

Tribhuvan University

Subversion of Gender Roles through Androgynous Characteristics in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in English

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November 2017

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Letter of Recommendation

Pharsu Ram Ghimire has completed his thesis entitled " Subversion of Gender Roles through Androgynous Characteristics in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*" under my supervision. He carried out his research from September 2017 to November 2017. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This Thesis entitled "Subversion of Gender Roles through Androgynous characteristics in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*" Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Pharsu Ram Ghimire has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee:

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## Acknowledgement

The present thesis would have been impossible in this form without insight and guidance of my thesis supervisor Prof. Dr. Ram Chandra Paudel whose precious time, guidance and inspiration are a way of great value. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to him for his unflagging support in understanding various aspects of the androgyny and gender roles and providing rare materials to carry out this research.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Amaa Raj Joshi, Head of Central Department of English, for accepting my thesis proposal and inspiring me with his experienced remarks and academic comments to conduct this work. I am indebted to my respected teacher Shankar Subedi for his unconditional support and priceless time for his academic guidance. Similarly, I am thankful to Dr. Durba Karki, Prof. Dr. Anirudra Thapa and other teachers of Central Department of English for their suggestions and encouragements.

Finally, I am grateful to my parents Bishnu Prasad Ghimire and Lilamaya Ghimire and grandparents. I am equally thankful to my uncle Prof. Dr. Krishna Prasad Ghimire, Central Department of Nepali and Aunt Nanda Kumari Ghimire for kind cooperation. I am also grateful to my brother Narayan Prasad Ghimire. I would like to thank my sisters and other brothers for their support and care. Similarly, Cordial thanks to my friends for their direct and indirect contribution to complete this work.

Pharsu Ram Ghimire

## Abstract

*The Crying of Lot 49, the protagonist offers idea of androgyny that Woolf exalts in A Room of One's Own (1929). However, this paper argues that Thomas Pynchon does not rely on stereotypical gender differences and critiques the pitfall of gender and sexual condition in The Crying of Lot 49. Oedipa Maas is an androgynous character and she subverts gender roles. Pynchon depicts an idea of androgyny throughout the protagonist acts. She does heroic adventure in post twentieth century by challenging traditional gender roles and creating new gender as androgynous. Protagonist does not end her journey even in adventure, it is her continuation to her objective, and emerges as the new hero by dismantling gender role. The present research tries to look at the novel from the perspective of Pynchon's employment of unconventional portrait of women, primarily Oedipa Maas, as an agent, an independent being and a freedom seeker. Her struggle is portrayed through her unstoppable struggle and an internal passion for complete independence and individual identity. She represents postmodern gender role which is changing. She departs from traditional gender roles and dismantles gender role. Her transgression from confine to free working, independent and heroic woman that makes her self-guided and her acts show societal change slowly and gradually.*

*[Key Words: Androgyny, gender roles, subversion, transgression]*

## **Subversion of Gender Roles through Androgynous Characteristics in Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49***

This paper deals with the concept of androgyny in Pynchon's novel *The Crying of Lot 49* to represent the protagonist as an androgynous character. This study can shed light on androgyny vision and subversion of gender roles. Thomas Pynchon's second novel, *The Crying of Lot 49* is a postmodern novella published in 1960s. The Protagonist, Oedipa Maas, a Californian housewife who is entangled in a convoluted historical mystery of muted post horn symbol and death of her ex-boyfriend, when her ex-lover dies naming her as the co-executor of his state.

Oedipa's adventure is a set of stamps that may have been used by a secret underground postal delivery system the Trystero. She faces many troubles when she searches varieties of death. She leaves her comfortable home in Kinneret-Among-The-Pines, a northern Californian village and travels to the south the town San Narciso near Los Angeles. The Protagonist, female character, Oedipa Maas is as an androgyny in her action and performance. Oedipa Maas's androgynous act challenges masculinity in contemporary time of 1960s. She challenges male centric societal values and makes destiny to San Narcisso for discovery of new state.

Combination of masculine and feminine characteristics of Oedipa Maas is as poly-gender in her behavior. Her heroic journey from housewife to Yoyodyne company to find out mystery is masculine act. So, Oedipa Maas challenges stereotypical gender roles given by the society. She has double gender's quality on the same person. Protagonist has an androgynous quality which subverts conventional patriarchy discourse of gender role. The loss of unitary subject of consciousness, the paradox of retaining historical memory in the wake of passionate desire to discard unpleasant events, the fragmentation of narrative and the characters reflect to some

extent of post modern novel. Oedipa Maas struggles to discover her own subject of identity and subject of agency as she roams through the metropolitan mass of Francisco bay area. She becomes victim of transitory moment in America. Although, she continues her heroic journey without feeling dejectedness by struggling.

The novel *The Crying of Lot 49* published in 1965. After the world war second the rise of voice of women for their rights, equality and freedom was burning. The third movement of feminism and radical feminism rose up. Females involved in movements for their social, economic and cultural positions. Before that time females were deprived from equality and dominated in different sectors. Males' position was supremacy over females to keep females away from mainstream and outer world. But the influence of feministic movement society was in gradual change. Radical feminist were against males and wanted to dominate. At that time of civil war movement and the minorities were against mainstream for their rights. Pynchon here wants balances both males and females. That time, at the rise of feminism, but Oedipa Maas is as neither special feminine nor masculine in her action. Pynchon conveys the message of equality, freedom and self governance to every person through Oedipa Maas.

