

Chapter- I

Trickster and Resistance: The Trope of Rabbit Resistance in *Watership Down*

This research “Trickster as the Trope of Resistance in Richard Adams *Watership Down*” examines Richard Adam’s concept of trickster as the trope of resistance. The novel discusses the role of rabbit trickster at different context but this research focuses on the particular aspect of trickster. It studies the resistance of trickster in different level like for power, cooperation, construction of myth and culture and identity as well as resistance of trickster against totalitarianism in search for democracy. In the novel *Watership Down*, the rabbits are involved in trick either in one or another way. The groups of rabbits in order to save their life from the cruel activity of human beings as well as other animals, use trickery to resist against them to establish a new warren. In the world of rabbits, there are groups in which one group is involved in trickery and the other does not believe on trick but believe on violence. Adams mainly focuses on the group of rabbits who are involved in trick and have victory over the violence. For example, in the novel the group of rabbits under Hazel’s leadership practice openness and equal participation in solving problem but in Efrafa, the groups of rabbits who are ruled by General Woundwort, lack freedom and democracy. General Woundwort punishes them who demand freedom and democracy. So, the group of rabbit under the leadership of Hazel following the tricks of the mythological character El-ahrairah resists against the rule and law of Woundwort.

In the novel, a group of rabbits in Sandleford warren are unsafe due to human encroachment. Fiver, the prophet of the rabbit foresees this destruction and he urges all the rabbits of his group to migrate to another new warren. Asking permission from the Chief Rabbit, these groups of rabbit migrate to another place, Watership Down. In

their journey to Watership Down, they tell the story about El-ahrairah, the mythological hero of rabbit and his tricks, “El-ahrairah is a trickster”, said Buckthorn, “and rabbits will always need tricks” (67). By telling this story, they identify themselves with the mythological character. Such identification allows them to forge an identity and collective strategy for survival.

In order to survive, these groups of rabbits cooperate with different animals in their journey. By befriending with Kehaar, a bird, it becomes easier for the rabbits to survive. He is their messenger of their rabbits, who brings message from the warren of Efrafa, which is ruled by General Woundwort, a violence character in the novel. Because of the help of Kehaar it becomes easier for the rabbits to wage a war against Woundwort. These rabbits also help other animals in need, even though some of them are their enemies. They help other animals such as cat dog and so on. They undergo several hardships, “I know there’s been some trouble, but the best thing will be to try to forget it” said Hazel (36). Finally, they are under the control of cruel rabbit, Woundwort. After that they wage a dreadful war against Woundwort. They defeat Woundwort and established a new warren which is democratic.

The cooperation of rabbits with other animals helps them to survive and resist human encroachment. The affinity between several animals projects satire on the selfish behavior of human beings. Human beings can get moral lesson from the affinity of animals that human beings lack themselves. We can parallelly analyze the stories of rabbit taking the domination of white over black. The rabbits who are compelled to leave their original home can be identified with the black people, who had left their homeland Africa and were forced into slavery and the groups of rabbits led by Woundwort can be taken as white people indirectly.

Watership Down dramatizes the dichotomy between the natural and the developmental worlds and the community sense of the rabbits with the individual sense of the human beings. The story begins when human post a notice in the field where the rabbits live; it reads: “The ideally situated state comprising six acres of excellent building land, is to be developed with high class modern residences by sutching an martin, limited of new bury berk”(4). In the name of development human beings destroy the living place of animals. They don’t care about the life of small creature like rabbits but they only think about development. But this developmental works of human beings is harmful for animals and other creatures.

The rabbits of *Watership Down* are clever, cunning and witty, they have the power to resist against the domination of human beings, as well as they resist domination to gain power, survival and coordination for the establishment of culture. Explaining the function of the trickster figure, Anne Marie Karus writes, “A trickster is a character who uses wit and cunning to outsmart some one else, tricking him or her to achieve a particular goal” (4). These rabbit figures also resist against the domination of other animals as well as other groups of rabbits like the rabbits of Efrafa, rabbits of Cowslip warren. Creating different groups of rabbit Adams shows the contemporary society of his time, in which one group seeks for freedom and survive by resisting and the other group using their trick resist for power and authority. The rabbits of *Watership Down* have human qualities and they symbolically represent enslaved Africans who are dominated by the rabbit of Efrafa and human beings as well. The rabbits of the novel *Watership Down* have the history and their culture of their own. The culture of the *Watership Down* rabbits is similar to some traditional human culture. These rabbits have also the tribal community values such as heroism, self-sacrifice, community family and compassion as well as democracy. In

the novel *Watership Down* the mythological character El-ahirahah represents the enslaved Africans who use his wit to resist against Frith, the sun god who is also the representative character of the white indirectly. As the representative of enslaved Africans, El-ahirahah exposes his inner hatred and resist against human brutality as well as the sun god, Frith.

Adams in the chapter “The story of the trail of El-rairah” emphasizes the similarity between rabbits and humans. While focusing on the resisting power of rabbits like human beings he writes:-

Rabbits are like human beings in many ways. One of these is certainly their staunch ability to withstand disaster and to let the steam of their life carry them along, past research of terror and loss. They have a certain quality which it would not be accurate to describe as callousness or indifference. It is, rather, a blessedly circumscribed imagination and an intuitive feeling that life is now. A foraging wild creature, intent above all upon survival, is as strong as the grass. (107-108)

By endowing human qualities to the rabbits in the novel *Watership Down*, Adams shows that they have the strength and ability to overcome disaster which they face in their life. He also insists that their quality should not be described as callousness or indifference but it the blessing of imagination and intuitive feeling that life is now.

Watership Down celebrates the rabbit as the trickster as they show honor, courage and dignity in risking the life for others. Their love for families and friend and community is enduring and effective. These qualities are lacking in human beings. For example the mythological character El-ahrairah as a trickster figure shows honour and courage to save his people from King Darzin palace. Anne Marie Kraus

taking about the courage of trickster states, “Tricksters are usually small and physically weaker than their opponents, and they gain their advantages by brain over brawn” (4). As the comparison and the contrast between the rabbits and the humans obtaining out of the use of the myths about rabbit is certainly important in *Watership Down*, this research will draw on the theory of the trickster and the mythology of the rabbits as the trickster figure.

Besides writing *Watership Down*, Adams had already written many books. *The Plague Dogs*, *Traveller* and *The Girl in Swim* are some of the books which Adams has written. Mainly, these books deal with myth and fable. A book *The Plague Dog* is similar to his novel *Watership Down*. These books *Watership Down* and *The Plague Dogs* are similar in the sense, that both the book is an animal story which is told for children and these books also describes about the condition of animals. In *The Plague Dogs* Adams deals with the miserable condition of dogs and similarly in *Watership Down* Adams deals with the miserable condition of Rabbits. Beside this similarity this book is also similar to R.M. Lockley’s *The Private Life of the Rabbit*. In most of the epigraphs of the book Adams cites about the words of the book of R.M. Lockley’s, *The Private Life of the Rabbit*. Furthermore in his acknowledgements Adams himself says “I am indebted, from knowledge of rabbits and their ways, to R. M. Lockley’s *The Private Life of the Rabbit*”. In *The Private Life of the Rabbit* Lockley’s deals with the life of the rabbits and their condition which is also similar to Adams *Watership Down* in which Adams deals with the life of rabbit including their culture and their condition of survival.

Since the publication of Adams’ *Watership Down*, the novel received various critical responses responded in various ways. Aidan Chambers discusses the origin of

the place *Watership Down* and finds the novel deeply moving and vividly memorable.

In *Letter from England: Great Leaping Lapins!*, he opines that:

The story is what one might expect had *Wind in the Willows* been written after two World Wars, various marks of nuclear bomb, the Korean and Vietnam obscenities, and half-a-dozen other hells created by the inexhaustibly evil powers of Man. In fact, the tale begins with a deliberate act of demolition, when human beings destroy an ancient warren in order to create a building site, inadvertently leaving alive a handful of ill-assorted rabbit to wander the countryside as refugee. (254)

Here, Chambers focuses on the destructive nature of human beings and its effect on the rabbits that are living as refugees in *Watership Down*. Similarly, Jane Resh Thomas talks about the limited, stereotypical portrayal of the female character in *Watership Down*. Thomas views, "*Watership Down* survives the flawed characterization and the discrepancy between the richness of the male rabbits' lives and spirituality penury of females" (406). Thomas shows the dichotomy between male and female in *Watership Down*. He relates male character with the qualities like bravery and portrayed female character as spiritual, "within the framework of other wise delight story Richard Adams has embodied an anti-feminism which deprives his female characters of the spiritual fruit of the community" (406).

