyle of a male character, who has suffered a lot in her life although he is rational. He belongs to a good class so he seems busy in parties and wine, but he does not feel satisfied from his life, so his life story is the example of failure of enlightenment ideology. He seems a postmodern man who represents the then bourgeoisie society.

In fact, intertextuality is the relation between different texts. Graham Allen in book *Intertextuality* says, “Intertextuality functions in terms of that unavoidability, the

apparent naturalness of literary and cultural codes, the only defense against them appearing to employ them ironically”(90). Actually, the interconnected between texts, social facts is the essence of the different texts is intertextuality. *Too Far To Walk* is one of the contradictory texts which has parodic intertextuality. It uses genres like long fiction and anti-story. This fiction does not conclude any of the paragraphs, any story and there is no media-res. Hersey includes a letter in the novel which reveals his style of writing (9).

This is the story which shows a girl Mona who sleeps with many male partners. Even the man on the way licks her soul which reminds us the waste land; it is America where sexual activities have been taken as the means of entertainment.

In fact, intertextuality reminds us that all texts are potentially plural, reversible, open to the reader’s own presuppositions, lacking in clear and defined boundaries and always involved in the expression or repression of the dialogic voices which exists within society. In Graham Allen’s opinion, “Intertextuality is an important term for describing the radically plural text, and is a crucial technique in the work of those writers who eschew notions of the unified work, yet it is also potentially what creates a sense of repetition, of doxa over that which would resist and disturb the beliefs and forms and codes of the culture”(Intertextuality 90). Intertextuality is the shaping of the texts .It can refer to writer’s borrowing and transformation of prior texts and a reader’s references of one text in reading another. So, it makes each text mosaic of quotations and part of a larger mosaic of texts in *Too Far To Walk*.

Hersey brings references of many authors, different departments of knowledge, locations and people to raise their cultural codes and interrelate them in a parallel line, which depicts the significance of intertextuality like James Baldwin Le Roi Jones (13).

Fist, the narrator brings reference about different authors and musicians which depict the plurality of the text and disruptive force of intertextuality which makes a interrelation between the text and the people from different space and time.

Intertextuality is a term which continually refers to the impossibility of singularity, unity and thus unquestionable authority, intertextuality remains a potent tool. Grham Allen says, "Intertextuality, reminds us that all texts are potentially plural, reversible, open to the readers' own presuppositions, lacking in clear and defined boundaries and always involved in the expressions or repression of the dialogic voice which exists within society" (*Intertextuality* 209). Intertextuality can be beneficial for postmodern critics or readers and writers to refer to works, which aim to fictionalize actual historical events and figures like Hersey includes the name of Lord of Flies as reference which John the protagonist suggest all characters (13). Hersey presents a story of a man, whose name he does not mention and leaves his story in mid, which shows the absence of authorial control in the text .

Actually, the purpose of parody in to offer the sense of the past in the present. For Simon Dentith, "Cultural politics of parody that is placed very specifically in the fraught negotiations of migrant experience, though its comic ambitions are partly aimed at defusing the intensities of that experience, without in the least underestimating the necessities for political allegiances and solidarities" (50). Parody is a tool to expose reality of the past truths. As postmodernism departs and continues from modernism, parody is the ironic tool to depict modernism. In another way, modification in earlier forms with innovation resembles postmodern parody (*Parody* 180). Hersey includes Periender of Chronith as reference (22).

Parody is often used by such marginal and marginal groups in postmodernism to attack in the centre. Simon Dentith regards "Parody is the mark of a gameful, but

productive relationship with the past which nevertheless demonstrates the persistence of critical distance in to the high art of the present” (*Parody* 57). Parody has perhaps come to a privileged mode of postmodern self –reflexivity because its paradoxical incorporation of the past into its very structures often points to these ideological contexts somewhat more individually than other forms. Hersey includes student freedom union as reference to question existence of the unity (30).

In fact, in postmodern parody it is often some discontinuity, difference at the heart of similarity. Simon Dentith opines, “Parody debases the moral currency, and recklessly threatens the very fabric of civilization by ridiculing the precious cultural safeguards which are highest achievements in art and literature” (*Parody* 186).

Postmodern parody does not disregard the context of the past representation but uses irony to acknowledge the fact we are inevitably separated from the past today. Hersey brings the movie *Marriage Italian Style* as reference to denote the style of marriage today (35).

Parody is a perfect postmodern form in some senses for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies. “Parody typically attacks the official word, mocks the pretensions of authoritative discourse, and undermines the seriousness with which subordinates should approach the justifications of their betters” (*Parody* 21). Thus, postmodern parody subverts the power of representations in history and questions the loopholes in history; in fact parody depicts the hidden aspects of the history which official documents never share to the public. *Too Far To Walk* stands such a voice of a male writer who deliberately brings the national history in his autobiography to critique the problems seen in society. In *Too Far To Walk* he questions the dual citizenship system, beurocracy and law Martin Luther (36).

Hersey reveals the hidden aspects of American security system. Actually,

parody has ironic rupture of the past and it critically examines past. Simon Dentith says, “Parody is the means of indicating this mentality, as the thoughts and speeches of these characters relentlessly expose the thoughts and speeches of these characters relentlessly expose themselves as full of clichés, pomposities and second hand phrases” (*Parody* 71). It also focuses a contradiction a reconstruction of the idea of the origin and originally that is compatible with other interrogation of liberal humanism. For example, *Fist* seems obsessed with Socrates and other thinkers. John is mere a showy thing for the stakeholders because they run after only economic profit and government does not concentrate in each activity.

There are writing techniques like back broke sentences like lexical exhibitionism and catalogue structures, invertebrate sentences, and madness in postmodernist fiction which makes the text more interesting. Brian McHale says, “Postmodernist texts are typically spaced out, literally as well as figuratively” (*Postmodernist Fiction* 182). These texts use such styled words as a voice of change; such spacing is the objective correlative not a just of a destabilized fictional ontology, but also of carnivalesque revolution.