This research paper explores the concept androgyny rising in 1960s to challenge the traditional concept of gender and establishes notion of androgyny. The protagonist attends the Tupperware Party. She comes out from her private sphere to public sphere for the quest of freedom, identity and independence. Her search of subject of agency and self transformation makes her anandrogynous character. Moreover, her decision to leave husband to fulfill will of ex boyfriend, her perpetual struggle to deal with business, her affair with lawyer reflects her act of transgression from expectation of womanhood. Oedipa Maas's transition from dependent to independent, an object of passivity to subject of agency and her will to go beyond

patriarchal limit depicts her image of an androgyny.

Virginia Woolf argues a person can have double characteristics. She emphasizes in man womanly and womanly man in action, gender as androgynous. (Keren, 20) Similarly, Oedipa Maas has both genders roles. She has as male characteristics of investigative journey in to a fictional secret postal delivery company called Trystero and her feminine household activities as well. The protagonist, Oedipa Maas takes bold decision to uncover mystery and take risk by herself to fulfill will of her ex boyfriend. Therefore, Oedipa Maas's act is double gender.

This research paper attempts to scrutinize the distortion of western male identity and creates hermaphrodite performance in Pynchon's novel. Oedipa undertakes the mission of finding of Trystero only after she inherits the right to the huge estate of ex-boy friend Pierce Inverarity as co-executor. Pynchon includes mixing of genre, science fiction, detective fiction and pop culture in the novel to create pot puree of sorts is what Jamson refers to pastiche. Being Engineer, Pynchon recognizes as complex writer who includes in his writing science and philosophy artistically. This novella also presents complex writing. My research here is how protagonist represents double gender roles, and how society is transgressing from confined conventional patriarchal definition of gender roles.

*The Crying of Lot 49* has linear narrative structure with omniscient narrator. Oedipa Maas wanders for vast information as a result she revolves around the mystery of underground postal network Tristero. Her world is chaos and does not get final truth. She faces many problems but continues her job without disappointing in her goal. She cannot achieve her goal and final answer which she wanders to get in postmodern time. Oedipa Maas married with Mucho, an innocent woman lives in comfortable house. The novel is a metafiction, Oedipa and lawyer Metzger see the

play *The Courier's Tragedy* which also reinforces Oedipa to research mystery of postal delivery system known as Tristero.

In this research paper, primarily I am analyzing primary text itself. To support my argument I have used theoretical light of Virginia Woolf's notion of androgyny to critique conventional division between masculinity and femininity. 'Androgyny' and 'subversion of gender' tools are being implied to deconstruct traditional celebration of gender and establishes a new idea of gender as androgyny. However, other theories like *Gender Trouble* by Judith Butler, *The Androgynous Sublime* by Warren Stevenson, *Gender Studies in Plains Anthropology* by Francis Juli E, *The Subversive Androgyne* by Friedrichsmeyer Sara, and *Androgyny in modern Literature* by Tracy Hargreaves, *Sex and Gender* by Robertare used as supportive tools. The tools which I have applied are relevant to my title and issues.

Pynchon's female hero, Oedipa Maas disrupts the grand tradition of heroism. Oedipa Maas is as energetic and active like male heroes who break traditional meek beautiful virgin heroines and who are subservient to men. She also challenges conventional heroism which has always valued only the males. She chooses the best human qualities from male and female domains and mocks the male heroes. Oedipa Maas moves from stability to dynamism, certainty to uncertainty. Oedipa Maas becomes free woman to work for herself. Oedipa Maas's voyage is adventurous and new and it does not follow traditional kind of heroic journey completely. She protects herself in her journey.

Tracy Hargreaves brings ideas of androgyny in his book *Androgyny in Modern Literatur* from Plato's *Symposium*. The concept of androgyny has developed in ancient time by Plato in his book *Symposium*. He defines etymological meaning of androgyny as:

This ancient Greek word – from *andro* (male) and *gyn*(female) – defines a condition under which the characteristics of thesexes, and the human impulses expressed by men and women, arenot rigidly assigned. Androgyny seeks to liberate the individualfrom the confines of the appropriate.(100)

Plato gives definition of androgyny as combination of both sexes male and female.

'Androgyny' is an ancient Greek word in which 'andro' means male and 'gyn' refers to female. So that, androgynous peoples have males and females impulses, that are expressed by the same person as a single gender. That's why, person is liberated to express from confined boundary. Androgyny has double characteristics of male and female. Two sexes' characteristics are found in a single person. It gives liberation, freedom and boundary of confinement. The concept of androgyny was established in ancient time but it is implementing after first half of twentieth century. This is recently born issue. Oedipa Maas is an example of androgynous person.

Hargreaves quotes Plato's *Symposium* that formerly human was only sex then divided in two in his book *Androgyny in Modern Literature*.

First then, human beings were formerly not divided into twosexes, male and female; there was also a third, common toboth others, the name of which remains, though the sex itselfhas disappeared. The androgynous sex, both in appearanceand in name, was common to both male and female; its namealone labours under a reproach.

(*qtd*Androgyny in modern Literature, 15)

He argues that first there was only human beings and then divided in two sexes: male and female. Human being was as androgynous as third sex, common to both sexes.

The name as it is has both features appearance. They have feeling of double sexes and

act like that. The combination of feminine and masculinity in the performance is as androgyny.

Oedipa Maas a female hero of the post twentieth century. She takes her bold decision when she heard that her ex boy friend named her as executor of his property at the time of his death. Oedipa goes to explore that mystery of his death and his property of new state. This heroic act of female hero's is her androgyny act.