Furthermore, Peter Petzold sees animal stories in Rudyard Kipling and Richard Adams. Despite the difference in length, Richard Adams' fantasy novel *Watership Down* is similar to Kipling's "The White Seal" into two important aspects: in the degree of humanization of its animal agents, and in the central motives of its action (18). Similarly, in *Richard Adams at Eighty* John Bridgman explores the

motive behind writing the novel *Watership Down*. In the point of view, of Bridgman this novel is intended for his children, “but, irritated by stepped in another life in writing *Watership Down*, a books about rabbits intended for his children” (108). He also relates the character of rabbits with the human beings who talks like the civil servants, “Rabbit talk each other like civil servant” (108).

With regard to allegory, Celia Catlett Anderson wrote:-

By the time we have finished the book, the rabbits have taken on both epic and allegorical proportions. They are heroes who have fought battles that we imagine will be incorporated into rabbit lore and told to future generation along with the tales of El-ahrairah.

(12)

Anderson allegorizes the rabbits with the hero of the past who had fought great battles. Rabbits waging the battle with Woundwort and showing their bravery in battle is similar to the heroes of the past who also showed the bravery in the battle.

Furthermore, Sam Sebesta in *Journal of Reading* says that *Watership Down* is, above all, an existing story. A group of rabbit’s escapes from their home warren just before the terminators arrive to make a way for new housing project and says that:

It is neither, for Adams’ is an agile writer with a clear style. He intrudes upon his story- not to make a critical comment, not to make a political point, not to sermonize about ecology, and not to champion his own cleverness. There has seldom been a fantasy in which the author’s personality and point of view remained so adamantly in the background. What we have left is the story, and a story only, told with absolute convention, as deft and objectives as Homer or Chaucer might have told it. (332)

Sebesta relates the novel as similar to Homer and Chaucer and also talks about the author personality in *Watership Down*.

Similarly, Kelly Winters in an essay for “Novels for Students” discusses about the theme of the hero’s journey in Richard Adams *Watership Down* and says that “like many heroes of the great quest myth, the rabbits face the presence of death, and although they survive, they are never the same” (349). Kelley relates the novel to the quest myths and the poor condition of rabbits which is near to death. A very similar, but true, story of an escape from a totalitarian prison is told in Slavomir Rawicz’s gripping book, *The Long Walk: The True Story of a Trek to Freedom*, in which Rawicz discuss “his and his companions’ three thousand mile trek across Siberia, through China and the Gobi desert of Mongolia and across the Himalayas to India in the early 1940s, after their escape from a Siberian prison camp in Soviet Union” (349-50).

Thus it is evident from the review of the criticism available on the novel that none of the critics has yet thrown light upon the cause and politics behind the involvement of mythological character El-ahariarh and other rabbit figures as the trickster. El-ahrairah involved in the trick to save the lives of other rabbits and groups of rabbits leaded by Hazel follows the trick of El-ahrairah to resist against the tyrannical ruler of their society. So, it is the newer perspective to look at the implication of the novel behind these criticisms. As the main purpose of this study is dramatizing the dichotomy between those having lust for power and those loving freedom, who resists the unjust accommodation of power by the rulers in the world of rabbits, this research draws on the theory of trickster and shows the mythology of the rabbit as the trickster hero, who resist against imposition of power, unjust authority etc. During the process those who have studied and theorized about trickster like

Virginia Hamilton, Roger Abrahams, and others will be taken to establish the theoretical modality. By reconsidering the issue of culture through trickster perspective, mainly the importance of trickster figure in modern culture will be analyzed. Beside the extensive analysis of the primary source, use of secondary materials for necessary information, library consultation, internet websites, and the guidance and instruction from the university scholars will be the treasure for providing the aimed shape of this research.

Roger Abrams talking about the dualistic personality of trickster says: “trickster is the figure who at one and at the same time, represent primal creativity and pathological destructiveness, childish innocence and self-absorption” (155). Here Abrams relates the trickster figure with dual personality having creativity as well as destructiveness. Virginia Hamilton believes that trickster are very important because they come in misbehavior of human beings and the animal trickster also provide unconventional tricks in the need of human beings

The animals trickster were invented by the community to cast away human act of misbehavior from one suitable deeds. These animals’ characters... performed outlandish tricks because the people needs then to. We’r glad they did They seem very human, very much like ourselves. (73)

Here Hamilton states that animal tricksters’ tales are very important because human beings need them. By telling story about animal’s trickster figure human beings identify with them to search identity in their society.

This project uses insights developed by Virginia Hamilton, Roger Abrahams, Marget P. Baker, Gerald Vizenor, Chris LaLonde and others who have interpreted and theorized about trickster. Trickster is not alone; he is accompanied by his community.

Though tricksters suffer much, he is not totally tragic fellow because the trickster does not promise a happy ending. Gerald Veiznor discussing about the notion of trickster's tale states, "Trickster is a communal sign, never isolation; a concordance of narrative voices. The trickster is not tragic because the narrative does not promise a happy ending" (284).

This research taking the trickster as trope of resistance shows the dichotomy between the tyranny and freedom in which later one becomes victorious. It also shows the dichotomy between man and animals. It also wants to show that how is the trickster important figure in 20th and 21 century in achieving freedom and identity as well as independence. To support this claim that trickster as the trope of resistance in Richard Adams *Watership Down*, an extensive textual analysis will follow this introductory chapters of the thesis. The thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter will follow the basic information of the novel along with the trickster studies. In the same way, the second and third chapter deals with the extensive textual analysis of the novel. Moreover, the final chapter is conclusion which ultimately concludes the main points of the thesis. The chapter can be called the very brief critical summary of the textual analysis concerning the dimension of trickster of the narrative.

Chapter- II

Trickster as the Trope of Resistance in *Watership Down*

Tricksters are neither supreme beings and nor creative forces, they are physically weak and small but they have also power to resist against the domination. Even though they are weak they use their wit and cunning and also fight for freedom and independence. Most often, tricksters seek out a mythological figure who teaches them to create and destroy. Tricksters have all the negative and positive qualities. They also help others in need as well as they take benefit from them for their survival in life. So, they have qualities like wit, mercy compassion which are very important in whole life of rabbits. Like this Barbara Schutz-Gurber says: “[The trickster] has all our virtues creativity, wit, mercy, compassion. He also has all our faults sloth, gluttony, deceit, lechery. The trickster is a caricature of ourselves has its all good and bad, but in larger than life proportion” (3). They trick for their existence and survival under the unjust authority of power.

Adams in the novel gives important role to the rabbit trickster figures and their resistance against their unjust authority. By giving human qualities to the rabbits, Adams establishes the rabbit culture and their own mythology. For an example, the governments of rabbits are also different from warren to warren. Talking about the different governments of rabbits warren narrator writes, “Nearly all warrens have an Owsla, or group of strong or clever rabbits—second year- or older surrounding the Chief Rabbit and has doe and exercising authority” (4). The warren of Watership Down is democratic and the warren of Efrafa is totalitarian which is ruled by cruel ruler General Woundwort. Although the rabbits of Watership Down leading by Hazel are small but they are very tricky and they resist against the tyrannical rule of

Woundwort, who is very powerful. This proves that even though tricksters are weak they have also the power to resist against their unjust authority.

At the beginning of the novel, we can trace the resistance of trickster. Hazel has won the position of leadership by resisting against the Chief Rabbit and does not follow his rule and regulation in the Sandeleford warren. While commenting on the character of Hazel, Fiver says, “He had won his position not only by strength in his prime, but also by level-headedness and a certain self-contained detachment, quiet unlike the impulsive behavior of most rabbits” (6). By completely rejecting the power of Chief Rabbit, Hazel urges all the rabbits of Sandleford warren to leave the warren and establish a new warren. But this all is done by Hazel by using his trick against Chief Rabbit and resist against him in order to have a power in his own hand. This shows that trickster do resistance for the shake of power.