Hersey uses upper cases to depict the notice on the beach, but he pastes the notice in the book as it was written on the board, actually he wants to subvert the traditional method of writing so he does not the appropriate method of word-case. Even there is the use of the single word caution in a sentence which sounds so commanding, which gives the sense of speech than the writing, thus it’s an example of subversion of writing trend.

Parody questions the represented fact within itself. Jameson argues, “Postmodernism as a parodising concept, whose function is to correlate the emergence of new formal features in culture with the emergence of formal features in culture with

the emergence of new type of social life and a new economic order” (*Poetics* 37).

John feels that he has come to such an island where lies no facility regarding modern equipment's and the lady seems unable to communicate with her. He feels odd at his situation as he keeps shouting other for taking his soul (43).

On the theatrical and anthropological front, this origin is often regarded as the research collaborations. This origin narrative emphasizes a definition of performance as being "between theatre and anthropology" and often stresses the importance of intercultural performances as an alternative to either traditional proscenium theatre or traditional anthropological fieldwork as the ironical statements resolve ironic mood of the poet. *Too Far To Walk* consists of a sequence of imaginary dialogues between John and Breed which is suitable for theatre and dramatical performance and relate socio-political reality of the cities the characters live.

The novel consists of a sequence of imaginary dialogues John and Breed. In the course of these discussions, the young John and Breed describe a series of metropolises, each of which bears a woman's name, and each of which is radically different from all the others. The descriptions of these cities are arranged in groups in text:

Although Hersey uses historical personages for his main characters, this dreamlike novel does not really belong to the historical fiction genre. And even though some of the cities that John evokes for the aging Orreman are futuristic communities or physical impossibilities, it is equally difficult to argue that is a typical work of fantasy, science the novel is fiction, or even magical realism. But the novel can be loosely described as an exploration—, sometimes playful, sometimes melancholy—, of the powers of the imagination, of the fate of human culture, and of the elusive nature of storytelling itself. *Too Far To Walk* is not the only narrative from the middle of the 20th century that serves as an investigation of storytelling. But it can stop seeming totally

offbeat or totally baffling when considered in this wider, international context of self-conscious writing.

Hersey provides some very specific information about the strategies that John and Breed use to communicate with each other. Yet the two characters' different backgrounds, different experiences, and different habits of interpreting the world naturally make perfect understanding impossible. *Too Far To Walk* frequently calls attention to the destructive effects of time and the uncertainty of humanity's future. Several of cities are alienating, lonely places, and some of them feature catacombs, huge cemeteries, and other sites devoted to the dead. But *Too Far To Walk* is not an entirely bleak work.

Likewise, it is a work that brushes aside conventions of form and narrative to ruminate on ideas of memory and place, touching on everything from trajectory of civilizations to the limits of communication. At times delightfully whimsical and intensely melancholic, this novel is a testament to the power of an author at the height of his powers to provoke, enthrall, and connect. Cities are constructed around some marvellous conceits. Some of the tales dig deeper, becoming vehicles to insert some sly or pointed piece of commentary. Thus, the story of *Too Far To Walk* serves as an investigation of storytelling including action like visiting those cities, dialogue between John and Breed, description of cities as area of despair and change occurred there, inner monologue of John who feels Breed with baggage as odd human, exposition of beautiful conversation in prosaic way their cities are described and narrative which binds cities in a story. The narration consists of memory and change as elements of permissivity which focuses on transient aspect of cities which John visits. Those cities are full of stories and John define them to Breed. The memory of cities and change occurred there in cities and the hereness of those described cities refer to performative aspect in storytelling.

History has been one of the major areas of the study in human knowledge. In ancient and modern times history has been regarded as the matter of official facts, historical events. So, in the past history has been used in the novel as criticism usually as a model of the realistic pole of representation. Herodotus introduced ancient historiography, after him Aristotle introduced it and later Hegel and Ranke wrote historiography in their time. After him, Michel Foucault and Greenblatt mentioned in their works. Now, in postmodern era, Hayden White and Linda Hutcheon and La Capra discuss and introduce historiography in metafiction mixing, representing and interpreting the postmodern pastiche and parodies on it.

To Aristotle, the historian could speak only of what has happened, of the particulars of the past, the poet, on the other hand, spoke of what could or might happen and so could deal more with universals, the postmodern novel has done the reverse. Postmodernist Michel Foucault views history as human construct, we find even postmodern fiction problematizes the model to query the question of both history to reality and reality to history and reality to language. For Linda Hutcheon, "Postmodern historicism is willfully unencumbered by nostalgia in its critical, dialogical reviewing of the forms, contexts and values of the past" (*Poetics of Postmodernism* 89). Postmodern history reviews the loopholes and contradictions in the past.

Hersey also problematizes the history and the hidden aspects of the past. He depicts how his family got problem in the then society, how they kept on changing their identity wherever they went, so their reality kept on changing in official documents too.

So, here she comments about the security system of the then so called democrat government, where many fake visas were prepared for one's facilities.

Actually, historiographic metafiction is well known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflective and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical



events and personage .Historiographic metafiction incorporates all three domains that is theoretically self-awareness of history and fiction as human constructs (historiographic metafiction) is made the grounds for its forms and contents of the past. Lind Hutcheon says, “These postmodern novels raise a number of specific issues the interaction of historiography and fiction that deserve more detailed study, issues surrounding the nature of identity and subjectivity, the question of reference and representation ; the intertextual nature of the past, and the ideological implications of writing about history” (*Poetics* 117).