One summer afternoon Mrs Oedipa Maas came home from a Tupperware party whose hostess had put perhaps too much Krish in the fondue to find that she, Oedipa had been named executor, or she supposed executrix. of the state of one Pierce Inverarity, a Californian real estate mogul who had once lost two million dollars in his spare time but still had asset numerous and tangled enough to make the job of sorting it all out more than honorary. (1)

The above paragraph shows Oedipa Maas is a middle class female who attends in Tupperware party in California. She receives a letter naming her as executor of her ex-boyfriend, Pierce Inverarity state. He is rich and has lots of property, who lost once two million dollars. After that, she decides to explore his property and his mysterious death. Oedipa Maas's husband Mucho Maas works as a joker for radio. She leaves her husband and then makes bold decision to go new state of San Narciso to find out the reality of the death of Pierce Inverarity. Being housewife of Mucho Maas, her bold decision and going for heroic act of voyage portrays her as masculinity in her act. Coming out from private sphere to public sphere is as males for outer world shows double gendersroles in her act. She takes a lawyer Metzger to council her. A married woman goes for exploration reflects her as new women in 1960s. She does not know where to begin and how to start her journey as innocent but becomes courageous and

hopes to achieve her goal anyhow. She drives to san Narciso. She transforming from state of limitedness four walls to self guided action, immature to matured women and innocent to enlighten and a responsible female to fulfill Pierce's will.

Gender refers to the socio-cultural definition of male and female. It is differentiated and given roles by the society which is constructed. Gurjeet K. describes as: Gender roles are socially constructed based on the differences in the patterns of behavior of men and women. It is the socially constructed meaning of the biological differences of male and female which affects their responses to one another in a given 'situation'. (6) Gender roles are construction by family, community and society on the basis of patterns and behavior of men and women. On the basis of biological differences, their response is given male and female. Multiple structures like culture, language, religion media, and education determine the roles of gender. Sex is natural and constant, so it is unchangeable. For example women give birth to babies and male help in reproduction. For males and female gives specific roles on the basis of their body structure and status in the society, whereas biological determinism has been accepted as natural. Society divides their jobs such as women to household activities like cooking, washing and caring children and males to do outside works. Inequalities are created to women and men like different races and casts. But protagonist Oedipa Maas challenges males by doing outside works and decides to voyage to fulfill ex boy friend's will. She subverts conventional gender roles.

Oedipa Maas faces many difficulties in her new way of life to new state. She lacks public knowledge even though tries to adjust in discomfort situation. She reaches Yoyodyne where Pierce's company lies, without feeling tired that refers her doppelganger characteristics, in the course of her travel she drinks and enjoys with wine freely. Oedipa Maas is as a subject or agent not as an object. She had close

relation with Pierce and enjoys with him at that time.

'Fair enough', drawled Metzger, taking her hand as if to shake on the bet and kissing its palm instead, sending the dry end of his tongue to gaze briefly among her fate's furrows, the changeless salt hatching of her identity. She wondered then if this were really happening in the same way as, say, her first time were in bed with Pierce, the dead man.

(22)

Metzer, a lawyer is with Oedipa in her voyage. They drink enough, Metzger takes Oedipa's hand kisses and gazes on her. At that time Oedipa Maas remembers her past time with Pierce, in the bed, now dead. These lines reflect that she had also physical relation with her ex-boy friend. This evidence shows she is different from traditional woman. She is a new woman, she has freedom what she likes to do.

The representation of inequalities and stereotypical representation of gender roles takes long time to change. Different movements and long practices make transgression. Ridgeway opines, "If, over time, changes in the material arrangements between men and women continue to accumulate, the traditional content of cultural beliefs about gender will gradually change as well. A single wave does not move a sandbar, but wave after wave does." (14) Ridgeway puts his opinion that changes have been taking place but it takes ages. Over the time materials arrangements are to collect for the change. That's why reformation is not possible immediately. Traditional beliefs about gender is about to change in post twentieth century which represented by Oedipa Maas. Similarly, it is continuous up to now. It is process that needs more time. A single wave does not move but waves after waves make transition in belief. We can see the Plato's time to present time different movements taking places like industrial revolution, queer movements, racial movements etc. they are making change in belie

from traditional gender roles to androgynous roles.

Gender is vast subject of study. It is the matter of culture. Simone de Beauvoir suggests in *The Second Sex* that “one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one (Butler 48)”. For her gender is constructed. Woman becomes woman due to cultural compulsion of one but it does not come from sex. Gender is matter of social classification. That’s why it is violated the person who is in power.

Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of lot 49*, post modern novel is representing contemporary American society at the time of civil war movement quest for balance identity. The novel explores the concept of androgyny. The heroine of the novel is one a soul of searching journey that will give her understanding of herself in and the world she belongs to. Oedipa Maas breaks cultural definition of gender and challenges conventional role of female. She subverts gender roles. Coming out from housewife to outer world for discovery is masculine in her action level. Cathy argues that Oedipa goes beyond cultural norm of gender:

For example, when Oedipa Maas, the protagonist of *The Crying of Lot 49*, rejects her cultural inheritance along with its restrictive definition of "womanliness," she certainly does not become a being who is biologically part male. Androgyny, for her, means finally refusing to be fractured by societal definitions of what she, as a woman, should or should not be. (3)

These lines present that protagonist Oedipa Maas breaks cultural norms and definition such as submissive, fragile etc. of womanliness. Being biologically female she has male's quality as well. For her androgyny means rejecting societal definition of masculine and feminine boundary of societal definition. Societal definition makes limited to gender in specifies works but protagonist rejects that definition and

performances male roles that makes her androgynous character. She does not limit earlier definition rather goes beyond in heroic action of discovery. So, she subverts traditional gender roles and establishes gender as androgynous. Female hero finds road to androgyny more difficult and more distant than her male counterpart. She has attitudinal and volitional androgyny, not the act of chromosomes. Oedipa Maas rejects cultural inheritance restricted definition of womanliness. She fractured societal definition of woman. She is as liberated women.