In the novel *Watership Down*, the rabbits of Sandleford warren, while leaving their homeland because of human tyranny seek their identity through telling the story of courage and tricks of El-ahrairah. Dandelion telling the story of El-ahrairah says, “They hurried on and presently they came to Prince Rainbow’s carrot. How many they stole I cannot say; but of course as you know, El-ahrairah is a great prince and no doubt he used powers unknown to you and me” (116). El-ahrairah stealing the carrot of Prince Rainbow exemplifies the search for identity and courage in the lives of the rabbits. Indirectly this tale hints the psychology of the rabbits that they want to destroy the civilization of human beings who are the cause of their misery. Like this the oppressed one cannot challenge the oppressor directly and the oppressed one of every time and every society seeks roundabout way of resistance. Trickster tales do not concentrate only in an age and culture. But they dramatize the common themes of human condition of all the ages and cultures. Anne Marie Kraus writes, “Trickster

tales are for all ages and all culture dramatizing themes common to the human condition” (6). There is always conflict among and between the cultures and ideologies in human society; one ideology is altered by another, and it is a continuous process. In this conflict either one way or another there are sufferer and suffered, where suffered one cannot oppose directly to the deeds of sufferer. So to outlet the pain and to search the identity in the hostile condition the victim takes help from trickster tales.

In their journey to Watership Down, rabbits tell the story about their mythological character El-ahrairah and identify with him. They also believe that they are like El-ahrairah in many conditions and always tell the heroism of El-ahrairah which he had done in the myths of rabbits. By remembering the story of El-ahrairah the rabbits of Watership Down establish the storytelling culture of human beings. Dandelion revives the storytelling culture, “Long ago, Frith made the world. He made all the stars, too, and the world is one of the stars. He made them by scattering his droppings over the sky and this is why the grass and the trees grow so thick in the world” (16). Dandelion tells the story to his friend about the creation of world. He tells the story about Frith, the sun god who created the animal world Frith created all the animals. But he made the entire creature the same. For an example, fox and rabbit were friend and they both ate grass. By telling this story the rabbit figure established their identity having their own independent culture. Tricksters have also the culture of oral tradition of story telling. For their survival and identification they tell story to each other about myth and they identify with the mythical hero. By this they established their own culture having freedom. Anne Marie Kraus views, “Trickster tales are part of the folk tradition of nearly every culture of the world, full of common themes and motifs, yet unique in their ingenuity and seemingly endless plot for yet

another trick” (3). These tales are part of every culture and it has also the common theme.

In the novel, Adams establish the sense of cooperation among the rabbits. The rabbits in their journey, in difficult situation help each other. This cooperation is also the means of resistance against the power of unjust ruler. Adams satirizes on the contemporary human society in which the sense of cooperation is lost among human beings of our time. By making laugh at the contemporary human society, Adams’ main purpose is to reform the society. When the rabbits are crossing the river Pipkin, a rabbit cannot cross the river because of injury, some of the rabbits show willingness to help him, especially Fiver says, “I can rest, Hazel, but Pipkin is in a pretty bad way. I think he is injured. We may have to stay here half the day” (21). This is very striking event in the novel that animals have human qualities of cooperation, which human beings are lacking now a days. Through this event we can identify our weakness. The primary function of trickster is to entertain the readers and thereby communicates lesson about moral values in society. The readers can laugh at trickster, at the same time they can get chance to recognize their weakness through that humor. Anne Marie Kraus furthermore, views, “By laughing at the trickster we recognize common human foibles and remind ourselves in humorous way that is not acceptable behavior” (4)

Rabbits are compelled to leave their original home because of human tyranny. For an example, this human tyranny can be seen when Bigwig, “noticed a hrududu in the lane at the top of the opposite slope” (103). Bigwig noticed that men were getting out of hrududu carrying gun with them. This proves that human beings destroy the lives of rabbits without thinking their feeling and emotion. They only think of their civilization, but being such civilized person they don’t know the feelings of other creatures. In a sense, the relationship between rabbit and human beings is the

relationship of master and slave or dominator and dominated. There is the psychological anguish inside the minds of the rabbits, for they are leaving their trace of love, their homeland and compelled to take way. Story telling is at the heart of every animal tales. To be free from panic of dreadful violence from human beings some of the rabbits try to heal their wound telling the story of the trick of El-ahrairah, on the way to their journey without destination. As Dandelion explains:-

Frith could have killed El-ahrairah at once, but he had a mind a mind to keep him in world, because he needed him to spot and jest and play tricks. So he determined to get the better of him, not by means of his own power but by means of trick. (17)

Frith gave gift to all the animals and to all of them Frith gave cunning and fierceness. But by using the same given by Frith El-ahrairah revolt against Frith to save the life of his people. This hints that tricksters, for the benefit of people also resist against the creator. “El-ahrairah was dancing and mating and Boasting” against Frith to save life of his people” (10).

Story telling culture is a kind of psychological healing to those who suffer from psychological domination and fear from the so-called master of particular community. Through the tales the slaves mock towards their master secretly by identifying them with Brer rabbits. During slavery, Africans people tell stories about rabbit trickster figures and identify themselves with Brer rabbit trickster figures. Anne Marie Kraus states, “The Brer rabbit characters become a metaphor for the slave who was tricking the so- called master with his superior wit” (5). In the novel El-ahrairah represents the Brer Rabbit trickster figure. While leaving Sandleford warren all the rabbits have been like selfless creature. To live without self is very difficult task. So, all the rabbits are in search of their self. But they couldn't materialize their dream of

finding self in their real life that is why they started to search their role model through the story of El-ahrairah. When they leave the warren, Hazel praises the courage and heroism of El-ahrairah saying, “Uncle Remus might of heard of him, for some of El-ahrairah’s advantages are those of Brer rabbit of that matter, Odysseus himself might have burrow a trick or two from the rabbit hero” (15).

The rabbits create their identity and self by presenting about the heroism of El-ahrairah. By seeking identity they are searching their history and myth. Any search of history and myth is also the search of position in the society. Rabbits search their position in the warren. So they seek myth and culture along with the mythological character El-ahrairah. In the stories like, “The Story of the Blessing of El-ahrairah” and “The Story of El-ahrairah and the Black Rabbit of Inle” we can recognize mythical believes like the gift of certain attributes to the ancestor of animals spices. “Frith has given the rabbit cunning hearts” as a gift” (17). The mythological rabbit trickster figure violates the rules and regulation of sun god Frith. He does not listen to the sun god Frith and resist against him. El-ahrairah thinks himself that his people are stronger in the world and they have a better live than the people of sun god. “My people are the strongest in the world, for they breed faster and eat more than any of the other people” (17). El-ahrairah does not listen to the words of the sun god and violates his rules and regulation. This violation is also the means of resistance in which El-ahrairah by violating the rules and regulation of sun god wants to save the identity of his people. “You must realize, my lord, how important they are and not hinder them in their beautiful lives” (17). El-ahrairah gives warnings to the sun god about the importance of life of rabbits and he also remembers the sun god not to hinder on the beautiful lives. This is a king of resistance of trickster on the powerful people even though the tricksters are weak and small. For instance, Hazel is the leader

of the rabbits who escapes from Sandleford warren. He is small and not a strong figure in the warren, as Adams write, “He looked as though he knew how to care of himself. There was a shrewd, buoyant air around him as he sat up, looked around and rubbed both paws over his nose” (52). But he becomes the most loved and respected leader of the warren.

The main role of the trickster is to violate the rule and regulation of the society. They violates the rules and regulatio to establish a new democratic society. They want to be the hero of the society by befitting others and violating social norms. Donald Haase also presented the notion of violating the social norms. In his own words, “A trickster is one who engages in trickery, deceives, and violates the moral codes of the community” (992). Tricksters by violating the social norms and regulations want to reform the society. They want to bring new order in the society which is acceptable to all. Hazel and his group violate the norms and values of the society of General Woundwort they do not follow any order of Woundwort. Instead they resist against the rule of Woundwort.