Moreover, we can talk about the relevance of self –reflexivity in postmodern art; it is directly linked with meaning of the text. Postmodern arts attempt to make the receiver into Brechtian, aware participant; self consciously part of the meaning making process. Linda Hucheon, also favors the same idea and says “Historiographic Metafiction refutes the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical facts and fiction” (*Poetics of Postmodernism* 93). Historiographic Metafiction problematizes both the nature of the referent and its relation to the real historical world by its paradoxically combination of metafictional -reflexivity with historical subject matter. Actually reality does not remain stable, because even language is meta-language so even signifier always remains signifying the chain of signifiers. So self-referentiality is the feature of language and postmodern fiction.

In reality, these historiographic metafictions incorporate and subvert its mimetic engagement with the world. It does not reject it nor does it merely accept it. Narrative representation fictive and historical comes under similar subversive scrutiny in the postmodern form which Linda says as *Postmodern Metafiction*.

For Linda Hutcheon, “Postmodern historiographic metafiction refuses the view that only history has a truth claim, both by questioning the ground of that claim in

historiography and by asserting that both history and fiction are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems and both derive their major claim to truth from that identity” (83). Historiographic metafiction shares the characteristics associated with metafiction in general and takes history, or part of history as its topic and creates its fictional universe around historical figures and events. Its aim is to foreground the discussion and to draw attention to the matter of whose truth is told, as historiography metafiction presents the view that there are only truths in the plurals and never one Truth with capital “T”.

Correspondingly, the disciplines of history and literary studies are being challenged by historiographic metafiction’s problematizing of both historical knowledge and literary representation, by its foregrounding of the process of the production of facts out of the events through definite ideological and literary practices (*Poetics* 192). Postmodern historiographic metafiction merely foregrounds this inherent paradox by having its historical and social, political grounding set uneasily alongside its self-reflexivity. So paradoxes are revealed in postmodern text.

So, *Too Far To Walk* has been inherently ambivalent; it has always been both fictional and worldly, as it reveals the paradoxes in narrator’s life as he feels evil on his good (45).

By focusing on narrative, the postmodernists regard words as having no fixed meaning, there is rejection that human history follows a particular line of development. For Hayden White, “Even to narrativize the events of the past is already to moralize and to impose closure on a story which did not end and whose constructed end suggests that there is a moral meaning inherent in those events.”(qtd in *Poetics* 192). In other words, narrative does not derive its authority it represents but from the cultural conventions that define both narrative and the construct we call reality. History has no

pattern and can be interpreted from multiple perspectives. The notion of truth has no relevance and is at best only relative. So, there is no fixed meaning like moral meaning, its mere an attempt to show the moral lesson out of the constructed truths. By focusing on the narrative, the postmodernist regard words as having no fixed meaning.

Even, Hersey represents his own cultural positions of a modern man who has urban lifestyles and provides a vision of a postmodern man; his reality differs from the official facts too. *Too Far To Walk* is periphetic account of peripatetic life, the narrator's dualistic vision toward her role in the unfolding events of the unsettling autobiography .

The problems in the school area are heroin, LSD, precocious abortions about which then official documents do not provide any idea, but Hersey presents everything using his own ideology about riding in progressive summer camps and schools and resisting the teachers in imagination. He feels panic in the school where negative environment of the schools and summer camps where students enjoyed drug addiction and open sex. Actually she feels his superstition had engulfed his mentality, it is one of his irony about so called "The Enlightenment theory", which always regarded rationalism paved the way for civilization, it increases life –standard, but the example what Heresey presents that even school has been the waste land in the then society .

In point of fact, Postmodern historiographic metafiction asks us to acknowledge that representation has a politics; there is power politics through which the marginalized are controlled. "Power is also, of course a dominant theme in historiographic metafiction's investigations of the relation of art to ideology, as it also takes on potent critical force in the incorporated and overt discourse of protest, especially that of class, gender and racial protest" (Poetics186). Historiographic Metafiction reveals the hidden aspects of those events which official documents hid in

previous official history.

They are linked together in a less amalgamated than accumulated cement that suggests hodgepodge but conveys a certain consistency because the pieces are filtered through sensibility –even though she brings his sensibility into question. After all, she, unlike the people whose actions he observes, desperately needs sensible answers, normality. he brings one incident during the last days of the crisis. A bomb went off. The explosion was enormous. Windows smashed. Doors fractured. The reception desk blew up. The lights went out. No one in that place, that year, Then wisps of smoke were drifting down the corridor. Correct. The fumes were poisonous. The room had been half smoldering, half in flames. How a bomb blast went nearby and how he feels at that situation. This incident is also connected to the then history, which John describes in his own way.

The novel details confused and disillusioned, Fist searches for truth and rails against the “phoniness” of the adult world. He ends up exhausted and emotionally unstable. The events are related after the fact. John Hersey’s *“Too Far To Walk”*, a novel set in the 1960s America is a story of an ordinary male, who has covered from apartment fires to war to the race relation such childhood stories, old news stories, past lovers and lousy parties, by raising issues surrounding the nature of identity and subjectivity; the question of reference and representation. The story reveals John Hersey’s postmodern duality of perspective towards American dream, Enlightenment, capitalism, history, patriarchy. It deconstructs the traditional notion of history as a single and fixed discipline in order to shoe the multiple possibilities and open-ended nature of history in this world. This novel explores the personal history of John Fist, the male protagonist and national history of the then America. The novel is in first person narrative sequence and succeeds to represent the actual historical events of 1960s

America in a fictional manner. So, in this sense, his critique of metanarrative and valorization of historiographic metafiction in signify the death of grand narratives like American dream, Enlightenment, capitalism, history, patriarchy and so on.