Protagonist, Oedipa Maas presents her as capable person and capable even of heroism. Her extramarital affairs also end disastrously. At last, Oedipa Maas herself transform into 'waste' in to W.A.S.T.E. Oedipa achieves great heroism by becoming against great odds, she is aware of her identity, a person fully human and thus an androgyny. Oedipa challenges cherished male dominated society. (Davidson 1-14) She challenges discriminated and dominated society.

The concept of gender roles is constructed by the society. According to Robert J. Stoller, "Gender identity starts with the knowledge and awareness" whether consciousness or unconsciousness, that one belongs to one sex and not the other, as one develops, gender identity becomes much more complicated. So, that for example, one may sense himself as not only male but masculine man or a man who fantasizes being women" (10). Stoller explains that gender is the knowledge of awareness of human being which can be conscious or unconscious. It is connected to the sex which becomes complicated to the person to bind in certain boundaries. But, one might feel masculine as well as feminine at the same time. It is constructed by the society. A male can have female's feeling and vice versa. Likewise, Oedipa Maas has masculinity too even though she is a woman biologically. Androgyny is attitudinal than biological. Androgyny is the perfect union in the one person of

characteristics conventionally designated as either male or female, can never, in a sexist society, be perfect. But traditionally insisted that women are less capable than men and their lives are more determined by biology.

Oedipa Maas and Metzger see the play *The Courier's Tragedy* by Richard Wharfinger in San Narciso. She saw there in the play muted post horn symbol which she saw that on bathroom of the hotel. That's makes her more curious to that symbol.

It got so confusing that next day Oedipa decided to go see the play itself, and even conned Meyger in to taking her...' I want to find out something. I want to talk to Driblette.' 'Oh about the bones.' He had a brooding look. Oedipa said, ' I don't know. It just has me uneasy, The two things so close.'...'Against whom?' inquired Metzger, putting on shades. I want to see if there's connection. I'm curious'. (43-52)

Oedipa Maas confuses after seeing the play it had also included that muted post horn symbol. She also finds that Thurn and Taxis, postal monopoly throughout the most of the done by Holy Roman Empire. Then she wants to find out mystery of that symbol and secret postal monopoly system. Oedipa then wants to talk to the play director Randolph Driblette to find out mystery of the use, she uses her logic and devoted to uncover mystery. She is here as subject to explore, she is so curious. Oedipa desires to see the script of that play where this symbol has used and asks about that to the director of the play. But director replied her not to worry about it too much and he also informs her old script he has lost it. Oedipa feels restlessness without finding the answer of her question. This work of continuity and passion of Oedipa Maas makes her androgynous character.

Writing about androgyny it is mainly reflected by Woolf. Steven postulates "Psychic androgyny [is] the only one worth writing." (10) Warren argues that the

reflection of psyche of androgyny is good writing. This kind of writing presents the psychological reality and androgyny quality. Writing should reflect inner aspect of psychology which is based on double characteristics of male and female. This, *The Crying of Lot 49* also presents psychic androgyny by main female character, Oedipa Maas.

The French Feminist Simone de Beauvoir, who is considered as a precursor of gender theories, had analyzed that biological determinism confines and women to the sphere of reproductive and nurturing roles. She pointed out the differences between "natural and cultural sex" by saying that a woman is not born but made"(35). Here, she talks natural and cultural sexes are different. Biologically, a person takes birth by being male or female that is natural sex but the certain roles are provided by the culture or the society that is cultural sex which is human construct and given that may change in period of times. Women are made by the societal norms that born. Thus, Oedipa Maas perceives both characteristics of society, challenging conventional notion of gender.

Similarly, Frances L. Restuccia argues androgyny is the mix of sexuality. "One might expect that such a sexual legacy would militate against the possibility of androgyny, if androgyny is, as Heilbrun defines it, "a movement away from sexual polarization and the prison of gender toward a world in which individual roles and modes of personal behavior can be freely chosen" (Heilbrun, ix-x). (7) Frances informs that in Heilbrun definition, androgyny is away from sexual binary and polarization. It also breaks prison of gender in individual's role. Person is free to his/her behavior. Person is no bound of traditional role of gender. It gives equal priority to both gender and creates no binary rather goes together in hand and hand. Similarly, protagonist, Oedipa Maas has no binary she handles double quality of

females and males.

Miglena Nikolchina postulates "Androgyny, therefore, is a fictional turn akin to role playing (it can be entered and exited) and to the mask (it can be cut out of perishable material and then burned)"(10). He describes androgyny is fictional turn in which role is played. It can be entered in writing and can be existed in time. Thus, mainly Virginia Woolf started writing about androgyny in her writings. Other writers did not insist primarily it in their earlier writing. Pynchon's writing has also included this concept in *The Crying of Lot 49*.

The arising modern phenomenon is concerning human as androgynous, which is defined as being biologically male or female but psychologically one. Androgyny also refers to doppelganger. Traditional cultural definition of gender is more dominant view of gender is either male or female. Androgyny is attitudinal than biological. Human beings have twenty three pair of chromosomes in which twenty two pair of chromosomes transmit parental heredity to the child and one pair of chromosomes determine sex either male or female. Females have "X'and "X' chromosomes and males have 'X' and 'Y' chromosomes. At the time sexual intercourse, if male's 'X' fuses with females 'X' chromosomes then female baby gets birth. On the contrary, if male's 'Y' fuses with female's 'X' chromosomes then male child gets birth. Therefore, male is responsible to reproduce male or female child. But androgyny is not biological, it is attitudinal and per formative of both sex acts.

Androgyny is a recently adopted concept in writing. Marilyn R. Farwel argues 'If we look carefully at the implied structures in the various attempts to define androgyny, we will notice that either balance or fusion is central to each statement.'"(6) Farwell tells that androgyny is balance between male and female. He also puts it is the fusion of both genders. So, in androgyny character maintains

characteristics of gender, he or she performances masculine and feminine in balance. Oedipa Maas as androgynous character, she balances inner work and outer heroic work together. Her journey of discovery in new state is as male heroic performance.

