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The Reflection of Social Realism of Modern China in Lu Xun's *Selected Stories*

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Abstract

This research work focuses on some of Lu Xun's stories. Through the stories it explores everyday life and suffering of the poor people from the village of modern China. Mainly it seeks to reflect oppression made by feudal lords to the poor people, class difference, failed intellectuality, hunger, cannibalism and violent culture of government. "Kung I – Chi", a 1919 story presents upper and lower class status through dress code and 1918 story like "A Madman's Diary" is entirely about killing human beings for flesh. Story like "Medicine" written in 1919 and a 1925 story "Regret for the Past" are about poverty and cruel human society. In the same way "True Story of Ah Q" reflects backwardness, oppression, hunger and violent culture. Initially, social realism is a term used to reflect social reality. These days it is a broad term to reflect human life, terrible suffering and human society as it is. Taking these points in consideration, this research reflects human life in true colour of Chinese village society. Despite China as an established nation of people's republic and through writing stories, author's attempt for spiritual transformation on human spirit is impossible to maintain social justice and prosperity.

Introduction

The Reflection of Social Realism of Modern China in Lu Xun's *Selected Stories*

Present research project focuses on selected stories of Lu Xun, one of the influential writer of twentieth century China. His numerous stories clearly portray the dark aspect of society of the village of the then China. Mainly he raises the issues of society, class and gender relationship in the stories. He talks about hostile relationship among family, friends and neighbours as human beings are naturally social animals and have to live co-operatively and mutually in the society for best life and survival. He also talks about hunger, cold, suffering and oppressive practices of feudal lords. Being a social animal, human beings possess some natural rights like life, liberty and happiness. Despite having such rights, he clearly exposes deprivation of such rights of Chinese village people in the stories. He also clearly talks about individual divorce from public and politics and inhuman aspects of society where beating, arresting and killing are considered very common task. Mainly he talks about injustice, apathy, backwardness and ignorance in the stories. Government is formed to rule over the people and to safeguard some basic rights of its people. It must be ideal and act according to wish of citizen. He also exposes autocratic nature of government of the then China in the story like "True Story of Ah Q". Some other stories talk about failure of intellectual in such a traditional society and social class. In this, he has practiced to talk about everyday life of ordinary and poor people in true colour.

The research project seeks to reflect some real aspects of the then Chinese society on five of his stories like – "Kung I-chi", "A Madman's Diary", "Medicine", "Regret for the Past" and "A True Story of Ah Q". These stories are written in different period of time in his life and taken from collection of stories published by foreign language press pecking in 1960 and 1972. "Kung I-Chi" is a story about a

person to survive hardly despite having qualification and narrator as a working boy in the tavern keeper to identify upper and lower social class through dress code. "A Madman's Diary" is a story about arresting, murdering of human beings in which major character gets trapped from his own brother for flesh. "Medicine" is the story about old Chuan Couple owning only a small tea shop as their income generative source and their only son suffering from fatal disease like tuberculosis. "Regret for the Past" also vividly reflects the young couple's tragedy caused by cruel human society. Long story "A True Story of Ah Q" which is divided into nine chapters revolving around the character Ah Q shows feudal oppression, hunger, suffering and autocratic government of the then China.

From the very beginning social realism is a term applied to reflect social reality. In modern sense, it is a term to represent human life, common feeling of the people, terrible suffering of people caused from feudal lords and hardship of low class people to get accustomed with high class people as well as human society as it is.

The 1919 story "Kung I – Chi" reflects social class of poor and rich and sketch of failed intellectuality. For this, the setting place is wineshop. The young boy narrates entire story who started to work in the wine shop since his early childhood days. In the story, wineshop is taken as a place for public gathering where many people come to take wine at mid day and evening as well when they become free from their work. As the narrator's task is to prepare, warm and provide wine to the customers, he is very well familiar with the different type of costume of the customers and manners they perform to him. Here the author writes, "But most of the customers belong to short coated class, few of whom can afford this; only those in long gown enter adjacent room to order wine and dishes, and sit and drink leisure" (7-8). This statement in the story tells social class of the then Chinese society through dress code.

In this story 'short coated' peasants represent low status class people who drink only warmed wine and bambooshoots standing outside by the rack for short period of time and 'long coated' intellectuals eat full course of meal sitting in an adjacent room long for period of time represent high class people as they were in pre-revolutionary China. In this story, the narrator's busy task of warming and preparing wine in other person's shop and tavern keeper's calculating daily income also reflects status of social class through labour division. The narrator's interpretation of working in the tavern keeper since twelve years age also proves violation of child right. In the age of schooling, the narrator is compelled to work as a child labour caused by family poverty. This also shows Chinese society divided into groups through economic point of view.