Adams shows dichotomy between male and female inside trickster figures. In the novel when rabbits search for a new warren most of the rabbits go outside the field and search for a does to dig a hole. Bigwig a powerful and big rabbit believes male rabbit should not do serious work, which is only for does. He says, “Well, there is no need to do any serious digging, is there? That sort of thing is all right for the does but not for us” (39). At the same time Hazel rationalizes the work of does saying, “This is the natural job of doe making home for her little, before they are born, and then her bucks help her” (40). In this way all the male rabbits of Waterhsip Down dominate the female figure, making themselves witty and superior. As in human society, tricksters dominate female and proclaim themselves superior. Both male and female trickster

oscillate in achieving a common goal, but male trickster is always commanding and female is in subordinate position. As Donald Haase says:-

Although the trickster starts as an amorphous being, he gradually discovers his own identity oscillating between female and male but eventually preferring his masculinity, these gives him a high degree of autonomy and mobility in public sphere, allowing him mock and subvert the existing political, social and economic structure. (993)

In the novel, Adams contrasts between two warrens in which Hazel warren is democratic where as Woundwort warren is tyrannical. For instance, Efrafa is a physically and spiritually oppressive dictatorship ruled by General Woundwort. Woundwort becomes the savage rabbit and destroys any other animals like cat when he sees them. Due to his savage nature Woundwort is in the critical eye of Hazel who also represents the kind figure in the novel and he is also the creator of new civilization of rabbit figure. For the establishment of new civilization, “Hazel, who was ready to accept advice from anybody when he thought it was good” (251). For the betterment of his people Hazel is ready to listen every voice of his rabbit group in contrast to Woundwort in which his word is law. This comparison between Hazel and Woundwort proves that Hazel is a democratic leader who works for the betterment of the rabbit civilization where as Woundwort is the violence character who does not want the betterment of his people but destroys the civilization of the rabbit. In the novel Woundwort and Hazel can be taken as creator of new civilization where as Woundwort destroys the civilization of the rabbit as well as other animals. Adams explains about the character of Woundwort, “In a month he was big and strong and had become savage” (245). Trickster seeks mythological figure who teaches them to create and destroy. In Donald Haase eye, “The trickster is mythic figure both creator

and destroyer, associated with the traditional culture throughout the world” (992).

Tricksters give something new to the society as well as they also destroy the civilization of the society.

In the novel *Watership Down*, even though El-ahraiah is powerless and small creature but he has a power to deceive a master by using his courageous wit and guile. Prince Rainbow wanted to arrest El-ahraiah for stealing his carrot. For this situation El-ahraiah requested Prince Rainbow to bring jury to solve the problem. So Prince Rainbow brings Hufsa, a jury of animals as requested by El-ahraiah. But El-ahraiah in turn by using his trick makes Hufsa a fool person. Asking question to the animals jury Hufsa, El-ahraiah says, “Now Hufsa, can you hear a little more about a journey that you and I are supposed to have? For really I can remember nothing about it at all” (117). El-ahraiah asks this question as if he knows Hufsa, Hufsa cannot remember any thing instead he become a fool. Then Prince Rainbow chases away Hufsa because he cannot judge properly, instead he becomes a fool by not answering the question of El-ahraiah. This evidence proves that even though El-ahraiah is a powerless creature, he has a power to resist against powerful creature by using his means that is trickery. By making Hufsa fool is the means of resistance against Prince Rainbow because Prince Rainbow has brought Hufsa in order to judge in his favor. Donald Haase says, “Many stories depict the trickster mastery of powerful creatures through the operation of their wit. He engineers this with elaborate fictions of by pulling of a seemingly tasks” (6). Even though tricksters are powerless creature in the world but by using their wit and cunning they are even successful to defeat the powerful people.

In the novel *Watership Down*, Hazel and his groups of rabbit are heroic figure. These group of rabbits have also particular goal, which is to be free from the tyrannical ruler General Woundwort. For this purpose rabbits are involved in their

trickery and finally their result is victory against the cruel rule Woundwort. At the end of the novel, the groups of rabbits led by Hazel have a war against Woundwort and finally they are able to defeat General Woundwort and established a new democratic warren. "Listen to me. "There's not a moment to lose" (210). Bigwig expression suggests that trickster final commitment is not punishment but generally victory. By this commitment finally the rabbits are also able to defeat General Woundwort. "Woundwort, with both forefeet off the ground, was thrown over on his back on the earth pile" (274). This expression again proves that tricksters are able to defeat the powerful creature even though they small and physically weak by using their trickery more than courage and dignity. In "The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folk Tales and Fairy Tales", Donald Haase citing the lines of Julious Leaster says, "The reward for [Trickster's] trickery is not punishment, but generally victory" (qtd in Lester 5). Tricksters often trick for their benefit. By doing trick for their benefit and benefit of their people they are not punished but they are successful to achieve a particular goal.

Richard Adams does not give important roles to the female rabbits, in the novel *Watership Down*. The female rabbits are always dominated by male rabbits. In the case of re-creation also Adams does not give any role to females. Only the male rabbit has given important role in relation to re-creation. In order to fight for democracy and freedom only the male rabbits are active. When the rabbits are in the journey they have different obstacle in their way. So to remove this obstacle these rabbits figures, led by Hazel, re-create a new world which is democratic. They create a new rabbit civilization which is democratic. When Hazel meets new rabbit Boxwood in their way in Nuthanger farm, he immediately noticed about their freedom which is enjoyed by wild rabbit because he knows that Boxwood is a wild rabbit. About the notification of Hazel freedom Boxwood says, "Hazel begins to speak about

the life of the downs and the excitement and freedom enjoyed by wild rabbits” (137). Hazel thought about freedom and welcomed the four wild rabbits in order to create new world which is democratic as well as having cooperation and freedom among rabbits. To show freedom and cooperation is also the sign of re-creation which is lacking human beings in the present time. So Adams in this novel wants to reform the society which is totally democratic. By examining this trickster figure and their cooperation, and helpful quality, Adams wants to show that tricksters are important figures in present world.

If we examine trickster form the perspective of creativity, trickster cannot do anything new; they only arrange what is already there in the world. For their survival, identity and to establish a reformed culture tricksters only rearranges the thing which are already there in the present world. According to Lewis Hyde, “Trickster do not make new life, they rearrange what is already at hand” (341). Here, Hyde takes trickster as re-creator. They rearrange the world but they cannot do anything new. Similarly Hyde also believes those tricksters are only male genders. In his own words Hyde says, “The trickster is usually associated with the male genders, the trickster possess masculine attribute because of trickster ability to re-create” (341). In watership Down, their new warren the rabbits only rearrange the things of the present world. For an example, Hazel and fiver only make the old warren their living place but they cannot establish totally new warren. They only make their live comfortable to have a peaceful enviroment.

Hazel, Fiver and two of their friends Dandelion and Blackberry discussed about the conversation with Chief Rabbit. Meanwhile, Bigwig also arrives there, he is curious to ask about the conversation. Bigwig asking about the conversation with Chief Rabbit says to Fiver:-

“Oh! That’s you Fiver, is it?” said Bigwig noticing him for the first time. “Good I was coming to look for you. I’ve been thinking about what you said to the Chief Rabbit. Tell me, is it a sort of tremendous hoax to make yourself important, or it is true?” (9)

This shows how Fiver is eager to alter the power of Chief Rabbit. Being jealous about the power of Chief Rabbit, Fiver himself wants to hold the position of Chief Rabbit. We often can find this kind of trick in the character of human being. Ellan B. Basno commenting on these natures of trickster figure evokes, “Moreover, the terrible feelings of hatred, envy, greed, and jealousy that so often seem to accompany these trickster activities are also fundamental ingredients of human life” (294). To attempt to alter the power is the kind of resistance of trickster. We can find so many similar human qualities in the behavior of trickster animals, in the animals’ tales. For example, like jealousy, hatred, hunger for power and so on.

In the chapter, “The Story of King Lettuce”, we can trace the trick of El-ahrairah from the eyes of Prince Rainbow. At first Prince Rainbow orders the rabbits to stay underground, but El-ahrairah urges the prince not to tell them to live underground because the place is not good and suitable for the rabbits. El-ahrairah says, “Prince Rainbow, my people are cold and cannot get underground because of the wet. Their food is so dull and poor that they will be ill when the bad weather comes. Why do you keep us here against our will? We do no harm” (61). The Prince Rainbow never believes in the talks of El-ahrairah because he has understood the character of El-ahrairah as a liar and trickster. Then the prince replies, “El-ahrairh, all the animals know that you are a thief and trickster. Now your tricks have cut off with you and you have to live here until you can persuade us that you will be an honest rabbit” (61). The Prince is doubtful in the statementu of El-ahrairah, because he

knows that El-ahrairah is an opportunist. But the most interesting fact is that the African Americans take El-ahrairah as their folk hero, though he is cunning and opportunist. A folk hero is considered to guiding force for certain community or group. The story telling culture teaches the African American and Native American to trick against their masters.

In modern culture tricksters come in many guise. To serve the basic societal function these trickster figures come in the form of animals or human beings.

The enslaved Africans most often are employed in a lower position like drivers. The black people associate the drivers to the trickster in their community. To get relief from precarious situation the black drivers use their wit and deception while dealing with their masters. In some cases they are opportunistic, which is the feature of trickster. John W. Roberts associates the feature of trickster with enslaved African driver, "The black slave drivers' precarious situation which forced him to display wit, guile, deception in dealings with the master, and, in some instances, members of his own community, proved opportunistic for black folk heroic creation in term of trickster" (53).