The main Character, female hero as alienated. She lacks proper interaction in her journey. At the end, Oedipas Maas becomes alone and spends futile life.

According to Seed, he believes as:

“Oedipa’s special alienation as a woman from the media images surrounding her has not been analyzed satisfactorily by any critic, and it is helpful to have it at least identified. But the gender issue is rather swallowed up by the comment on networks, so that Oedipa is "looking for a lost system of communication". (1)

He mentions that Oedipa is looking for lost system of communication. She looks as alienated and fragmented thought out in her exploration. Being a woman she feels alienation and challenge even though she goes in her mission. She questions traditional gender issue and applied new issue of androgyny. She struggles and combats each and every challenging situation. Her continuity and devotion to her objective is admirable. She is self motivated and destiny oriented woman to achieve the goal. In spite of her heroic act her achievement at the last is less fruitful. This heroic act she performs even being women. Her bold decision makes as a male to her in her act.

Oedipa feels restless without finding the meaning of post horn symbol. She wanted to meet Professor Bortz whom she heard he knows something about it.

She found Professor Emory Bortz's number in the book and had better luck. A housewife Named Grace answered, backed by group of children. 'He is pouring a patio,' she told Oedipa. 'It's highly organized

joke that's going on since about April... I was hoping forever for love; my one extra marital has eloped with a depraved fifteen-years-old; my best guide back to the Trystero has taken a Brody. Where am I? (102-105)

She gets Professor Bortz's number and rings, his wife Grace answers. Bortz is on pouring patio wife replied. She also tells it is highly organized joke since April. Bortz says sorry to Oedipa. Here, she again does not get answer. Oedipa feels frustrated, she is hoping love but her extra marital fella elopes. She questions herself where I am. She is in the complex condition. Even though, she continues her work without disappointing. This is her bravery work of being female a masculine act and subverts gender roles.

Traditional women were confined in four wall's boundary. Patriarchal society only provided house hold activities. They were thought to be agent of entertainment and means of birth giver. Women were compelled to marry earlier in younger age.

More traditional women are likely to feel they needless education and hence less time to prepare for their roles as wife and mother, and so seek to marry earlier than do young women who endorse a greater role for married women in family financial support. And women expecting an egalitarian division of labor within the home may have a longer search for a suitable partner. (Goldscheider K.and Goldscheider 14)

Women's condition was worse. Women were more dependent to males and they are thought to be uneducated. They could only serve for the males' interest. Social division to women was worse and treated as submissive and docile. Young women are as object of marriage and used for financial support. Even in work places they were paid less than males. They wanted egalitarian society but the practice was different.

Women's deprivation from equality, rights and freedom made revolution to come up. As, a result, different feministic movement took place. Three waves of feminism provided them voting right, freedom and equality. Victorian era and modernism time they got equal existence. The Protagonist Oedipa Maas as female representative of freedom, agent of subject and androgynous character. Her bold decision to voyage presents female position up to 1960s.

Now she enjoys with a lawyer, Metzger. Metzger cooks an eyebrow with her. She has affair with lawyer, Metzger.

With a cry Oedipa rushed to him, fell on him, and began kissing him to wake up him. His radiant eyes flew open; pierce her, as if she could feel the sharpness somewhere between her breasts. She sank with an enormous sigh that carried all rigidity like a mythical fluid from her, down next to him undress her; it would took twenty minutes, rolling , arranging her this way and that... she came into a sexual crescendo in progress, like a cut to a scene where the camera's already moving... Her climax and Metzger's, when it came, coincided with every light in place. (27)

Oedipa Maas has close relation with Metzger who is as an assistant to her in her travel. She seduces him by kissing and by falling on him, at his sleep. This undress to her, and sexual crescendo in progress, this situation reflect their sexual relation. Female hero is fulfilling her sexual desire at the absence of her husband with her assistant Lawyer. Her affair with him as her act is modern from traditional women. She does not care Mucho's letter. She has own decision and freedom what she wants to do. That's why she has her subjectivity of her own. She challenges conventional women limitedness. She acts males and has not any regret rather celebrates it. That

shows her as androgynous protagonist challenging conventional gender roles.

Before feministic movements, females were more dominated from socially, economically, and culturally. Male's imposition over female and keeping females from away main stream deprived them from liberation and rights. Females' empowerment was suppressed and made them as labor inside four walls.

Victorian notions of womanhood have been imposed upon historical accounts and in the ethnographic and archaeological record...women's status and an economic differential between men and women, perhaps accounting for the "slave-like" conditions of women described in many historical narratives... Conkey and Spector (1984: 6-7) go on to note that our own ethnocentric views of gender roles have been imposed on the reconstructions of earliest hominid life ways, with the presumed development of a strict sexual division of labor seen as central in the development of family groups and culture. (Francis 3-4)

At the time of Victoria era, females had been imposed. Female's status and males status was divided, they had different economic and social status that can be found from many ethnographic accounts. Female were treated as slave like and their condition was very worse. They were behaved as animals like creature without emotionally and continuous imposition for males service. Victorian and before Victorian are female are presented negatively in literature and they could not handle bravery. Their limitation in private sphere and restriction from outer world was gender bias. Social strict sexual division and female labor paid less comparison to males. As Eve was created for the service of Adam from his rib, since in the case of this first human being that attainment was possible only through the separation of the female from the masculine essence, God took Eve from Adam. This was Bohme's

explanation for the division of the sexes and was an event he considered the first fall.