George Lukacs, a Hungarian Marxist philosopher in his article "Realism in Balance" argues that, "if literature is a particular form by means of which objective reality is reflected, then it becomes a crucial importance for it to grasp that reality as it true is, and not merely to confine itself to reproducing whatever manifests itself immediately and on the surface" (1037). In the essay, he calls for awakened social humanism that would heal the breathe between life and beauty. He also says man is alienated due to labour division and social class has been divided into upper and lower. In "The Reflection Model", he connotes reflection as a work of art as a whole of social reality. He further says a realistic world must reveal the underlying pattern of human society and art is to reflect reality in the most objective way.

Through the character of Kung I-Chi, the author reflects failed intellectuality in the then Chinese society. In the story "Kung I –Chi", the narrator identifies Kung wearing only long gown seems typical person as he always appears in dirty and tattered cloth. The story further reveals him as an educated figure, "Kung I - Chi has studied the classics but had never passed the official examination" (8). Education is

considered essential in the life of people. It helps them to decide correctly in difficult situation and only educated people get best employment. The story also further says about him that he could earn enough being a good calligrapher but having a habit of running from his working place, no one desired him to provide employment. Since he became jobless, grew poorer and poorer everyday. Having no another alternative way to survive, the last part of the story shows him involving into petty theft for cash. This secret is revealed between the conversation of tavern keeper and his worker. For this he writes:

"How could he come?" one of the customers said.

"His legs were broken in that last beating."

"Ah"

"He was stealing again. This time he was fool enough to steal from Mr. Ting, the provincial scholar! As if anybody could get away with that!"

"What then"

"What then ? First he had to write confession, then he was beaten. The beating lasted nearly all night, until his legs were broken. (9)

This statement reflects real aspect of society that human beings are born with hands to work, feet to move, brain to think but hungry stomach. To survive, one has to do hard struggle using either physical strength or mental knowledge, attitude and skill. For best survival one has to create earning environment in the life. As various rules and regulations are made in favour of workers, each worker receives amount of money equal to labour. Fact the matter is that it depends upon human nature that only curious and active people easily could earn for the livelihood but it is problem for sluggard people who do not want to involve in some kind of work. Ultimately this kind of habit leads them towards poverty and suffering as the character Kung I-Chi in the story.

The story written in 1918 under the title "A Madman's Diary" is a vernacular text to gain recognition as a proto-typical text of social protest and criticism of modern Chinese literature. This story clearly portrays the inhuman act like cannibalism of proto-capitalist society through the minor as well as major characters represented in the story. To reflect all this, the setting place in the story is an ordinary village community that appears to be sealed from the outside world. In this story, main character is imprisoned by his own brother for future purpose. In the course of his imprisonment, one of his high school friend came to meet him and he provided all details to his friends. Finally the details of his concealed suffering became the matter of reveal among the mass of people through author's story in China.

The very beginning of the story creates the fearful situation in which human beings have to get fear from human being and domestic animal in comparison to the narrator's native village as he comes to visit remote village after so many years. According to historical perspective human beings have created and experienced different types of society. As it is getting advanced according to changing situation of time, it must be free from fear and prejudice for happy life of human beings. But the author reflects the society which is out of human desire. Following statement proves much about it:

Tonight there is no moon at all, I know that this bodes ill. This morning when I went out cautiously, Mr. Chao had a strange look in his eyes, as if he wanted to murder me. There were seven or eight others, who discussed me in a whisper. And they were afraid of my seeing them. All the people I passed were like that. (3)

Chapter two of the story "A Madman's Diary" clearly says the same situation that the continuous look of the children terrifies the narrator a lot. He says, "I can't sleep at

night. Everything requires careful consideration if one is to understand it" (4).

In the course of analyzing this story from the point of view of inhuman act like cannibalism, chapter three of the story "A Madman's Diary" reflects the situation in which main narrator of the story is forcibly taken by another character old chen. Before taking him there, he witnesses a scene of a woman cursing her own son to eat his flesh and continuous look upon her son. When he is taken by old Chen, he considers it is done for some purpose as killing is considered simple thing in that village soceity, "He dragged me home" (4). This chapter further reflects about the narrator to be treated like an animals in the cage as there are vast differences between human beings and animals, "they locked the door outside as if cooping up a chicken or a duck" (4). Last paragraph of this chapter reveals the failure of the crops and act of arresting and murdering of the remote village called wolf Cub and while going through the book available in the room, narrator only finds all the books filled with only one words that is, "Eat people" (4). This statement of the story caused tremendous fear upon him regarding himself to be murdered and eaten by human beings in upcoming days.

While defining the origin of human and universe, all definitions seem fictious but among the creatures originated in the universe, human beings appeared with rational capacity of thought. Because of this capacity, they are capable enough to distinguish between good and bad and form their own society. It is the place where we survive mutually helping and cooperating each other. It is the only place where every individual is connected either by biological or physical relationship and everyone needs ideal society for better survival. Biological relation is considered most important as one gets birth from parents and has brothers, sisters and other relatives. For survival, biological relatives are essential but circumstance of time plays very

crucial role to break biological relation into inhumanity. Chapter four of the story "A Madman's Diary" also says the situation in which the narrator gets imprisoned by his own brother in the collaboration with others. This act is done for murdering purpose.