The mythological hero, El-ahrairah is loyal to Prince Rainbow and the prince wants to put El-ahrairah back in his place. But in the mind of El-ahrairah there is a plan to steal new carrots of prince. The Prince Rainbow says:-

Well El-ahrairah, said Prince Rainbow, interrupting him. I am sure I can trust you. And go prove it; I have decided that I will grow a new crop of carrots in the field behind the hill. It is an excellent bit of ground and I am sure that they will do well. Especially as no one would dream of stealing them. In fact, you can come and watch me plant them if you like. (113)

On the other hand, El-ahrairah wants to jeopardize the business of Prince Rainbow. In the narrative of Bluebell, “They came out of the hole and Rabsuttle went to the farm to steal some seed corn. El-ahrairah spends the rest of the night gathering slugs, a nasty business it was” (113). We can find the double dealing nature of the trickster in animal stories. The tricksters, who are supposed to be servant, serve properly to their master, but also at the same time they jeopardize the situation doing wrong the things. This double dealing nature of the trickster is for their survival as well as their prosperity. Furthermore, John W. Robert views:-

The general condition which serves as catalysts for heroic creation are those which by virtue of their serverity, jeopardize the group ability to maintain the behaviors which reflect values accepted as important to survival or prosperity. (5)

Bigwig’s story about stealing carrot is a sign of resisting norms and values of civilized society of Prince Rainbow. Allegorically, we can examine the stealing of the rabbits with the violation of rules and regulations of white by enslave Africans. To violate established rule is non other than resisting. In the novel, Bigwig, a rabbit describes a horrible situation when he sets for stealing carrot in the farm of Prince Rainbow, “I noticed a hrududu in the lane at the top of the opposite slope. There was a boy with them and he had a gun (102). In the animal trickster tales told by enslaved Africans, the animal tricksters acquire food through their wit and cleverness. John W. Robert, ahead, talking about wit and cleverness of trickster figure says, “Not surprisingly, in the animal trickster tales perform by enslaved Africans, the African animal tricksters superior abilities in acquiring food through wit, guile, and deception became primary topics” (36).

In the novel *Dandilion*, gives attribute to human quality to El-ahrairah and compares him with two heroes; Robbin Hood as white and John Henry as American Negroes. Here Dandilion says, “Robbin Hood is to the English and John Henry to the American Negroes, Elil-Hiair-Rah or El-ahrairah— The Prince with a Thousand Enemies—is to rabbits” (15). Here Dandilion associates the hero of rabbits El-ahrairah to the two heroes, especially John Henry. Rabbits are nearer to Henry as Henry is the hero of oppressed American Negroes. This comparison makes it clear that every group or community has its heroic figure, who serves as a catalyst to form certain heroic qualities for the survival of the group and their identity. Richard Adam somehow, has done justice to those African Americans as well as the marginalized community of blacks by presenting the story in the novel *Watership Down*. The novel can be taken as the brick to heighten the thickness of story telling culture in African American folk tales history. Enslaved Africans tell the story about animals trickster to search their role model in these stories, as animals are suppressed like them in the hostile environment. Jonh W. Robert again in “From Trickster to Badman”, concerning about the guiding force behind telling the story in African American culture says:-

In the animals trickster status as preyed upon victim and his cleverness, guile and wit, enslaved African discover heroic attributes and behavior which served as important models of heroic creation within their situation. (42)

In the background of telling the story of trickster hero, there is desire for being the hero like in these tales. In “From Trickster to Badman”, John W. Roberts cites the idea of Robert Penn Warren while talking about hero. In the words of Warren, “To create hero is, indeed, to create a self” (qtd. In Roberts 1). While leaving Sandleford

warren all the rabbits are like selfless creature. To live without self is very difficult task. So, all the rabbits are in search of their self. But they couldn't materialize their dream of finding self in their real life that is why they started to search their role model through the story of El-ahrairah. When they leave the warren, Hazel praises the courage and heroism of El-ahrairah saying, "Uncle Remus might of heard of him, for some of El-ahrairah's advantages are those of Brer rabbit of that matter, Odysseus himself might have burrow a trick or two from the rabbit hero" (15). The rabbits are creating their identity by presenting about the heroism of El-ahrairah.

Most of the characters in the novel are facing hardship and dangerous situation dealing with life. The rabbits of Watership Down are in the position of double dangerous situation; from cruel activities of human beings as well as from the rabbit tribe the violent ruler, Woundwort and his security guard. An examination of this rabbit figure shows that just like human beings these rabbits figure also faced critical situation in their lives. Human beings are also in marginal position in their society, because of the tyrannical ruler, and having different tribe and culture of their own. Just like this the rabbits of Watership Down are also in marginal position in their society because of their different tribe and having culture of their own. Due to this different culture, the rabbits of Watership Down are in the critical juncture of the tyrannical rule of Woundwort. Due to this position the groups of rabbit leaded by Hazel threatened the society of Efrafa, which is ruled by the savage Woundwort. To defeat him, the rabbits under Hazel's leadership made a plan as well as use their trick for the betterment of their people and to establish a new democratic value. Here, as in the view of Robert, the rabbit of Watership Down make a courageous plan to deceive Woundwort to overcome their dangerous situation. The group of rabbits leaded by Hazel by rejecting the words of Woundwort says, "No, we can't agree to that. I've

come to suggest something altogether different and better for us both” (250). Rabbits are not accepting the power of General Woundwort and they wanted to establish a new warren near to Efrafa in order to resist the rule of Woundwort. “We ought to make other warrens between us -- start one between here and Efrafa, with rabbits from both sides. You wouldn’t lose by that, you’d gain” (250).

Chapter- III

Trickster, Identity, Myth and Culture in *Watership Down*

Tricksters seek heroic figure for their identity. For this they revive the heroic deeds of the past heroes. Resisting against the power of tyrannical ruler, tricksters search identity in their society. Most of the folk tales about trickster are heroic; they seek advantages in dealing hardships and obstacles there by threatening established values of specific temporal, political and economic context. John W. Roberts writes:-

In reality, the actions that a group recognizes as heroic are those that it perceives as the most advantageous behaviors for dealing with an obstacle or situation that threatens the values that guide action with specific temporal or social, political and economic context.(5)

In the novel, the mythological character symbolizes the Brer rabbit trickster figure as well as he symbolizes freedom for his people. El-ahrairah risks his life for other had a great faith for his people. Most of the rabbits of *Watership Down* trust upon the mythological character El-ahrairah. Fiver trusting on the mythological character says, “They had no Chief Rabbit – no, how could they? – for a Chief Rabbit must be El-ahrairah to his warren and keep them from death” (34). The mythological character El-ahrairah symbolizes freedom for his people in the eye of Fiver. Being the chief rabbit or the rabbit hero of myth El-ahrairah should help his people and keep the warren safe. Believing on the power of El-ahrairah Fiver says, “He had resisted all the idea of mass emigration and enforced complete isolation on the warren, thereby almost certainly saving it from extinction” (6). The rabbit trickster figure like Brer rabbit figure of *Watership Down* represent as cultural hero. They are the main parts of story telling. Furthermore, talking about Brer rabbit trickster figure Virginia writes,

“Bruh rabbit is the emblem and cultural hero who symbolizes freedom for all those hold in bondage” (13). In the novel *El-ahrairah* represents the Brer rabbit trickster figure, “*El-ahrairah* advantage are those of Brer Rabbit” (15). He uses his trick to deceive his enemies. Rabbits of *Watership Down* believe on such types of myth of *El-hairah*. Some rabbits say, “He controls the weather, because the wind, the damp and the dew are friends and instruments to rabbits against their enemies.

In the novel, rabbits act like human beings. They have the culture and tradition of their own and these rabbits figures fulfill the needs of human beings. About the human qualities of rabbits Adams write:-

Rabbits have there own convention and formalities, but these are few and short by human standards. If Hazel has been a human being he would have been expected to introduce his companions one by one and no doubt it will have been taken in charge as a guest by one of those hosts. In the great burrow, however, things happened differently. The rabbits mingled naturally. They do not talk for taking’s shake, in artificial manner like human beings—and sometimes even there dogs and cats. (48)

Adams gives the qualities of rabbits more than human beings. Human beings talk in artificial manner but the rabbits do not talk for talking shake like human beings and their dogs and cats. They were no more speechless but their subject of discussion is just like human beings. The animals’ tricksters were invented to cast away the misdeed of human behavior. The animals’ tricksters such as rabbit act like human beings. They fulfill the act of human beings and resist against human cruel activity for their survival. We find same view on Virginia Hamilton. Hamilton takes the trickster

figures similar to human beings and writes, “The animals tricksters were invented by the community to cast away human act of misbehavior from one suitable deed” (73).