John Fist is a talented overachiever who has become restless and bored in his second year at Sheldon, an elite New England college. He is losing motivation, increasingly finding it “*Too Far To Walk*” to his philosophy class across campus. The best way to describe the idea of the book is that of a coming of age story combined with elements of the Faust legends. John Fist, a student at a fictitious Ivy League school, experiences ennui and boredom, and seeks to find a “breakthrough” as he puts it. Some transcendent experience which will make him feel alive and know himself. It isn’t too hard to see why he feels this way. He has grown up in an upper middle class family which always assumed he would follow in his father’s footsteps. Dad was a man who always did what was expected, a favorite of the professors, and as square as possible. And yet, with all that promise, he ended up punching a clock in marketing at a widget company, making his paycheck, but never really having an interesting or challenging life. Mom rather wears that pants, and has invested much of her emotional energy into the kids, the elder of which was more, shall we say, compliant than John. The title of the book itself comes from the idea that John is finding it “*Too Far To Walk*” to his philosophy class at the other end of the campus. At the peak of this malaise, John is approached by Breed, another student, with a proposal. It turns out that Breed is the Mephistopheles of the story, a representative of the infernal regions. But things have changed a whole lot over the years. He says that sure, he can sign s a contract in blood, but the contract is conditional: he can cancel if he is dissatisfied. And also, the whole thing about dragging a soul to hell after death is much too chancy. A modern contract requires him to do the devil’s work during the term of the contract instead.

And so, John Fist signs, and then waits. And waits, and hopes for his promised breakthrough. First, he goes out with Madeline, a nice “girl next door” sort. They eventually get a hotel for the night with the idea of consummating the relationship, but he is unsure how to proceed, and she falls asleep, and the whole night has the ring more of a comedy than a serious scene. John feels cheated, not by Madeline Turk, but by Breed, who seems to be under delivering on his promise.

Next, Breed sets John up with a prostitute, Margaret, who is one of the most interesting characters in the book. She has serviced a good number of the professors, and knows how they talk. She can buffalo her way through an impersonation of a college girl - or even a professor herself. On a whim, John takes her home to meet his parents, which sets up one of the most awkward and hilarious scenes in the book. The parents clearly know she is older and more experienced than she lets on (John introduces her as a student at a local junior college), yet their good manners prevent them from prying too deeply or being rude to her or John.

After this, Breeds sets John up for a bizarre burglary in a poor neighbourhood which seems on the border between real life and a dream. In fact, one might even question if it really happened. Finally, Breed procures some LSD, and John goes on an extended trip (which takes up about a quarter of the book). This is not, shall we say, a particularly good trip. The images at first are interesting, and Hersey’s writing is, as usual, excellent (He says for what it is worth, he has never had a drug stronger than Benadryl - which makes him seriously unfit to drive or function - but he can kind of sort of get the whole drug trip thing from a number of dream experiences, most of which were rather unpleasant). It is at the end of the trip that things get really dark. John ends up at a witches’ sabbath, and kind of freaks out.

Ironically, while John never gets his “breakthrough, ” he does have an epiphany

of sorts. He realizes that his dream of somehow bypassing the hard work of finding his own identity and life is an illusion, and that he is just going to have to muddle through on his own.

One came in the hotel scene between Margaret and John, where they are discussing books - particularly the more racy modern literary fiction. John is made somewhat uncomfortable by Margaret's casual - and even dismissive - attitude toward sex in literature. Because of Hersey's style (in this book) of writing dialogue without quotation marks and without a clear delineation between spoken words and John's inner thoughts, not sure exactly if this was John's thought or the author's. She was post-liberated; she talked about these things as if they belonged to an older generation. Older people wrote those books for older people to read and throw up over. She was aware but untouched.

In some ways, hard to believe this was written 50 years ago, but so true today. Fiction dreamed up by old people for themselves to titillate themselves over the imaginary sins of the young people, and reassure themselves that they weren't this bad, that it really is all our fault. And meanwhile, we feel we are reading books by older people written for themselves that have little if anything to do with the world as we know it.

The book deals with the issues like existence, identity, patriarchy rooted culture, human relationships. The books with several major issues of modern civilizations which includes contemporary national and international issues like multiculturalism, cultural confusion, class hierarchies, economic inequalities, sense of loss, identity crisis and internal terrorist violence John here responsibly weaves global, economic, social, political, cultural and educational aspects of postcolonial society and its impacts upon the lives of characters. Even though there are so many contemporary issues this

research will focus on the impacts of imperialism in the lives of characters of John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk*. The researcher will analyze how postmodernism creates hierarchies, cultural dilemma and distorts the postcolonial society.

*Too Far To Walk* as a postmodern narrative describes the themes like immigration, cultural clash and cultural diffusion which make the novel transnational novel. Major characters of the novel like John Fist and his parents and friends.

The narrator of the novel at the end reaches to a sudden, disheartening conclusion concerning the meaning of his recent experiences in America and what those experiences reveal his own short comings. Just as the young boy must attempt to make sense of American's mysterious materials like sex workers like Mona on the street where he lives with his family. Hersey suggests that all people experience frustrated desire for love and new experiences. The story presents this frustration as universal: the narrator is nameless, the girl is always "Mona" as if she is any girl next door, and the story closes with the narrator imagining himself as an identity less creature who feels abjected at the loss of his innocence and realization of his own foolishness to valorize American Market in vain. Postmodernist novel questions the concepts like autonomy, transcendence, certainty, authority, unity, totalization, system, universalization, centre, continuity, teleology, closure, hierarchy, homogeneity, uniqueness, and origin (*Poetics* 57).

In *Too Far To Walk*, about the beginning and the end of the novel there is confusion and uncertainty. Hersey does not conclude the novel, so the ending is more ambiguous, it ends where it begins. The relationship between John the male protagonist and Mona the friend is not progressive. Her future is in uncertainty and confusion.