This statement proves much about it:

I said, "old chen, tell my brother that I feel quite suffocated, and want to have a stroll in the garden." Old chen said nothing but went out, and presently he came back and opened the gate.

I didn't move, but watched to see how they would treat me, feeling certain that they wouldn't let me go. Sure enough! My elder brother came slowly out, leading an old man. (4)

Likewise chapter eleven of the story "A Madman's Diary" also reflects the situation of violence in the family in which narrator lost his own five years old lovely sister in his childhood days for flesh to survive due to failure of the growth of crops caused by long draught fell in China. For the murder of his lovely sister, the narrator accused his own brothers, "My sister was eaten by my brothers, but I don't know whether mother realized it or not" (7).

Social realism is a movement of art to draw attention to the everyday condition of the working class and the poor people. It also exposes murder, crime, sex and other types of abuses which take place in society. Regarding it, author David Bret says in the article "On the possibility of social realism", that social realities are learnt, known and recognized; and acknowledged through complicated behavior. Supporting the similar view, Terry Eagleton talks about the failure of socialism to maintain social justice. He elaborates this idea in the book *Why Marx was Right* and says:

Marxism may be very well in theory. Whenever it has been put into practice, the result has been terror, tyranny and mass murder in an

inconceivable way. For millions of ordinary men and women, it has meant famine, hardship, torture, forced labour, a broken economy and monstrously oppressive state. Those who continue to support the theory despite all this are either obtuse, self-deceived or morally contemptible. Socialism means lack of freedom; it also means lack of material goods, since this is bound to be the result of abolishing markets. (12)

Taking this point in case, Mike Davis also discusses in the book *Late Victorian Holocausts* that ten millions of people from India, China, Africa, Brazil, Korea and people from other countries lost their lives due to famine, draught and disease in the late nineteenth century. He also discusses it is due to free market dogma that high price deprived poor and common people not to have access upon the food available in the market.

The circumstance that the author reflects in the story is also the consequence of draught and famine which fell long period of time in China. Due to this, there was no any production in agriculture and people sustained upon grains they had stored in their houses. In the later days, it too caused great depression to them as they didn't have grains to eat. In the market, imported foods and grains were so expensive that poor and common people didn't have access upon it. Only the rich and prosperous people had access to the available crops and foods. Draught and famine were the only cause to result an act of cannibalism in the countryside of China as it was already practiced long ago by Chinese people. The following statement in the story reinforces about it:

In ancient times Yi Ya boiled his son for Chieh and Chou to eat; that is the old story. But actually since the creation of heaven and earth by

Pan Kun men have been eating each other, from the time of Yi Ya's son to the time of the Hsu Hsi-Lin and from the time of Hus Hsi-Lin down to the man caught in wolf cub village. (6)

But in the modern world, society is considered educated and civilized. Education system and advancement of science and technology have great impact on society and human psychology. For the well being of citizens, government is formed. And it provides and safeguards citizen's rights. They also have to form government according to their will. According to citizen's rights, human beings are independent to move, live and eat. Even they are free to express their thoughts and desires. Despite having such rights and freedom, whole story only focuses on inhuman act of killing and murdering.

Similarly, chapter eight of the story "A Madman's Diary" portrays the situation regarding the draught and famine in which narrator asks question to someone who came near to him, "Is it right to eat human beings?" (6). At the response of this question, he says, "when there is no famine how can one eat human beings" (6). This statement also gives much emphasis that cannibalism in China is a result of drought and famine. Because of this, most of the people passed away by hunger and others committed suicide. Some others involved themselves in murdering and killing act as one wants to keep existence and the story itself is a reflection of such act in Chinese village society. For this, strange people and bad persons are targeted. The last part of the story further states killing human is not the internal desire of people but bad circumstance compelled them to commit such act. As they are under the control of government authority, they did not kill directly rather compelled others to commit suicide for the survival. In this regard narrator says, "I know their way, they are not willing to kill anyone out right nor do they dare, for the fear of consequences. Instead

they have banded together and set traps everywhere, to force me to kill myself" (5).