When the rabbits have a new warren in *Watership Down* they are in search of female partner to begin a new life. Hazel is in search of new rabbit female in Efrafa. When Bluebell, the rabbit of Watership Down ask Hazel about his visit to Efrafa he replied to Bluebell saying, “If I can get anyone to come with me: and we shall bring back as many does as the warren needs” (172). This word of Hazel proves that the rabbit of Watership Down are totally in search of the female partner to begin a new life. Tricksters are always active in their lives. Most often their activities are centered to seek their sexual mates. This helps them to re-create or begin their new life again. Further, Hume project his idea with their activity which is oriented to sexuality saying, ”For tricksters, that life force requires outlet in activity, so we find their action often resulting in sex, conception, and the beginning of new life” (596). For the establishment of their own civilized culture rabbits also realized that female partners are necessary.

The groups of rabbit leading by Hazel and Fiver trusted on their mythological character El-ahrairah and for their survival these rabbit trickster figure debate on seeking vision of El-ahrairah. “El-ahrairah is a trickster”, said Buckthorn, “and rabbits will always need tricks” (67). For them El-ahrairah is a higher power who can heal their agony of leaving their homeland, Sandleford warren. At the same time Hazel tries to identify himself with El-ahrairah. One of the rabbit figures, Blackberry compares Hazel with El-ahrairah, asking Hazel, “Aren’t you like El-ahriarah?” (92). This expression is an evidence how much the rabbits are eager to find their role model. Tricksters have healing power. When one associates him or her with tricksters he/she goes through cathartic purification. Trickster in this way is a kind of psycho-

pathology. It has communicative and healing potentiality. A trickster often appears in different form. A trickster appears in disguise form partially to make his trickery effective and partially to hide his original identity to save his own life there is constant threat upon his existence because he challenges the autocracy of certain power which aims to established monolithic and one dimensional tradition. In the story of tricksters we can find the communicating and healing power overlapping to each other, which seek higher power and visions for the benefit of any tribe. Kathrin Hume presents her view about trickster as, “Historically, shamans has a variety of functions such as finding lost things of desired things (like the location of game to hunt), communicating with higher powers” (594). El-ahrairah communicates with higher power the sun god, Frith. He boasts with Frith saying, “You must realize my lord how important they are and not hinder their beautiful lives” (17). El-ahrairah communicating with higher power Frith, reminds him about the importance of beautiful life.

In the novel *Watership Down*, when Frith came searching El-ahrairah, he knows Frith was very clever and start to dig a hole for his safety. When El-ahrairah was about to finished to dig a hole he saw Frith near by immediately El-ahrairah putting sand over his body deceived the sun god Frith. In the page of 6th chapter of the novel reads, “Then El-ahrairah knew that Frith was too clever him and he was frightened. He thought that the fox and weasel were coming with Frith and he turned to the face of the hill and began to dig” (17). Sometimes tricksters resistance comes in disguised form the group which disguised, do so for justice and dignity, which is based on power relations. James C. Scott says:-

Ideological resistance [that] is disguised, muted and viled for safety’s sake. What we confront then, in the public transcript, is a

strange kind of ideological debate about justice and dignity in which one party has a severe speech impediment induced by power relation. (411)

Actually in the novel *Watership Down*, El-ahrairah has the ideology to steal the carrot of the Prince Rainbow. Beside this ideology El-ahrairah has the power to resist against human beings. El-ahrairah said, "I've been looking at those carrots of Prince Rainbows. I can't stand it any longer. (114). El-ahrairah resists against human beings who are the enemy to the rabbits. Human beings are the main enemy for the rabbit like El-ahrairah. So he makes a plan to steal the carrot of human beings which is the threat for human beings from rabbit.

Adams shows the failure of trickster El-ahrairah because he cannot save the life of his people and they become ill and some of them are at the mouth of death. At this critical situation El-ahrairah becomes desperate and he loses his power and dignity. At this time he takes the name of Lord Frith, which at the beginning of the story telling he violates the rules of the sun god. He also grants for the Black Rabbit of Inle. But this failure is also the means of dealing with life. Although El-ahrairah failed to save his people from King Darzin but he had also shown his power against King Darzin. He shows that how the rabbits can also face critical and dangerous situations in dealing with their lives. El-ahrairah shows the desperate condition and he, "demanded to see the captain of the guard" (64). El-ahrairah disguises himself in order to resist against the cruel authority of King Darzin. El-ahrairah himself becomes the captain of the guard and deceives King Darzin. Disguising himself El-ahrairah becomes physician of the sick king and says, "What is the sickness of the little king to chief physician of the land beyond the golden river of Frith" (64). King Darzin has a great animal farm and in this farm there is also Darzin's luttuces to feed them. But El-

ahrairah uses his trick against king Darzin to free all the animals from him and steal the lettuces. This is one of the resistances of trickster for having freedom in life. Just like human beings animals also need freedom and security. So the only means of freedom of rabbits is their tricks and to use in critical situation and resist injustice. Although, these animal figures come in different guise, they also serve the function of human beings. Baker views, "Traditional trickster come in many guises, some of them human, more of them animal. One of the forms which has had important extension in modern particular culture is that of the rabbit" (149). In the novel *Watership Down*, El-ahrairah disguises himself to serve the basic function of the society. He also creates a number of different forms of social order, corresponding to human society by disguising himself. He serves the basic function of all human society such as feeding habits, communicating to other rabbits and helping them in need. Here in the novel El-ahrairah disguise himself to serve the society and to give the society the new order. About the disguise of El-ahrairah the narrator writes:-

El-ahrairah set to work to disguise himself. He clipped his white tail and made Rabscuttle nibble his fur short and stand it with mud and blackberries. Then he covered himself all over his trailing strands of goose grass and big burdocks and he even founds ways to alter his smell. At last even his own wives could not recognized him, and El-ahrairah told Rabsuttle to follow some way behind and off he went to King Darzin palace. (63)

El-ahrairah disguises himself to serve the basic function of the society, and to serve his people from the hand of King Darzin. If we examine these rabbit trickster figure, it proves that how is trickster important figure in modern particular culture.

Although the mythological character El-ahrairah is the ideal trickster rabbit but he is not successful in his whole life. In the story “The Story of El-ahrairah and the Black Rabbit of Inle” Adams shows the failure of the mythological character El-ahrairah in dealing with life. Although he risks his life for others but at the same time he himself is defeated in his life. About this failure of trickster Adams writes, “El-ahrairah tried every trick he could think of, but he couldn't be rid of King Darzin or get his own people away” (305). Tricksters are not always successful in their life. Sometimes they are also failure in their life. They are neither victims nor victors but they have the power to deal with in equities of live. As Marget P. Baker views, “The trickster figures show their audience that they are neither totally victims nor victors, but that they may capitalize on their own weakness to build strengths in dealing with life” (158).

In the novel *Watership Down*, in Nauthanger Farm Hazel was in search of a few does. Beside the platform of the farm, Hazel when making his way to a low roof shed he saw a cat becoming afraid with the cat Hazel said to Pipkin: “Hlao-roo”. “There’s only one way out of this place. You’ll you will have to keep watching for cats or we may be trapped. Stay at the door and if you see a cat outside tell me at once” (137). By searching the does the rabbits want to establish their real existence. In their journey to Watership Down rabbits had faced many obstacles and hardships but when they had found a new place to settle they thinks about every thing what a rabbits needs. This furthermore proves that rabbits have their own culture and civilization. Gaining the knowledge from the mythological character the rabbits under Hazel’s leadership involved in every kinds of tricks and they also developed a courage and dignity, “we are not afraid of cats, as long as we are in the open” (138). This shows that how the rabbits develop their courage to resist against other animals for their

establishment of their new generation. These rabbits trickster figure although they are small they are all gifted with wit and guile. As they are taken as secondary personages but they had also the supreme power to establish a new rabbit culture and civilization. They had also power to defeat the tyrannical ruler General Woundwort who is also known as the destroyer of rabbit civilization.