Many narrative conventions are ignored. Time, for example, is not handled linearly, nor are there conventional flashbacks. The book bounces back and forth



haphazardly with respect to time as well as perspective. First may be watching on a Manhattan street “last night” and then, a page later he may be speeding along a rural road in a car with no reference to time, and then, , then quoting the ironic remarks of the programs where he plays no part, then appearing back in Manhattan on an unnamed day at 3.00 a.m. and then appearing in the present telling the reader his job. He returns to his childhood years, visits his college dormitory, and shoots in to the near past with little regard for temporal continuity.

The alienation and emotional numbness projected by Hersey’s narrator –double must seem familiar to anyone acquainted even superficially with the now attenuated conventions of literary modernism. *Too Far To Walk* is genuinely an autobiographical document, as a self –judging expose of the easy posturing, the essentially derivative and literary nihilism, to which intelligence and sensibility are peculiarly vulnerable in these muddled times. Hersey himself understands this, or comes to understand it during the course of her writing, for she ends her book with a paragraph that opens itself to vital energies that have been largely absent from the text until now, energies or sympathy and imagination that are inaccessible to mere wit or to satire even in its most ambitious. The paragraph begins with a surprising description of the narrator’s lover.

Thus, there is the open-endedness in meaning one can imagine there can various possibilities whether First and Mona will marry or not, either their children will open eyes in the world, or Mona will have an abortion to get rid of the baby.

Postmodern novel explores the deconstructive notion of time and progress by depicting histories, stories and myths that neither claim to have concrete notion of growth and development nor linear account of progression of time. Postmodernism questions the existence of any sort of truth, reality or meaning. For Lyotard, “Postmodernism is characterized by exactly this kind of incredulity toward master or

metanarrative: those who lament the “ the loss of meaning” in the world or in art are really mourning the fact that knowledge is no longer primarily narrative knowledge of this kind” (qtd in *Poetics* 6 ). Postmodernism questions the existence of any sort of truth, reality or meaning, it believes in plural meanings or open-endedness of meanings of the text.

Even the language of the novel seems influenced by postmodernism notion of: “lack of signified” in language. The sentences used in the first paragraphs are not interconnected, and they do not create any sense in whole about what the narrator is describing. He seems confused about his surrounding and seems very pessimistic in his tone too.

John finds no changes in his life. He prioritizes sleep as important part of his life and he feels that the daily events influence one’s life. In fact he feels he is puzzled about the varieties of people she meets in his daily life and so his daily life for him has become mere a journey. Even Hersey draws the same picture of the then life. His irony is assured and then delicate: his sense of humor is finely honed. He does try to weave a slight narrative thread into *novel*, while keeping his fragmented method. But a novel consisting of fragments, to be successful formally, must be woven carefully. There must be composition, as in music or painting. Otherwise, if one’s meaning is about the randomness of experience, and Hersey’s meaning seems to be this, one falls flat into the imitative fallacy.

Postmodernism as an aesthetic formation and associates openness, play, chance, dispersal, combination, difference and desire as the postmodern terms. Simon Malpa in his book *Postmodernism*, “Postmodernism seeks to grasp what escapes these processes of definition and celebrates what resists or disrupts them” (5).

Plurality of meaning, open-endedness of meaning are the features of

postmodernism which helps to examine the texts from different perspective. This novel also resembles those qualities, when we see narrator saying we feel confused about John is describing, his sentences carry more than one meaning, as in those sentences: “Any dreams?” the doctor asked his patient softly, tentatively, as we used to say in the child’s card game, “Any aces? Any tens?” (12).

Hersey uses only two sentences for a paragraph, though minimal words are used there, but they generate various meanings. The narrator who is a student mocks the lecturers at his habit of dealing the students in childish way. On the surface level, it seems a simple joke, but in depth we feel the then lecturers are not in the positions to be respected who are dealing the students as children. There is inherent appeal from narrator to the lecturers to be serious on their duties. Thus, *Too Far To Walk* is highly influenced by postmodernism.

Postmodernist fiction revisits past with ironic rupture, and examines past events critically. For Simon Malpas, “The advent of post modernity marks a ‘new deathlessness, a consequent weakening of historicity and a schizophrenic subjectivity’” (*Postmodernism* 24). The death of metanarrative in postmodernism takes the form of a false narrator. So, the narrator seems a fallible narrator who deliberately changes his topic, as he begins with.

John mentions about different singer and authors but he does not give complete information about them, and leaves them incomplete, which pave the way for open-endedness of meaning in text.

*Too Far To Walk* is also conglomeration or ironic incidents presented to the reader by an equally ironic first-person narrator, a student, who sometimes radiates an acute sensitivity and at other times seems hopelessly numbed. This “notebook” of frenetic pace and crazy logic in everyday urban living examines the landscapes of urban

escape-the Humblesmith, the Caribbean, and the Mediterrean –where the pace slackens but the logic remains flawed, and doubles as self-directed psychoanalysis.

Most of the writer use irony, there remains the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case, not, however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Linda Hutcheon says, ” Postmodernism attempts to demystify, subvert, undo and often through irony” (Politics179). Irony is a tool, which helps to subvert the things.

Hersey brings very two odd references in same paragraph which depicts that he wants to satirize “Orreman” (lecturer), it means he seems careless towards his nation, his duties and responsibilities as an authoritative person. Even he satirizes committee for spending their valuable time to concentrate on America only for their political cold-war.

Irony helps to do critical study of the texts, truths and reality. Linda Hutcheon says “Postmodernist parody is fundamentally ironic and critical, not nostalgic or antiquarian in its relation in the past” (*Politics* 94). The parodic and ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech situation that the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation. In novel, the male protagonist questions about the system of Authority, how careless are they, below is the story of service.

Irony is a tool which seriously mocks at the loopholes of the characters to bring change in society. Simon Dentith in his book *Parody* describes about the irony. He says, “Irony is seen as essentially conservative, destroying the seriousness the required to transform society and reconciling its inhabitants to a world of second bests” (21). So, irony is the tool which helps to expose the mentality of the characters to ridicule and correction, to bring a positive change in them.