Central as well as minor characters represented in the 1919 story "Medicine" reflects poverty and hardship of common village people. For this, the author creates a small tea shop as a setting place owned by old Chuan couple. Chapter one of the story "Medicine" exposes old Chuan couple only owning a small tea shop as their income generating source. As the plot line moves forward, it further reveals much about their poverty where old Chuan becomes ready to go outside for shopping but Mrs. Chuan provides a packet of silver dollar to her husband, "After some fumbling under the pillow his wife produced a packet of silver which she handed over" (9). Giving a silver dollar instead of cash money for shopping proves the poverty stricken plight of old Chuan couple. This chapter further says about them using cheap and light thing in their home as a source of light, "He struck a match and lit the grease covered oil lamp" (9). This statement clearly reflects poverty that in the age of science and technology, the invention of electricity has made every aspect of human life easy and comfortable. Even at this modern age, old Chuan couple still using grease covered oil lamp is the icon of poverty due to which they had to adjust old traditional setting of life. The statement, in the story clearly portrays the serious condition of their only one son. His son was suffering from tuberculosis, "and from the small inner room a fit of coughing was heard" (9). This chapter narrates that the only son suffers greatly from the fatal disease. The last paragraph of chapter one says old Chuan going outside from home. In his way to outside, he was robbed on the way. Following statement in the story proves it:

What are you afraid of? Why not take it? When old Chuan still hesitated, the man in black snatched his lantern and tore of its paper shade to wrap the role. This package he trust into old Chuan's hand, at

the same time seizing the silver and giving it a cursory feel. Then he turned away, muttering and fool. (10)

This statement in the story clearly says that the year 1919 A.D. itself is the year of civil war in China. War takes place when people feel their basic rights and demands are not fulfilled. It is the nature of the war that one aspect fights for raising the demand and another tries its best to suppress. Between the two fighting group common people have to suffer from terror and fear. In this statement, the exchange of packet of silver dollar and bread do not value equal in both quantity and quality.

And chapter two of the story "Medicine" also reflects hardship and suffering of old couple not having access the physical property. To reflect this, the author has a kitchen as a setting place. This chapter clearly reflects the situation of old Chuan's arrival from outside and finds his ill son eating stale food as morning meal. It further reflects about the ill son, "his lined jacket clung to his spine and his shoulder blades stuck out so sharply, an inverted seemed there" (10). This statement in the story also says about poverty as old couples are not capable to feed him properly. In human life, basic necessities like food, shelter and clothing come with the birth. It must be fulfilled and fulfillment of these things are also connected to fundamental rights of human. For the fulfillment of these thing mostly parents are responsible. Next setting time in this chapter is morning. It shows their busy work in the kitchen where they lack utensils to eat morning and evening time. For this they depend upon leaf of the tree rather dishes and plates, "then the old woman went out, to return shortly with a dried lotus leaf which she spread on the table. Old Chuan unwrapped the crimson – stained roll from the lantern paper and transferred it to the lotus leaf" (10). Eagleton also supports this idea in the book *Why Marx was Right*. In the book he writes:

Marxism reduces everything to economics. It is a form of economic

determinism. Art, religion, politics, law, war, morality and historical change: all these are seen in crudest term as nothing more than reflection of economy or class struggle. (107)

It means everything comes down to economics. Before we can do anything else, we need to eat, drink and live. For this economy is necessary, this story is written in April, 1919. Twentieth century is the era of industry. Human beings are capable enough to produce necessary materials in their daily life. In the market, various type of utensils are available but the story tells old couple using lotus leaf in place of utensils. Last paragraph of this chapter says them heating breads until it turned black on the layer and providing to son reflecting poverty, "Eat it up . . . then you'll be better" (11). This statement reflects their poor economic circumstance that they are unable to treat their only son despite suffering long from fatal disease. Due to advance made in medical science, there is the treatment of many disease and treatment depends on economic status of people. Poor economic circumstance becomes obstacle for them that they are unable to treat the illness of the son rather they prefer proper kinds of rest as the best medicine as treatment, "have a sleep, then you'll be alright" (11).

Similarly, chapter four of the story "Medicine" mostly takes place in the teashop. It is taken as a gathering place for some people and begins with old Chuan's task of making tea for customers. This chapter also says the suffering of old Chuan about the poverty and his son's illness, "There were dark circles under his eyes" (11). Customers appearing in the teashop also know the pathetic condition as he practices always to remain happy, "Aren't you well, old Chuan" (11). The most terrible situation told in this chapter about poverty is, "he went to the kitchen, filled a bowl with cold rice, added a hot water to it, and sitting down started to eat" (11). The food

which they serve their son is the sign of malnutrition and illness. It signals as a major cause of depression to them as there will be no one to take care them in the old age.

In the same way, chapter four of the story "Medicine" is extremely sympathetic. This chapter reflects the time of festival in Chinese village community. The occasion of festival is taken as sharing happiness, doing entertainment and wearing new clothes, eating delicious meal. It is only one occasion to bring joy in the family and society but in contrary, this chapter shows bereaved situation of Chuan family. The hope of old couple is broken due to untimely demise of their son. In this time old couple are childless and old lady has to remember her late son during festival. For this, author writes, "The chingming festival that year was unusually cold. Willows were only just beginning to put forth shoots no larger than grains. Shortly after the break, old Chuan's wife brought four dishes and bowl of rice to set before a new grave in the right section and waited for it" (12).