Rabbits are not mere rabbits in the novel, rather they are much more than what they appear. They are the representative of the people who seek freedom, individual rights etc. not through violent way but through tricky way. They have their own peculiar way and style of dealing with different situations and people. They believe that change is possible not by killing totalitarian and undemocratic leaders but by fooling them. A trickster uses the obstacle and enemy as the ladder to climb to grasp and get the communal solidarity, individual identity and cultural sovereignty. The tricksters want peace prosperity and democracy intact and unharmed. They even become ready to give their lives to protect their society. In this way they are heroes who draw sympathy from others. They are certain to be the victorious in the battle though it is not the battle of sword rather of wit and trick.

The trickster not only tricks for his shake but he also tricks to save the lives of others. Furthermore, Baker says: “In some cases, the trickster is able not only to save himself but also to each others by his ploys” (155). In the novel, El-ahrairah is the ideal trickster rabbit; who is the example of idea of strength and he is also employed to serve society. In “The Story of Blessing of El-ahrairah,” Frith, the supreme creator of the world in rabbit mythology, punish El-ahrairah for failing to control the group. But the mythological trickster figure El-ahrairah, shows his proudness to Frith of the strength of his people. Then Frith calling after El-ahrairah says:-

El-ahrairah, your people cannot rule the world, for I will not have it so. The entire world will be your enemy, Prince with a Thousand Enemies, and whenever they catch you, they will kill you. But first they must catch you, digger, listener, runner, prince with the swift warning. Be cunning and full of tricks and your people shall never be destroyed. (37)

El-ahrairah by managing to get power wants to save the people from the power of sun god, Frith. He is also an example of listener, runner who is very cunning and he is full of trick to resist against Frith to save his people.

In the novel, a rabbit, Hazel tries to become like their mythological hero El-agrairah doing many tricks. His friend Bluebell associates the name of Hazel with El-ahrairah by renaming Hazel as Hazel-rah. Here, Bluebell says, “You know, Hazel-rah, this really is the funniest evening I have ever gone looking for a doe” (210). This shows how all the rabbits are in search of a hero in their real life through myth. To attribute Hazel the name of El-ahrairah suggests the appetite of rabbits for their identity. As the driven out rabbits are in the quest of their hero, the Native Americans are also in search of heroic figure in their community through the medium of telling stories. In any folk tale history the trickster and trickster discourse are very important and fundamental tropes of resistance and the affirmation of the identity of that group. In Chris LaLonde eyes:-

The trickster and trickster discourse, the figure and economy which both free and compel us to re-examine the world, are also fundamental to the text’s interrogation of the tropes of Indian and vanishing Native, both of which are vitally important to resistance the affirmation of true identity. (27)

Here trickster, trickster discourse, and identity are intermingled to each other.

Tricksters are important to resistance the existence of true identity. In the epigraph of chapter 5, quoting the lines of R.M. Lockley, *The Private Life of the Rabbit*, Adam writes, “These young rabbits... must move out if they are to survive.... Wandering themselves until they find the suitable environment” (5). From this citation Adams suggests that to re-examine the world trickster must be free and maintain the suitable environment in order to survive.

In the chapter of Kehaar, when rabbits are befriending with Kehaar, they themselves become deceived. Trusting upon the gift of El-ahrairah, for the rabbits of Watership Down the trick becomes dangerous for them for their survival. They are in the position of self-deceiving. When the gull was absent from its place the rabbits searching for safety place wanted to go into the place of gull as gull was absent for several days, following the trick of El-ahrairah. But Fiver is doubtful about their safety. He says, “The gift of El-ahrairah. Tricky; great danger; and blessing for the warren” (129). This is the doubtful expression of Fiver which suggests the self-deceiving trickery. The characteristics of trickster may be sexually active, violent, and tricky and at the same time may be self-deceiving. They are prone to suffer because of their own tricks. In the notion of Chris LaLonde:-

If we know the trickster, it is through his action: sexually active, often violent, ravenous, impetuous, and weak to play tricks on others, quick to deceive and at the same time self-deceiving—unwitting suffer of his own tricks. (29)

The rabbit trickster figures identify them with the mythological trickster hero El-ahairah. They find out some marvelous arts to take the place of trick and the old stories. Each of the rabbit figure, in the novel believes that their chief rabbit is El-

ahrairah and identify with him. About their identification with the mythological hero El-ahrairah Adams writes, “They have no chief rabbit – no how could they say? For a chief rabbit must be El-ahrairah to his warren and keep them from death: and here there was no deaths but one, and what chief rabbit could have answer to that?” (78). The rabbits of *Watership Down*, here identify with the mythological character and ask answer to the supposing chief rabbit about the question of death. In the novel while telling the story of El-ahrairah, most of the rabbit identify themselves with the mythological her. When they identify with mythological hero they forget all the danger and obstacle in their life and they feel relief. Identification is to seek security. The rabbits identify themselves with mythological hero because they want to secure their identity. Like these rabbits human beings too identify themselves with their forefathers who are powerful, tricky and who had did heroic deed in past. By so doing they associate themselves with glorious history of their lineage. Identity subjectivity and individual are the fundamental rights of an individual. So he/she desired them to be secured. About identification again narrator tells, “Each one of them saw themselves as El-ahrairah, who could be impudent to frith and get away with it” (18). Most of the rabbits identify themselves with El-ahrairah. By so doing, they feel relief from their obstacle in life. This identification is also with the mythological figure is also a kind of resistance of rabbit for their survival as they search identity of the culture in the world of rabbit.

The issue and question of survival is directly associated with the act of identification with the mythological characters. This very identification their wish and will for freedom. It is their quest for life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. By the association with myth and history they want to preserve and protect their cultural heritage unharmed unravished and virgin. They hate the encroachment at physical,

social, cultural and psychological level. The rabbits get a kind of power by the identification and association with the mythological figure. Trickster identifies themselves with the mythical trickster hero. They identify with their trickster past hero by telling the story about trickster figure. In the case of identification again Chris Lalonde opens: “Trickster identify finally and fully with the trickster, rather than having the discourse” (33).

Adams by creating the characters Hazel liberates his group of rabbits from the Efrafa. He had a liberating power to characters and audience as well. About the liberating power Hazel said:-

“The Trick”, turning to Blackberry who all this time had been nibbling and listening in silence, “the trick will have to do three things. First, it will have to get the does out of Efrafa and secondly it will have to put paid to the pursuit. For a pursuit there’s bound to be and we can expect another miracle. But that’s not all. Once we are clear of the place, we’ve got to become impossible to find beyond the reach of any Wide Patrol”. (170)

Hazel wants to free the does from the warren of Efrafa by using his trick. The tricksters have a power to liberate the world. They liberate reader as well as characters and audience. The tricksters are real for us if the trickster liberate the world and give freedom to the people. As Chris LaLonde views:-

The trickster is the sign of freedom and chance can liberate readers as well as characters and audience, if we are aware of an understood both the signifier and signified which compromise the sign. Only then the trickster will be real for us. (33)

In the final section of the novel, the narrator describes about the condition of rabbits in the winter season. Here, narrator also contrasts the world of rabbit with the world of human beings. In winter season human beings can be safe from cold using fire and warm clothes. They have also sufficient amount of food for eating. But the rabbits are compelled to leave their life in their own way. This condition of rabbits shows that they do not expect happiness all the time but only they are searching for their survival. About this condition of rabbits the narrator says:-

Rabbits, like most animals suffer hardship. True, they are luckier than some, for food of a sort is nearly always to be had. But under snow they may stay underground for days at a time, feeding only by chewing pellets. They are more subject to disease in winters and cold lowers their vitality. (265)

Not to expect happiness is like remaining silent and being silent is also a sign of resistance. Rabbits also face hardship in their life but their problem is never solved. Due to this poor condition they are not having a better food but only chewing pellets. Due to their poor condition and domination by powerful creature, rabbits are resisting against their authority and also they want better position in the society and treated equally. Applying different types of comic language, tricksters make fun to others and do important things for the contribution of myth and culture. These trickster figures are very important in modern culture as well as literature. About the language of trickster Gerald Vizenor says:-

The tricksters are language games: “The trickster is androgenous, a comic healer and liberator in literature..... and erotic shimmer in oral traditions” and does not consist of “discovered elements that are recomposed to endorse invented models in social science (188).