Similarly, females position as server to males. But the industrial revolution, different feministic waves and voice of female empowerment females secured as males position. Later on, they also thought as females are as capable as males in every sector country. The concept of androgyny as male and female in one is developed. In spite of the sexual distinction male can have females emotion female can have males. Unlike traditional women, Oedipa Maas acts as both of males and females and she subverts conventional gender roles.

Despite of the unexpected result, Oedipa continues her job to finding out mystery. She takes it as her duty. She cleverly deals with Stanley Koteks. She asks blunt questions like what does that symbol mean? That is to fulfill her desire of that question.

'Who's that with beard?' asked Oedipa. James Clerk Maxwell, explained Koteks, a famous Scotch Scientist who had once postulated a tiny intelligence, known as Maxwell Demon... She'd decided to come tonight to the Scope not only because of the encounter with Stanley Koteks, but also because of other revelations; because it seemed that a pattern was beginning to emerge, having to do with the mail and how it was delivered...She asked him then about the initial W.A.S.T.E., but it was somehow too late. (59-68)

Oedipa asks James Maxwell about Maxwell Demon which operated with molecules that were moving in different random speed by the Second Law of Thermodynamics. She also visits Scientist John Nefastis asks how it operates. He replies everyone cannot work it, and tells only people with the special gift. She also pronounces W.A.S.T.E as waste which stands for We Await Silent Tristerio's Empire. She

searches scientific reasons of using of underground mystery of mailing system and how it is used. She decides to visit Stanley Koteks at night for find out mail and how it is delivered. She does all these works independently, that is her masculine act. She has also gone back of historical marker deliberately to Lake Inveracity one day. She is ready to face any difficulty in her journey that makes her androgynous protagonist.

Virginia Woolf, as an early proponent of androgyny in women, Woolf challenged trends to construe same-sex desire as a distinguishing characteristic of a sexual identity type and also essentialist ideas about male and female character traits underlying theories of androgyny.

Against these trends and ideas she expressed a much older understanding of women's same-sex desires - a belief that they are common to most women - and promoted it as epistemologically, aesthetically, and politically more useful to women than the beliefs about bifurcated sexual identity and dual-gendered minds that were being promoted by sexologists and some members of the avant-garde. Though she is often understood as an early proponent of androgyny in women, socio-historically contextualized attention to her emphasis on the social realities of gendered embodiment in *A Room of One's Own* and *Orlando* suggests that she rejected it. (Helt 3-4)

Helt believes that Woolf challenges trend and ideas of older that women have same sex desire only. Woolf and theorist of androgyny, they believe that two parts of genders in one by knowledge, beauty and politically. Androgyny as dual sexuality and dual genders mind at the same person and that is also protected by avant-grade. Woolf is a one of modernist androgyny writer who contextualizes social and political realities of the societies. She has included androgynous character in her book *A Room*

of *One's Own* and *Orlando*. Misogynistic behavior was practiced in conventional society. Woolf opposed both the reduction of desire to sexuality and the concept of sexual identity itself. Her literary portrayal of heterosexual and bisexual desire challenges identity. Sexuality is concerned with imaginative and creative possibilities with gender. Woolf believed to be producing another social invention: a culturally widespread homophobia that isolated women from other women emotionally, politically, and professionally.

Androgyny concept also can be found in ancient Greek and Roman times. Ancient writers also wrote about dual sexuality. But in middle age single gender roles were dominant. The androgyny concept was pioneered in ancient times. The following excerpt explains androgyny was even in ancient times.

Ancient Greek and Roman authors that relate to the experience of "dual sexuality," defined by the author as "the simultaneous or successive possession of both sexes by a single individual"(1)... By examining these texts from various literary, historical, and philosophical sources in their intellectual contexts, Brisson seeks to illuminate the role played by dual sexuality and its associated concepts of androgyny and hermaphroditism among the people of the classical Graeco-Roman world. (Cyrino 2)

Cyrino informs that Greek and Roman era, authors of that time, they relate the experience of dual sexuality. The persons who are successful have possession of double sexes in single. In different texts of literary, philosophical and historical dual sexuality play the great roles and they associated concept of androgyny and hermaphrodite. Dual sexuality in Teiresias, the Theban prophet famous for spending some time as a woman and around whom several layers of myth and legend have

accrued in his numerous appearances in Greek and Roman literature.

Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of lot 49*, post modern novel is representing contemporary American society at the time of civil war movement quest for self identity. The novel explores the idea of struggle of humanity in a world of diminishing alternatives. The heroine of the novel is one a soul of searching journey that will give her understanding of herself in and the world she belongs to. In the process, she investigates in to the future of the American Dream that lies hidden in many layers of technological progress that America has achievement. Vine argues that Oedipa goes for her task of discovery. She acts like male in her discovery and shows androgynous act.

Oedipa Maas, the questing heroine of Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965), finds herself in a situation that echoes Lyotard's sublime of the event. At the start of Pynchon's text, Oedipa is "named executor" (5) of the estate of her former lover, Pierce Inverarity, and charged with ordering its tangled contours - but, as she pursues her task, she finds herself caught up in a series of occurrences whose meaning is indeterminable. "This is America, you live in it, and you let it happen. (15)

These lines we find that Oedipa pursues her task to new state for exploration. Her mission is to find out meaning from series of occurrences. Her act is heroic to discovery mystery. But at last she gets nothing special. She questions male dominated society and decides to excavate mystery of her ex boyfriend', Inverarity's death... She involves herself taking bold decision in that extreme situation and feels sublimity. She faces several obstacles to find ex boyfriend's state and to dig out mystery of his death. Her act is like males. In spite of, the female her act of unexpected like males makes

one of the androgynous women.