Another story "Regret for the Past" written in 1925 A.D. is about tragedy of young lovers persecuted from cruel human society and economics. The introductory part of the story reflects the narrator's rearrival in the hostel after one year being fade up with friends, relatives and society 'where he lived during student life, "In Tzu Chun's absence. I saw nothing in this shabby room" (40). In the story, hostel is the setting place where the narrator falls in love with the character Tzu Chun. As hostel is for students, it is difficult for them to live there. In this, the two lovers began to move outside as their suitable destination, "we went to several times to the park, but often to look for lodging" (40). This statement of the story clearly states two lovers trial to search another place for accommodation. The union between two is natural as male and female are taken as two part of a single coin. In the absence of one, another's life is impossible. Both male and female can be active in their own state but union

between two is essential to bring joy and happiness in the life. Same thing also happened to them, "last spring last year was happiest and busiest time" (410).

After hostel, author creates chichao street as a setting place where narrator and his beloved girl live on rent for years. In the initial phase of their living there, the story shows them facing some challenges and lacking necessary things for accommodation, "our furniture, simple as it was, had already taken greater part of the money I had raised: and Tzu Chun had sold her only old ring and ear-ring too" (41).

Despite facing hardship in their first settlement there, the story shows their improved condition. In the later days, the narrator gets appointment in the local office to earn for survival, "I had my routine too, six days of the week I went from home to the office and from the office home" (41). This statement clearly says busy lifestyle of the narrator and employment is only way to maintain their living standard. Along with it, the interpretation of keeping some pets in the room is the sign of domestic life. As they have lived happy life, circumstance never remained same. Coincidentally, bad luck came to hit upon him that he is removed from job and received letter of abdication from office in which it is written, "By order to commissioner, shih Chuan-Shong is discharged" (41).

After this, author creates another circumstance to reflect their normal life style. He writes about the narrator of the story hoping to follow other types of work in his life as he is unemployed, "I could work as clerk somewhere, else or teach" (41). In the story the narrator's writing a letter to the editor of *Freedom's Friend* and task of book translation are proper way to earn to survive according to mental skill. In this dire circumstance, his beloved girl worries much when he appears as a hopeful person, "I had a sudden vision of a peaceful life" (42). Despite being hopeful in the life, situation turns worse day by day in which due to excessive worry about

upcoming days, his beloved girl changes physically in comparison to past days, "she seemed to have grown weaker" (42). People mostly keep pets for the entertainment purpose and feed them frequently in a day but due to poor economic condition, even they are not capable enough to feed their pets, "they were very thin, though, because of a long time they had only been feed a few grain of kaoliang a day" (42).

Regarding the problem and hardship caused by economics in the book *Why Marx was Right*, Eagleton writes, "In one sense, the claim that everything comes down to economics is surely a truism. Before, we can do anything else, we need to eat and drink. We also need clothing and shelter at least if we are living . . ." (107). Same case is revealed in the story, existing in the world and despite living in the human society, they face problem of basic needs in the life. Due to poverty, narrator also tries to remove pets far from them, "finally I muffled his head in a cloth and took him outside the west gate where I let him loose when he ran after me, I pushed him into a pit that was not too deep" (43).

Giving much emphasis about the necessity of economics, Karl Marx writes in 'The German Ideology' that, "the production of ideas, of conceptions of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their materials behavior" (768). This statement of Marx clearly says material activity is related to production and production relation which determines social aspects like ideas, conceptions and moral aspects. Behind all these things, economy also plays great role. To reflect tragedy, setting time in the story is winter season. The influx of winter season is troublesome for them. In human life, some basic as well as additional needs also born with the birth and its fulfillment depends upon the economic status of the family. People having access to physical property easily fulfill them but it is the

problem of poor to fulfill them difficulty. In the story, author reflects them lacking proper kinds of clothes and appliances to protect them from cold. Nature itself is omnipotent but blind. It never understands human problem and suffering that it can trouble us any time and before the power of nature, everyone feels inferior. As the best alternative the narrator chooses public library to spend the time to protect himself from cold rather wearing seasonal clothes, "The cold winter and her cold looks made it impossible for me to be comfortable at home. But where could I go? I could get away from her . . . looks in the street and parks but the cold wind outside whistled through me. Finally I found a heaven in the public library" (43).

The narrator's frequently visiting in the public library everyday is not his desire rather it is his compulsion. Among the mass of people in society, no one wants to be humiliated. Everyone one wants to keep better social image. To protect his social image better only, public library is the best destination for him, "you were liable to meet people you knew on the road who would glance at you contemptuously" (43). Due to sever problem and suffering caused by unemployment, the narrator only sees divorce as the best means of welfare for each other, "I feel that our only hope lay in parting" (44). To cause tragedy upon them the role of economic crisis is not only important, the role of cruel human society and relatives also play crucial role. In such a condition, there is no one to co-operate them, "She had already quarreled with her uncle – in fact he was so angry that he had disowned her. I had also broken with several friends who through they were giving me good advice but were actually either afraid of me or jealous" (41).