In the novel, Adams talks about the comic language of El-ahrairah. About the comic language of El-ahrairah Adams writes:-

Alas! Said El-rairah. ‘I know it well! But they have been infected by dreaded Lousepedoodle, that flies in every decreasing circles through the Gunpat of the Cludle—a deadly virus—dear me, yes! – isolated by the purple Avvago and maturing in the gray – green forests of the Okey Pokey. (64)

This type of comic language is also the means of trick. El-ahrairah is resisting against the sun god Frith to save his people by making laugh to others. Although El-ahrairah is not the actual character in the novel, he had played an important role of resistance against the unjust authority of the human beings as well the sun god Frith. Human beings are cruel to the animals and they don’t think about the feeling of the animals. Human beings just kill animals for fun but they don’t think animals have also the feeling and emotions like them. Due to this bad character of human being rabbits become the victim. So the rabbits resist against the bad nature of human beings. The rabbits for their survival, involved in different types if trick, “El-ahrairah made a great business of examining a king” (64). El-ahrairah mainly wants to trouble the king and his way of giving trouble is by stealing the carrots of king as well as Prince Rainbow. Giving trouble is also the kind of resistance in which, “El-ahrairah promotes the thousand tricks, the best in the world” (65).

To conclude, *Watership Down* is a trickster text and the resistance of tricksters in different context. El-ahrairah, the mythological hero of rabbits, is a trickster, due to his wit and cunning behavior. He save his people from king Darzin by using his trick and showing heroism. El-ahrairah never gives trouble to his people but he helps them either using his trick of showing courage and dignity when necessary. On the other,

Hazel and his group of rabbits, following the same path of mythological hero El-ahrairah also fight for democracy and freedom against cruel ruler General Woundwort. They, also by using their trick just like El-ahrairah resist against the rule and regulation of Woundwort, who is a tyrannical ruler. Adams by using the animal's characters in the novel *Watership Down* gives them human qualities and in some case he places them over than human. The rabbits of *Watership Down*, like human beings resist for power, freedom, survival and cooperation among one another in the new warren which they gain by having victory over Woundwort. They also established a new culture of their own which is democratic. *Watership Down* also revives the storytelling culture of Native Americans because in the novel when the rabbits are in the dangerous situation they always tell the story of mythological character El-ahrairah and also praise his courage and trickery. Adams resists against the white people who also called themselves, the so-called master and dominate the black people by showing the rabbit as the trickster and giving importance to rabbit in the novel. So Adams revives the story telling culture of Native Americans and wants to establish a democratic value of black people which is always free from the so-called master, white Americans.

Chapter- IV

Trickster on the Behalf of Resistance in *Watership Down*

The novel *Watership Down*, an animal story of Richard Adam, has a story of rabbits and their journey to Watership Down. They face different critical situation in their journey especially given by human beings as well as cruel ruler General Woundwort. The role given to Woundwort in the novel is troublesome. Woundwort always behaves very rudely to his people, all the rabbits are terrified in his presence, what he orders they have to obey without any delay. Adams by using the animal character, especially rabbits in the novel, gives human qualities to them. By giving human qualities to the rabbits, Adams satires on the qualities of the human beings. Just like human beings rabbit have also the culture of their own and their leadership is also different from warren to warren. This novel is also creative response to censorship. The rulers are supposed to be kind and protective to their people and secure their right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness but Woundwort is cruel and destructive for his people. Through this ironic note Adam is urging for freedom of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness in the novel by using trickster figure and giving them important value.

By using the trickster figures in the novel it is easier for us to find the importance of trickster. By examining the theorization of different thinkers and applying it to the novel, this research finds that tricksters are important in modern culture. They also give moral lesson to those who are hungry for power and who don't want freedom of their people. Where there is trickster there is freedom and liberty because trickster also plays important part to reform the society and its example are Hazel and his group of rabbit as well as mythological hero El-ahrairah in the novel. They are the trickster figure in the novel and they play important role to reform the

society. These trickster figures, the group of rabbits leaded by Hazel, and El-ahrairha resist for survival, identity, cooperation as well as they also construct their own myth and culture.

Richard Adams in the novel stands as vehement critique of tyrannical ruler by presenting his rabbits character as a trickster and giving them human qualities. Adams makes his point that leader should be equal to all the people of the state. They should rule giving equal right to all the people. But in the novel, Woundwort is a tyrannical ruler and do not give equal participation to his people. So Adams gives moral lesson to those leaders by contrasting between the two characters Hazel and Woundwort who are democratic and tyrannical ruler respectively.

This novel also shows the resistance of trickster in different context. For their identity, survival and cooperation trickster resist against those who are in power and who do not listen their voice equally. For example in the novel the rabbit trickster figures resist against human beings as well as their ruler General Woundwort who is supposed to be powerful. To prove that trickster is also an important figure in modern culture and is also a means of resistance, this research has also used different trickster's thinkers. An examination of these trickster thinkers proves that trickster is witty, cunning as well as they also help other in need. A trickster is a figure who uses his wit and guile is also clever. He has also power and courage to defeat the powerful people. For an example, Hazel and his groups of rabbits as well as their mythological hero El-ahrairha can be taken as evidence. Even though, they are weak they are able to defeat their leader by using their trick. Talking about the nature of trickster Roger Abhrams says, "Trickster is the figures who most fully illustrate how not to act within society.... He anticipates what sane and mature people do not do" (5). This proves that trickster is one who always violates the rules and regulation of the society, in

order to establish a new democratic society. For an example the mythological hero of the novel El-ahrairah, violates the rules and regulation of Frith, the sun god, in order to save his people. This further suggests that trickster is very important in modern culture.

Works Cited

- Abrahams, Roger D. *African Folktales: Traditional Stories of the Black World*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.
- Adams, Richard. *Watership Down*. New York: Avon, 1972.
- Anderson, Catlett, Celia. "Tory, Carthage and *Watership Down*". *Children's literature Association Quartley* 8. 1, (Spring 1983): 12-13.
- Baker, Margaret P. "The Rabbit as Trickster." *Journal of Particular Culture* 28. 2 (1994): 149-58.
- Basso, Ellen B. "The Trickster's Scattered Self." *Anthropological Linguistics* 30. 3/ 4 (Winter 1998): 292- 318.
- Bridman, John. "Richard Adams at Eighty." *Contemporary Review* 277. 1615. (Aug 2002): 108.
- Chamber, Aidain. "Letter from England: Great Leaping Lapins." *Horn Book* 49. 2 (July 1973): 253-55.
- Gal, Susan. "Language and the Art of Resistance." *Cultural Anthropology* 10. 3 (August 1995): 407-24.
- Haase, Donald. "African American Tales." *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folk Tales and Fairy Tales*. Ed. Donald Haase. London: Greenwood Press, 2008. 8-10.
- . "Trickster." *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folk Tales and Fairy Tales*. Ed. Donald Haase. London: Greenwood Press, 2008. 992-95.
- Hamilton, Virginia. *A Ring of Tricksters: Animals Tales from America, the West Indies, and Africa*. New York: Blue Sky Press. 1997.

- Hume, Kathryn. "Gerald Vizenor's Metaphysics." *Contemporary Literature* 48. 4 (Winter 2007): 580- 612.
- Hyde, Lewis. *Trickster Makes This World*. New York: North Point Press, 1998.
- Kraus, Anne Marie. "Folk Tales Themes and Activities for Children." *Trickster and Transformation Tales 2*. Englewood, Colorado: Teachers Idea Press, 1999. 2-10.
- Petzold, Dieter. "Fantasy Out of Myth and Fable." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 12. 1, (Spring 1987): 15-19.
- Rawicz, Slavomir, *The Long Walk: The True Story of a Trek to Freedom*, Lyons Press, 1956. 349-50.
- Roberts, John W. "From Trickster to Badman: the Black Folk Hero in Slavery and Freedom." *Afro American Folklore* (1449): 2-55.
- Schutz- Gurber, Barbara. *Trickster Tales from Around the World: An Interdisciplinary guide for Teachers*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991.
- Scott, James C. *Weapon of Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Searles, Baird, Beth Meacham, and Michael Farnklin. *A Readers Guide to Fantasy*. Fact on File, 1982. 347.
- Sebesta, Sam. "Untitled." *Journal of Reading*, 18. 4, International Reading Association, (Jan 1975): 332-33.
- Thomas, Resh, Jane. "Old Worlds and New: Anti-Feminism in *Watership Down*," *Horn Book*, 50. 4 (August 1974): 405-08.
- Vizenor, Gerald. "Trickster Discourse." *American Indian Quarterly* 14.3 (Summer 1900): 183-210.
- Winter, Kelly. *Novels for Students*. Farmington Hills: Gale Group, 2001.