Oedipa Maas wanders to get meaning of that muted post horn symbol. She visited director, Randolph Driblette and Richard Wharfinger from whom she got information about Trystero. She also visits scientist John Nefastis to know about mail system but she couldn't get answer from him. Then she moves to the professor Bortz hoping that finding the answer.

The girl in the English office informed Oedipa that Professor Bortz no longer with faculty. He was teaching at San Narciso college, San Narciso California... 'It?' said Oedipa. 'Do it? What? 'Have sexual intercourse,' replied Nefastis. 'Maybe there'll be something about China tonight...' 'Gah,' Oedipa screamed, and fled... She knew a few things about it: it had opposed the Thurn and Taxis postal system in Europe; its symbol was muted post horn; something before 1853 it had appeared in America and fought the Pony Express and Wells Fargo.

(71- 75)

Oedipa Maas started the car heading to the campus to find professor Bortz but she is informed by a girl that he is no longer with faculty. He was teaching san Narciso College, San Narciso California. She copied the address and walked away trying to remember who'd put out the paperback. She couldn't. She comes to visit scientist Nefastis. He came to her and put an arm around her shoulders and tells to not to cry and proposes to have sexual intercourse. Scientist flirts her, then, Oedipa screams and flews. Here she refuses to make physical relation with scientist. He wants to grab the opportunity at right time. She makes relation with Metzger but not with Nefastis, It is her freedom to decide what she likes. She is not bound to do forcefully and not weak as traditional women. She has her own life of liberation and right. Oedipa knows few

things about Trystero and Thurn and Taxis postal system in Europe, its symbol was a horn before 1853 and it had appeared in America. She spends nights finding the image of the Trystero post horn. This is her devotion to her duty about secret delivery system. This continuous and devoted to her job and difficult task hoping to fulfill her ex-boy friend's will she acts, that makes her hermaphrodite character.

German first important thinkers understand androgyny as harmony not of concrete masculine and feminine entities. They believed psychological or behavior polarities. German Romanticism believed they cut off from the organic world of nature and, following centuries of similar practice, posited in women those qualities they felt they lacked. Similarly, androgyny in Christian salvation in which Bohme dealt most consistently with androgynous wholeness and where his intertwining of traditions is most obvious.

Androgyne an occult paradigm for the combining of "masculine" and "feminine" elements in alchemical retorts, and we certainly do not have an intuition of a spiritual androgyne leading us ever onward to some mystical reunion with the All, both- of which were not uncommon practices just a few centuries ago. Instead, critical interest in androgyny today is focused on its potential to denote wholeness in the social or psychological sphere, apart from any connection with biological gender. To these critics an androgyne represents a model for the obliteration of societal expectations regarding masculinity or femininity. (Friedrichsmeyer<sup>2</sup>)

Friedrichsmeyer argues that androgyny is combination of masculine and feminine elements but we do not have spiritual androgyny to mystical union with all people.

Androgyny today focuses on potential wholeness in social and psychological sphere which is apart from connection of biological gender. By these critics we find that androgyny as obliteration of societal expectations in masculinity and femininity. Likewise, Romantic writers found philosophical underpinning for notion of androgyny as a model of human completion.

Oedipa Maas finds out the whole property of ex boyfriend, Pierce in new state. She researches there lots of asset of Pierce Inverarity.

'Sure', Oedipa said. Anybody could paste in an addendum. She drove back to San Narciso to have another look at the list Inverarity's assets. Sure enough, the whole shopping centre that housed Zapf's Used Books and Tremaine surplus place had been owned by Pierce. Not only that, but the Tank Theatre, also. (117)

In the above paragraph protagonist Oedipa Maas quests the asset of Pierce Inverarity in San Narciso. She drives back to San Narciso to have another look on ex-boyfriend's asset. She finds there housed Zapf's Used Book and Tremaine's surplus place. Not only that but also she finds Tank Theatre. Pierce had a lot of property in different places. But Oedipa is as capable person to finding out that all his property heroically. This is her act of difference from other women and her androgynous quality.

Jabok Bohme's conception and transmission of androgyny is as a model for human perfection (3). One can observe that even in the word "androgyny," the masculine half precedes the feminine. But more importantly, androgyny is a word composed of oppositions which has no meaning unless there are actual referents for those polarities. When the word is used to explain a physical or concrete merging, it perhaps has value, although the words "bisexual" or "hermaphroditic" serve just as well (10). Oedipa Maas act half males and half female in the novel. She represents

wholeness of society.

The notion of androgyny is being developed to modern period. Traditional pattern of sexual partition is minimized and created new concept of gender as androgynous. The notion of androgyny is differently understood in different period of times. This concept can be found in Plato's time too. Despite the notion was developed, treatment of gender was divided as males and females. Traditionally gender is taken as masculinity or femininity. But up to 1960s notion of gender was problematic. As a result, Oedipa Maas comes out challenging conventional gender roles and acts as androgynous character.

This research studies new area of knowledge. Research adds a brick to make a building in vast area of knowledge. Many researches are held before in this book but my research is different from others. Androgyny is recently practicing issue and very few researches are done. As earlier researchers have done research in this book from different perspective as unattainable nature of reality and post modernistic reading. Similarly, from the perspective of heroic motive is analyzed. On the contrary, my niche of study is androgyny and gender roles.

The research tries to contribute knowledge in the area of literature. My attempt is to add extra knowledge in ocean of knowledge. This research, I hope for new researcher in this area helps to guide and contribute for the extra research. In this research, I have analyzed from androgyny and gender perspective to the protagonist Oedipa Maas. Especially, this research focuses at the time of 1960s and onwards how the androgyny notion took place as a new concept. I expect my research also contributes in vast area of knowledge of literature.

Oedipa Maas collects Pierce's stamps for the auction. She sells it for bidder. She handles her business appropriately. She does everything what she needs to do for

the betterment of her and business.