Some foreign students seem influenced by money madness so one did swallow to demonstrate as a good performance. Talency regarding dancing and singing is good but one do try to harm oneself by having razor blade like a food, so it is a satire. It is a question to Enlightenment and rationality, which regards talency is the essential quality for human, only talent person are respected, one should continuously labor to gain the talency in any work.

Irony questions the truths, so it is subversive because it creates doubt about the prevalent social order and depicts loopholes in social order. “Irony is seen as essentially subversive, unsettling the certainties which sustain the social order, and placing all final truths under suspension” (*Parody* 20). Thus, parody questions the false ideology, truth, grand narrative, and portrays the reality examining the hidden aspects of society. *Too Far To Walk*, the novel also depicts problem in America, where foreign students suffer a lot and the narrator points out the problems which might not have been included by American Official History and John as a marginal speaker speaks about the problem .

There aroused various problems due to agency, it was a negative side of America because various people from abroad were suffering from racial discrimination because some abroad revolutionaries were burning the American flags and American government were insisting crosschecking in their documents .Though America sound so democratic in speech, but it could not maintain its own democratic nature while treating foreign students.

Irony also satirizes what is already said, and goes beyond it to deal with the problematic nature of the subject. “Irony is the used to mock literary and social innovation, policing the boundaries of the say able in the interests of those who wish to continue to say what has always been said” (Parody-20). So, irony examines the nature of the narrator, addresses various problems in implicit way and appeals to bring change

in such scenario. Even John Hersey mocks at the failure of the *Too Far To Walk*.

Hersey uses Fist as a character who reacts to the then social activities and society so she complains about own existence too. Hersey also problematizes the history and the hidden aspects of the past without any nostalgic tone. He depicts how his family got problem in the then society, how they kept on changing their identity where ever they went, so their reality kept on changing in official documents too.

He questions the notions of Enlightenment and theory of rationality, notion of civilization and society. There is the examination of the 1970s' landscapes of urban escape. He shows that the problems in the prep school area are heroin, LSD, precocious abortions about which then official documents do not provide any idea, but Fist presents everything using his own ideology about riding in progressive summer camps and schools. He feels panic at that situation .Actually he feels his superstition has covered his mentality.

He questions the notions of history, so he gives an ordinary citizen's remark about the human crisis, which depicts how protest had affected the daily lives of the people. *Too Far To Walk* represents a world of experience which John suffers. Hersey experiences and explains with a character named Fist through his multiple stories and ironic remarks try to generate the then social picture.

In this novel John being a male of the 1970s destabilizes the notion of gender and seems so masculine, he is the only real main character. Male characters –appear and disappear, showing that this periphetic man treats his men no differently from other people he encounters. He problematizes the conception of negotiations and throws lights in the then (political irony) events, issues war.

The feeling he is trying to create is one of dislocation, disorientation and depression which puts a question mark about her subjectivity, identity and life. He

hesitates to tell that he lives in such a waste land where sex is regarded as a commodity to take pleasure in. That's why, he feels being means to be hostage for anyone's child and her life will be ruined unnecessarily because it is going to hamper his career, and life. He feels disturbed so he says trust has caused a kind of hostage and for her mother has been the woman who is going to make him slave. The author narrates his life-story in the form of an auto biography to reveal her psychology which is full of uncertainty.

The ironic exposition and hundreds like them packaged into one or two or three paragraphs make up *Too Far To Walk*. They are linked together in a less amalgamated than accumulated cement that suggests hodgepodge but conveys a certain consistency because the pieces are filtered through John Fist's sensibility –even though he brings his sensibility into question. After all, he, unlike the people whose actions he observes, desperately needs sensible answers, normality.

Thus, Hersey redraws the history of America merging with the history of John Fist and his family, and reveals the hidden aspects of the 1970s America where everything is observed and examined from the perspective of an ordinary male, who has covered from apartment fires to war to the race relation such childhood stories, old news stories, past lovers and lousy parties, by raising issues surrounding the nature of identity and subjectivity; the question of reference and representation. In fact, Hersey makes an attempt of rewriting history from margin by blurring the demarcation between fact and fiction, subverting the official records about contemporary social and political issues of the 1970s, by using first person narrator and the self-reflexive nature of the text which helped to make apparent about the hidden histories of the different characters which is interlinked with the history of America. Thus, Hersey represents the actual history along with the histories of his fictional characters and even rejects the linear and chronological nature of history.

In this sense, his critique of metanarrative and valorization of historiographic metafiction in this novel signify is the death of grand narratives like American dream, Enlightenment, capitalism, history, patriarchy and so on.

The research has demonstrated the consequences of British colonialism and global network of migration. It is observed that through his narrative the writer is critical of politics of liberalization. Even after the end of colonization people are not get rid of its hangover. Colonization has left its deep impacts upon the people of colonized countries that they are always superior to them. There is collision of the eastern and western values the orient versus occident and the seemingly disparate characters are bound together by a shared legacy and common experiences of impotence and humiliation. It is also observed that the so called global economy only manages to scratch the wounds rather than heal them. In the novel the characters who have migrated to the west have experienced different racial prejudices and humiliation because of minority culture. Even if they have migrated to the west for economically capable they are not satisfy in their life instead of this they have lost their identity and living in between two worlds. The young boy of teenage in "*Too Far To Walk*" halts in the middle of the dark bazaar, knowing that he will never escape the tedious delays of America and attain love. Such immobility fixes the Americans in cycles of experience. The point of view of "*Too Far To Walk*" is that of an adult looking back on a maturing experience of his youth which occurred when he was perhaps eleven, twelve, or thirteen. At the beginning of the story the boy sees himself on a religious or spiritual quest. Madeline and other girl in the novel represents a kind of goddess or an angel to him, and he believes himself her protector and servant. The religious imagery throughout the story indicates his grandiose view of himself and the significance of his quest of love that he cannot get. The imagery also suggests