The interpretation of not responding from anywhere despite applying for various post in the story also reflects cruelty upon them. In this difficult situation, his beloved girl is also taken away by her father despite she lived long time with him. The

news of adoption he listens from the mouth of landlady terrifies him until he turns unconscious, "Feeling me surrounding pressing in on me, I hurried out to the middle of courtyard where all round was dark" (45). It is said in the story that Tzu Chun's father behaves his kids demonishingly. In his desolate wandering in the room, he also imagines death of the beloved regarding her as not acceptable girl as she is divorced, "I had thought of her death" (45). In the last part of the story, the narrator leaves his residential place far behind seeing not any kind of hope and possibility there and moves towards city to meet one of his uncle's friend for the support of employment as he is very reputed person in that city. He also appears cruel to him and informs the death of narrator's beloved girl, "That –er – that friend of yours, Tzu Chun I suppose you know is dead" (45). For him last destination is hostel again as none of his friends, relatives and society turned helpful and cooperative to him.

As a secondary objective of the research, it also reflects backwardness, ignorance, innocence, apathy, injustice and oppressive nature of Chinese feudalism in the story "A True Story of Ah Q". Central as well as minor characters represented in the story reflect twentieth century realism of Chinese society. For this, author has a remote Weichuang village as the setting place and archetypal character Ah Q in the story. The beginning chapter of the story reflects writer's confusion about the origin and ancestors of Ah Q. This chapter also shows vast gap between Mr. Chao and Ah Q through economic and social status. For this author writes, "Ah Q who had just drunk two bowls of yellow wine, began to prance about declaring that this reflected credit on him too, since he belonged to the same clan as Mr. Chao, and by an exact reckoning was three generation senior to the successful candidate" (1).

In this story, most of the incident takes place in the village Weichuang. In that village only Chhien and Chao family are represented as rich and rest of others as poor.

In such a village community, Ah Q is represented as a person without family members and home. Tutelary God's temple is taken as his residential home and portrayed as a person to work door to door for his survival as he is man without economic base, "he had no regular work either, simply doing and jobs for others" (4).

Similarly Chapter two of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" portrays him as a person having existential crisis as equal to insects. Successful county candidate from Chhien and Chao family having positive social image and economic prosperity also appear as his enemy. And sometimes he is also beaten by other people without any clear reason, "if the idlers were not satisfied, but continued to bait him, they would in the end come to blows" (5).

Likewise, chapter three of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" in title 'A Further Account of Ah Q's Victories' interprets if the act of beating relates to the Chao family, that is the matter of worth taking for villagers and they are never considered guilty for this. Only Ah Q is considered guilty. This clearly proves high class people's direct suppression towards the poors. Along with this, Whisker Wang is the another character to appear an enemy to him with whom the quarrel has taken place several times giving nonsense epithet, "Mangy dog, who are you calling names? Whisker Wang looked up contemptuously" (8). This statement in the story reflects that human enemies never remain far, rather they live around us. In the last part of the chapter, next setting place is wine shop where Ah Q goes to take wine as he is habitual drunkard. From wine shop he witnesses a nun going out from a convent and tries to manhandle her on the way and says to her, "If the monk paws you, why can't I? said he pinching her cheek" (10). Furthermore, this chapter also says the nun lives in convent and of small age. As she doesn't have any relation and doesn't have to receive or extend with Ah Q becomes source for his revenge of anger caused by other persons

in that village. A small girl devoted completely to the religion so strictly proves herself as an innocent suffers from bad person without any misdeeds.

In the same way, chapter four of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" in the title 'The Tragedies of Love' reflects both suppression and oppression caused by Chinese feudal lords. In the very beginning, this chapter says about Ah Q as a morally strong person but in the later the accursive language uttered by nun caused psychological change and made him to feel the necessity to have family for happy and prosperous life, "Ah Q, may you die sonless (11). As he is taken as a man of many task, this chapter has shown him working in Chao family. Chao family also contains named Amah wu as their maid servant. Their keeping of maid servant clearly proves them as feudal lord. In this chapter, as Ah Q and Amah Wu are in Chao family to work for their survival, he got attracted towards her and tempts her for the sexual intercourse. This issue caused psychological effect on her that she went terrible worry for long days despite showing any kind of interest towards work. This act of Ah Q caused serious concern to chao family and it led terrible beating to him by county candidate with bamboo pole, "Turtles egg! shouted the successful candidate. Cursing him in mandarin from behind" (13). It is said in the story that such kind of abusive language is used by only rich and position holder in that village society. This act of high class and position holder person is direct way of suppression to the poor people like Ah Q. Along with severe beating, Ah Q also makes some agreement with Chao family to which author writes:

1. The next morning Ah Q must take pair of red, candles, weighing one pound, and bundle of incense sticks to the Chao family to atone for his misdeeds.
2. Ah Q must pay for the Taoist priests whom the Chao family had

called to exorcize evil spirits.