One day Cohen called to tell her that the final arrangements had been made to auction off Inverarity's stamp collection. The Trystero 'forgeries' were to be sold, as lot 49. 'And something rather disturbing, Miz Maas. A new book bidder has appeared on the scene, whom neither I nor any of the firms in the area have heard of before. That hardly ever happens'. (121).

Oedipa is informed by Cohen that final arrangements had made to auction of Inverarity stamp collection. These stamps are going to sell in lot 49. So the Title of has written as *The Crying of Lot 49*. The bidder appears and it all takes. Oedipa Maas is such a person who handles Pierce's property including company, Theatre, and so on. She is capable and self confident female person of post modern era who is as qualified as men.

At the last stage Oedipa Maas becomes frustrate, she can't reach at her aim and truth. Consequently, she can't achieve and feels alone.

Oedipa sat alone, towards the back of the room, looking at the napes of necks, trying to guess which one was her target, her enemy, perhaps her proof. An assistant closed the heavy door on lobby windows and the sun. She heard a lock snap shut; the sound echoed a moment. Passerine spread his arm in a gesture that seemed to belong to the priesthood of some remote culture; perhaps to a descending angel. The auctioneer cleared his throat. Oedipa settled, to await the crying of lot 49. (127)

Oedipa Maas wanders everywhere but she can't find final truth, mystery of Trystero underground postal system. She is unable to get post muted horn symbol's meaning

even her hard struggle. At last, she sat alone, back of the room looking napes of the neck. She thinks her target, her enemy and her proof. Her assistant close the heavy door and windows. She hears the shut of the door echoed at that moment. His armed were spread to the remote god. That might be to the auctioneer. Oedipa sits waiting the crying of lot 49. In post modern time story ends without finding truth by the protagonist. Despite of many difficulties and struggle Oedipa Maas Struggles at the last time, that makes her as androgynous character. Her act is half feminine and half masculine. She challenges modern heroic males by performing masculinity. She has no less than a male's heroism. So, she is a model of postmodern woman. She subverts traditional gender roles and creates new definition of gender as androgynous.

This research paper deals with androgyny and subversion of gender roles to deconstruct the gender roles. The constructed gender role which is given by the society is transgressing according to time and situation. Similarly, the protagonist of the novel in *The Crying of Lot 49* who is deconstructing traditional gender role and creating the new notion of gender is as androgynous. Pynchon subverts conventional gender roles in his novel and establishes a person can have both femininity and masculinity. The protagonist, Oedipa Maas makes self transformation from within.

Pynchon's representation in the novel is the society is slowly and gradually transforming up to post modern period and it is continuous process. Oedipa Maas challenges traditional gender roles and makes decision to leave her husband and to fulfill will of ex-boyfriend after naming her co executor of his property. She struggles to deal with business in new state. She has an affair with lawyer and her self driven action reflects her act of transgressing from conventional expectation of womanhood. She is transiting from dependent being to independent one. She is transforming from object of passivity to subject of agency and her will goes to

beyond patriarchal limit depicts her image of androgyny.

The female hero breaks convention of gender role and constructs new identity. Her journey from private sphere of home of Kinnet to the Public sphere of San Narciso explicates challenging the conventional gender of feminine. She dismantles the masculine and feminine stereotypical conception of gender and creates gender as androgynous. She balances radical feminist thoughts of feminism and traditional thoughts of male as superior in the society. Oedipa Maas's heroic exploration of new state and handling ex-boyfriend's property represents she is a capable female. By doing these heroic works of voyage she subverts traditional gender roles.

Oedipa Maas struggles more and more to investigate of her ex-boyfriend's death. She invests much effort to find out mystery of muted post horn symbol but can't get actual final truth in post modern confused time. She faces many troubles to fulfill ex-boyfriend's will. She is running to achieve aim but at last she finds dilemma, untruth issue feels isolated, even though bold and self guided confidence shows courageous woman. She can't find mystery of underground postal delivery system in mysterious world. Despite those difficulties her act is masculine.

Oedipa's journey is heroic adventure. She combats with different difficulties in course of her journey in new state to achieve her goal. Pynchon's hero parodies traditional masculine heroism. She has qualities of males that make her androgynous character. She is dependent to independent, object of passivity to subject of agency. She has extramarital affair with lawyer, Metzger. She leaves her husband for her mission of discovery. Oedipa does not feel weak and hesitate for struggle. She runs her business properly. She dares investigating journey of secret postal delivery company and takes bold decision to uncover mystery and takes risk by herself to

fulfill the will of her ex boy friend. Oedipa Maas comes private to public sphere, stable to dynamic, and certainty to uncertainty to achieve her goal. She works in outside world rather household activities as males. These qualities are found in Oedipa Mass which are males' qualities. Therefore, she is androgynous character. She has males' features as well as females' that make her an androgynous person.

She disrupts historical heroism constructed by the males. Traditional hero is almost valued males heroes. That is why Pynchon chooses androgynous hero who has qualities of both males and female. She is self confident, goal oriented and self guided female. She adjusts her in any situation to achieve the goal. She becomes confined to free working woman. She is liberated her from household activities to outer works. She stands against hierarchal and biased social gender roles and creates equal righted roles. The qualities which are found in males she has those qualities. Her act is androgynous to reconstruct gender roles. That is why she is androgynous character.

Androgyny concept is new concept which includes males and females qualities in human being to make complete. But in stereotypical concept, it had made division in human being and gave certain qualities to males and females which show incomplete human being. On the basis of these qualities values are created and given certain roles to males and females. So, these constructed values can be violated and discriminated to powerless people like women. Androgyny concept challenges those stereotypical values of division gender roles. As a result, androgyny concept is an aspect of postmodernism.

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