something about the absence of a spiritual vitality from American life, where religion is reduced to habit and empty ritual. The images of decay, emptiness, and the banal dialogue, whether it be the street sounds or the conversation the boy overhears at the bazaar, emphasizing the trivial, silly, and specious quality of America and the boy's quest, both of which seemed to promise so much for him. Thus, one of the main contrasts in the story is between the banal and tawdry world of actual experience and the sensuous and romantic world of the narrator's imagination, an opposition between reality and fantasy that continues throughout. The sentence, where Hersey expresses about his loss constitutes the boy's epiphany, when he realizes the absurdity of both America and his quest. The "blind" or deadened street on which he lived foreshadowed his trip to different locations of America, that is, both the street and the trip to American streets seemed to be leading somewhere, but in effect lead him back where he began. He realizes that he must give up both American Academia and his quest and confront the truth of his existence. His eyes burn because it hurts to acknowledge that a false vision and hope has dominated his recent life. Now he must return home dreamless, but enlightened and more mature, with perhaps a commitment to himself to be more perceptive about life and more truthful with himself. Symbolically, the lights go out on the bazaar, on Mona and other friends, and on his romantic vision.

There is also a possibility that Hersey through the symbolism of the narrator's parents and the two friends at the college, may be highlighting the difficulties that American people had at the turn of the twentieth century with alcohol and with England as a ruler. The narrator experienced difficulty in getting to the localities. He had to wait for his uncle to return home (from a night of drinking) and while at the streets the young woman seems more interested in talking to the two Englishmen than helping the narrator find someone. In some ways the narrator's difficulties mirror America's (and

the American people's) difficulties. Set in 1960, the novel gives a graphic account of across sections of American society in characters like John Fist, at a good eastern university. And he is bored and finds the sanctimonious taint to the staff exceedingly dull. Now first off, Hersey's portrayal of college students seems WAY off. So much so that I would call it BS. But John Fist is his caricature of this type of student. And he gets tempted to try life a different way. No, he does not do drugs, or rebel by becoming a hippie (this book was written first published in '66) or go for free love.

John Fist is tempted by another student that is really Satan in disguise, gets him to sign a contract with him, and then, pretty much, nothing happens except John Fist does stupid things. A prescient novel about drugs. What happens when it's just *Too Far To Walk* to get to class. Fictionalized account of effect of drugs and the devil on a student. The novel has the stylistic approach to writing dialogue then the author throws the stupid Faustian curve.

John Fist is a talented overachiever who has become restless and bored in his second year at Sheldon, an elite New England college. He is losing motivation, increasingly finding it "*Too Far To Walk*" to his philosophy class across campus. So when the devil in sophomore's clothing (a fellow student named Chum Breed) offers him all the most intense experiences of the modern world in exchange for a twenty-six-week lease on his soul, Fist eagerly signs up. The anticipated adventures, however, turn out not to be quite what he had bargained for. Pulitzer Prize-winner John Hersey's *Too Far To Walk* is a bracing updating of the classic Faust legend, a compelling coming-of-age novel, and a masterful work of mid-century fiction.

John Fist, uncommitted, unshorn and thoroughly unkempt, is sunk in collegiate slobdom and cynicism at Sheldon College, a fictional cutting from the Ivy League. His descent to hell starts with a spiral of boredom and even Fist's first venture with a whore

fails to give him that old I-AM-SOLD-TO-THE-DEVIL excitement. Taking the whore home to mother for a weekend does not generate more than a minor row (the Fists are much too bourgeois to brawl about these lapses). Always awaiting some penultimate thrill, the unbelievably footling Fist ends book two as a phoney martyr, having been accidentally arrested in a protest march at Sheldon.

Always awaiting some penultimate thrill, the unbelievably footling Fist ends book two as a phoney martyr, having been accidentally arrested in a protest march at Sheldon. Book Three is a series of LSD nightmares that culminate in a very old fashioned devil's dance (choreography straight out of the Encyclopedia of Witchcraft) where Fist reneges on his contract renewal by refusing to buss the devil's bottom. Next morning, he decides his philosophy class, presided over by a dim, god-like old party, is really not *Too Far To Walk* to. Hersey hurls his symbols without art, but with a preacher's insistence. This is very light compared to the author's cement heavy *White Lotus* (1107) and *Too Far To Walk* is not too long to read in Everyman's sort of code.

Hersey narrates in the story about the journey of John Fist, Breed, Gibbon and Wagner his friends and a girl throughway the valley at three in the morning under a wet full moon. Breed drove, hunched over, steering with a wary grip as if the wheel itself were a ring of sleep (p. 3)

John Fist's role is constructed from his childhood, when the boy is sent to school on account of his being in the family's male inheritor. They have lured towards the culture of west. John Hersey narrates about the girl that her hands were a Viselgrip wrenches, real rodebenders (p. 4). The comic narration of her hands shows irony about the female character who is partner on the journey with three boys in same vehicle. Most of these figures are influenced by the imperial ideology as result they have alienated in terms of dislocation of place, wealth and in search of progress.

. The boy's reflections like his friends suggest that they come to appreciate an ambivalent symbol of power as all study in an elite school. John Fist's role is constructed from his childhood when the boy is sent to school on account of his being the family's single male inheritor, his father dreams to send him to England .The letter to John in which his father mentions about his plan to go Virgin Gorda, it's in British Virgin Island (9)The boy's reflection suggests that he comes to appreciate an ambivalent symbol of power .Hence, his simultaneous perception of royal ordinariness and authority enhance John's esteem for British supremacy. The impression reveals his interest in British cultural values as such and a focus on the idea of imperial domination.