3. Ah Q must never again set foot in the Chao household.
4. If anything unfortunate should happen to Amah Wu, Ah Q must be hold responsible.
5. Ah Q must not go back for his wages or shirt. (14)

All existing society is composed of between haves and have not. In the story too, Chao family and the Ah Q belong with this type but in the name of punishment which Chao family force Ah Q to pay physical things is beyond his capacity. The statement further says not to provide him wages and shirt. This act of Chao family is direct means of violation of human rights. The agreements which is made between them is feudal lords suppression towards poor.

In the coming days, circumstance becomes very crucial because of immoral task he performed in Chao house. The immoral task he performed there caused negative social image which is not considered good for him there. In the village as he is casual and seasonal worker, village people also apathied him both for work and food. Regarding it as a serious condition for him, author entitles chapter five as 'The problem and livelihood'. In this chapter, author reflects circumstance full of apathy for him. The beginning paragraph portrays him only to have a pair of cloth to wear as rest of cloth were left in Chao family. In the another paragraph, he is also apartheid for money. The story says the owner of local wine shop denies for credit. The old man incharge of temple also denies for him shelter. These types of apathy denied from villagers led him to terrible hunger and in search of work she goes door to door to ask, people also denied him for work, "there is nothing, nothing at all, Go away!" (16) Unemployed condition caused him to suffer from cold and hunger. In this, he couldn't stay long in the Weichuang village. For the next alternative, he moves from there and

arrives at convent crossing paddy field where he senses hopes and aspirations of life. As the necessity doesn't know the rule, he goes to steal into a convent jumping wall regarding no one's presence there but his all act are clearly observed by nun where she also apathies him to do so and says, "May Buddha preserve us, Ah Q! what made you climb into our garden to steal tunips! . . . oh dear, what a wicked thing to do! Oh dear, Buddha preserve us! . . ." (18). The act of barking and chasing of black dog kept in convent also signifies apathy for food to him.

On the other hand, chapter six of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" entitled 'From Restoration to Decline' clearly reflects the backward social status of the Weichung village. To reflect it, writer portrays the scene of Ah Q's rearrival there after some year of his living in city. In these days, city is considered as the best example of a human civilization where all kinds of services and facilities are available. In contrary, far and remote villages lack many things. In Weichuang also, the successful candidate's moving towards city is taken as the very important and respectful matter. The rearrival of Ah Q in new and fine get up caused jealousy to them as they don't have gone to city in their life, "And since everybody wanted to hear the success of this Ah Q of the ready money and new linked jacket . . ." (19). This statement also says them not having access to property and modern apparel. The interpretation of cloth sold by him in the story are shown to one another for approval also proves backwardness of woman. In that village community, even the young boys also become the follower of Ah Q's success and money in the last paragraph, "some idlers who wanted to get to the bottom of the business went to question Ah Q carefully and with no attempt at concealment, Ah Q told them proudly of his experience" (22).

In contrast, chapter seven of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" entitled 'The

Revolution' reflects the great impact of revolution takes place in China. Author reflects the situation of revolutionary people's entrance in the city and people holding government position going back to village as refugee. Their arrival in the village side causes fear on village people as they are innocent but Ah-Q is obsession of it that he takes revolution as a minor and good aspects of human being, "Revolution is not a bad thing, thought Ah-Q" (25).

Mainly revolution takes place if the people of the nation couldn't become satisfy with the government and its policy. Even if any government turns despotic, and couldn't guarantee captive rights and demands of people. But this chapter best reflects the revolution as power centre into which inferior and weak person involves to succeed his enemy. As Chao and Chhien family appears as enemy for Ah-Q, he also dreams to take revenge with them involving himself into revolution, "Things . . . I would go to straight in and open the cases; silver ingots, foreign coins, foreign Calico jackets . . ." (25).

On the other hand, last chapter of the story "A True Story of Ah Q" reflects injustice upon Ah Q and violent culture of government authority. For this the story portrays the act of theft took place in the Chao family. The story further says about Ah Q as innocent character for this act, "Ah Q was no exception" (31). Accusing for involving into the group of thief, he is arrested by military persons from Tutelary God's temple. This act of military persons in the story clearly shows that even they arrest without clear reason. After this, the story has small room as setting place where Ah Q and other persons are kept for investigation of crime they committed. The environment is so suffocating that they breathe hardly there, "During his living in the small room, he is suffered a lot" (32). In this chapter, the conversation among them concludes that one of them is imprisoned for the act that his grand father couldn't pay

rent to a successful provincial candidate. This proves Chinese government's injustice towards common people without any crime and military persons working only in favour of rich rather than poor. The punishment technique applied by them for investigation also says about injustice in the story, "that afternoon he was dragged out through the bared door and taken to a big hall" (32). Along with injustice, this story also tries to reflect violent culture of the government. In the last episode of this chapter, tragic incident takes places that Ah Q is murdered by government militia. Following statement in the story proves much about it:

Ah Q was lifted on to an uncovered cart, and several men in short jackets sat down with him. The cart started off at once in front were a number of soldiers and militiamen shouldering foreign rifles, and on both sides were crowds of gaping spectators, while what was behind. Ah Q couldn't see. Suddenly it occurred to him – "can't I be going to have my head cut off?" (34)

As the country is located in mid Asia, it has the history of four thousand years old. Being a fourth largest country in the world, it is most populous. During the time of 1830 A.D., China itself was feudal society totally based upon independent farming economy. During that time, British was first colonial power. Its capitalist group tended to enter in the China to lie and rob the Chinese people. Gradually they started opium business there. Through this, they earned 2-3 crores of golden currency and twenty millions of Chinese employee, intellectual, landlords and feudal groups fell in opium abuse. It resulted them towards luxury and extravaganza life style. On the other hand, gold store fell in the hand of British. It helped to increase the role of golden and copper currency which affected severely to Chinese the farmers and working class people. Tax they had to pay also went high due to which their living standard and life

style became miserable and pathetic. It continued for long period of time. During the time of 1910 to 1950 A.D., there was rapid change in political status. It was the time for the end of Qing dynasty established by Manchun in 1644 A.D. In 1912 A.D., this dynasty came to be end and Chinese communism emerged. It has had a remarkable continuity of leadership led by Mao Tse-Tung (1893-1976) A. D. In 1949 A.D., the civil war ended and it became successful to establish China as a people's republic. The then old social structure was obsolete gentry class people appeared as an obstacle to modernization. Even though vast majority of population was occupied by peasants. Majority of people lived under poverty, dying like flies in the recurrent famine. Even merchants in coastal side lacked capital and vision and urban workers were unskilled and lived in poverty. In such a pathetic condition, social change was necessary and it was third priority given by the then government.

The concern of the short stories, no contemporary writers can be expected to compare with Lu Xun in respect to observation and analysis of class difference and economy. He still survives as a living force in Chinese literature and was transformed as a symbol and writer who exposes human suppression and oppression. Due to which he is acclaimed as Chinese Gorky. In his short stories, every word carries gospel of truth. There is also much in his short stories which stem from his direct observation and part of his experience he gained in life time period. In the story "Preface to Call to Arms" he clearly mentions about the poverty in which he himself had to burrow money from local landlord to buy medicine by mortgaging jewelry and clothes. Being a founder of modern school of realism in Chinese literature, he was the first writer to expose the conditions of peasants and village life with the degree of realism. As his thoughts and literary development have close relation with Chinese people's revolution, genres written by him reflects social image. Eagleton in the Book *Why*

Marx was Right writes that, "Marxism is a dream of utopia. It believes in the possibility of a perfect society without hardship, suffering, violence or conflict. Under communism, there will be no rivalry, possessiveness, competition or inequality" (64). Regarding the principles of Marx, political parties are also established based on it to maintain social justice and equality. But practically it is never seen possible. Karl Marx himself viewed existing society divided into two groups and his "The Communist Manifesto" itself is declaration of abolishing capitalist society to maintain social equality and justice. Some of Lu Xun's stories also claim that he chose literary movement as the best weapon to fight for social justice and reformation. Through this he wanted to bring change in human spirit to end all types of social evils.

According to passage of time, change is the inevitable component of society. Change is only one component to bring reality and it is possessed when consciousness stands in relation to theory and practice get united and strive towards thought. But the author hoped to bring real change in peasant people's status promoting literary movement. In the circumstance in which he has created his stories, not only a China whole universe is existing in the same way. It is his real and animated testimony that Ah Q mentality is still dominant force in China which is holding back attempt at modernization and many other aspects in Chinese society. He criticized in the stories that Ah Q is not dead, it is still alive in China. It signifies that oppression, suppression, injustice, backwardness, poverty, hunger and violent cultures are still existing there in Chinese village society despite being declared as people's republic. Done Milligan says in the review on book *Why Marx was Right* that, "No of course, there would be plenty of problems, hosts of conflicts and number of irreparable, road accidents, wretchedly bad novels, lethal jealousies, over winning ambitions, tasteless, trousers and inconsolable grief. There might also be some clearing of the latrines"

(101).

The analysis of Lu Xun's stories make a conclusion that human beings are independent to have a happy life and property. If people lack such things in the particular nation, government is responsible to grant these and it should act ideally and credibly. Promotion of literary movement and communist led government are not proper weapon to bring real change maintaining justice and equality of common and poor people.

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