It is the rhetorical strategy of colonizers to lure colonized making themselves superior and more civilized that's why they can rule over them .Even after being free from colonization the people of colonized country try to imitate colonizer culture thinking that it is more superior and civilized .It is the indirect rule over colonizers after imperial power failed to rule directly. John Fist was sent to Sheldon college hoping bright future and better career. His father himself once a class president but once more than just that too, sensitive bursting with ideas and now \$38000 per annum wheeler dealer in big reproduction of colonial furniture company in Worcester, Massachusetts disappointed disappointing man .His mother she had given up teaching in the dim past to apply her farm attention to the brood, she called it the brood .They lived in a house of with a glass of wall staring into the teeth of a house without a glass wall across the street.(21).This distribution of power combines father's status within the community, revealing a collective America equation of the British space with the idea of authority. Considered from this perspective migration in the western metropolitan city creates local hierarchies in the society .Contact with the imperial power is regarded as symbol

of modernity and superiority.

This fact proves that the social norms and values are affected by the imperialism even after the colonization. Western domination is still running in colonized countries not officially but practically.

The sense of revolt against academia is seen in John .The assignments of freshman year had been either indigestive gobblets of rote learning which the instructors distastefully regarded as remedial or monstrous chores of reading for every Sheldon teacher seemed to believe that the paperback revolution has been achieved precisely in order to enable his students to read everything ever written around his discipline (21) .West empire allures the local elites by their power and position and even by capitalism to create hierarchies in the society that's why they can interfere and maintain their sovereignty as they wish because they know that social hierarchy breaks down the social unity. People migrate to west .Thus, migration of a family member in empire exaggerate the power and position of whole family unit in colonized countries, to get that power and position characters attract towards like the western countries like John.

He felt that he was on the edge of a dangerous state of mind .Breed had stung him .A reckoning ? should be made reckoning ?All right, to begin with, he who yearned to be different wore a Sheldon College uniform corduroys, plaid shirt with button down collar, pullover sweater, more or less white socks, one loafer sole bound around and around not caring about appearances which were on principle deceptive anyway (20) .

John's father regards that entering to Sheldon College his son will get rid of all types of problems and they will have a happy and satisfied family. The preference of British products and the description of clothing brand show his integration with British hegemony over the postcolonial countries which are also the attitude of impose

domination to others. Thus, this is the indirect involvement of empire to rule the country by ruling the minds of colonized people by its products. Hersey remarks colonized mind as reality of the then life. This colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps to generalize the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds. When empire fails to rule directly it started to rule indirectly by attracting the other by different strategy at first, it dominates them creating myths like orientalism and then by capitalism or colonizing psychological category of mind that western is superior in every perspectives.

### III. Conclusion

The sense of rebel has been prioritised as the matter of writing history from John Hersey's projected character John Fist who describes all colonial mentality as fake identity of his parents who demonstrate as British in USA.

Peg and Chum's real name was Margaret and Breed but they like to call them Peg and Chum which seems little bit modernised. Their names wearing British branded clothes, cosmetics from British product and even their interest in British literature shows impacts of imperialism in the characters of the novel *Too Far To Walk*.

Thus, most of the characters appreciate western countries and seems more interested to establish themselves or their future generation in empires. Parents as well as children in the novel allured towards the west to enhance their carrier as well as status in the society. To be superior and learn the English ways characters are attracted towards the west because they think their future is much more secure in western countries than their own countries.

He is considered one of the earliest practitioners of the so-called New Journalism, in which techniques of fiction in storytelling are adapted to non-fiction reportage is found in John Fist. Yet Hersey was more of a figure than that one megaton-weighted fact about him would indicate. Born in 1914, he had an astonishingly rapid ascent as a young man like John. Because he was a quiet, sober person who lived an unusually unflamboyant life by the standards of celebrated American writers, it's easy to miss how much he achieved as John is. The novelty of Hersey's approach doesn't mean that it lacked a lineage as John is portrayed in this novel.

You can trace it to the "sketches" about urban characters like John that newspapers started to publish in the eighteen-nineties. These were sometimes written

by novelists like Stephen Crane and William Faulkner, who found ways to make the author disappear, both as a character encountering people and as a voice offering judgments. You can find precursors, too, in social-realist photography about “conditions” and in certain cinematic works, especially documentaries without voice-over narration. The genre of historiographic metafiction can provide opportunities for developing such readers. While typical historical fictions are valued for their historical accuracy, historiographic metafictions call into question the very possibility of accurately representing the past. Historiographic metafiction consists of self-conscious fictions concerned with historiography (the writing of history). It questions how we know about the past, which version we know, and who told us and what they told us; then it invites us to consider the possible motivations of particular versions of the past.

Historiographic metafiction used by Hersey also problematizes the relationship between history and fiction as distinct narrative genres. In the classroom, students have access to historical novels that are interpretations of the past, which often invite reader identification with the characters; they might also use textbooks, which are considered authoritative and objective truths. Historiographic metafictions focus attention to both forms of representing history, drawing similarities between the two and demonstrating that history is a construction. The past can only be known via its textual remains, and history is a narrative construction using those textual remains. Historiographic metafiction can be used in the classroom to show the impossibility of objectively and transparently representing the past, while also signifying the importance of history.

Metafictive texts this novel written by include strategies such as unreliable or obtrusive narrators like John Fift, spatio-temporal disruptions, intertextuality, typographic experimentation, genre mixing, and multiple narrators, all of which can



draw attention to narrative processes.

Thus, this thesis has explored the impacts of imperialism in the lives of characters in the novel which has destroyed humanity and created selfish and revolutionary characters in postcolonial period. The character's belief towards imperial countries and empire's behaviour towards the characters has analysed with illustrations in the novel *Too Far To Walk* by Hersey. I hope it will insight the readers about the western myth and the desire to rule indirectly not by territory but colonizing the minds of colonized about its superiority.

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