

Chapter - I

Introduction

Feminist Subversion against Patriarchy in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*

This research focuses on Jane Smiley's novel, *A Thousand Acres*, which depicts the bitter and tragic reality of an American Midwestern family. Analyzing Jane Smiley's voice against male hegemony, that has long exploited both mind and heart of the female, remains at the core of this thesis. In that sense Smiley discloses the vices rooted in the structure of a feudal patriarchal family in which the plight of the female protagonist of the novel, Ginny, remains bounded within the patriarchal authority, an antagonistic force embodied by her father, Larry Cook. Along with such unpleasant female situation, it also speaks for the growing consciousness in women in the decades after the mid-twentieth century. Smiley resists the psychological and physical exploitation of women by challenging male superiority and raising voice through her mouthpiece and the protagonist, Ginny, who ultimately is able to carve out a niche, in her life. Hence her resistance against her dominating father and the ability to live in her own decision represents the feminist subversion of patriarchy and the woman's quest for individuality.

To accomplish the goal of the thesis, feminist perspective of analysis plays significant role. Feminist literary theory problematizes the whole human history as male history. Then it encompasses various representations and ideas regarding woman's cases. The works and ideas of the feminist critics and theorists like Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Mary Ellman, Elaine Showalter, Mary Wollstonecraft, and others are included in the theoretical modality. Whatever the different feminists argue, in common, they are concerned with the issues of gender,

equality and freedom of women. Feminism tries to dismantle the long established patriarchal system that subordinates and suppresses women.

Feminist critics deny that females are the "others", but decrees that they have been "othered". So it not only reveals the exploitation of women both physically and psychologically by men, but also exposes its adverse effects on women in their various potentialities. But things don't remain static. When they become unbearable, rebellion occurs sooner or later against it.

The novel is set in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Basically after the '60s, there was an overgrowing consciousness among the women regarding their rights. Women started fighting for their rights and identities and became aware of their misrepresentations in social, political, cultural, religious fields and also in the works of art and literature by the males of different generations, so as to justify, maintain and perpetuate the patriarchal establishment. As in a series, the awareness appeared in different forms: radical, liberal, materialistic, socialist, Marxist, lesbian, psychoanalytic and so on. At the core, all such forms unite for the female identity, equality, justice, and freedom by resisting the age old hegemonic discourses and practices of patriarchy.

Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* addresses the aforementioned elements: female identity, equality, justice, freedom. The farmer, Larry Cook, not only exploits the daughter(s) physically and mentally, he crosses the boundary of morality by sexual exploitation, too. The two daughters, Ginny and Rose, who get reared up in patriarchal set-up, are the real victims. Except these two females, many other females' role is shown insignificant since most of the females die so young which again proves the dominance and exploitation of females by males. The death of Larry Cook's sisters, Martha and Louise in their early age, the death of Larry's own mother at 43,

the death of Larry's wife so young, the absence of female members at Harold Clark's, and others strengthen to prove the argument.

Even though Ginny sounds so polite and obedient to patriarchal norms and values as she works to make Larry, her father, a successful landowner, her subversive and rebellious nature can easily be grasped from the very beginning of the novel. This female protagonist finally gets awakened through slow poison reaction. She realizes that she has been imprisoned within the domestic life. By identifying that her individuality has been dissolved within the individuality of her father, she denies her previous path of life. She realizes that the matters of equality, justice and freedom have been defined by the males in which the female perspectives get crushed. Hence the protagonist mainly resists such perspectives of patriarchy.

Ginny has been dominated throughout her life. Whereas in her younger life she was physically and sexually exploited and abused, in her adult, the domination was through silencing and misrepresentation. Unable to find out the source of her misery as she is unable to have the memory of Larry's rape and beating, Ginny couldn't resist. Ultimately as she finds out Larry as the center of power exploiting and oppressing, Ginny deconstructs the previously established ideology of domesticity by fleeing away from there. Her relocation and employment at Perkins Restaurant represents a total escape from the system and structure of farm and patriarchy. Ginny's move to St. Paul Church again marks the beginning of her new life of independence and self-control with hope and children.

Ginny's sister, Rose, bears the same plight. She is another example of patriarchal exploitation. She was beaten, raped, othered not only by her father, Larry Cook, but also by her own husband, Pete. However, because of her poor health, she

dies young and is unable to dismantle the hierarchy and superiority of males. But she always denied and resisted whatever happened to her in the evil system.

Jane Smiley has been criticized variously. Regarding Smiley's fictional works, Ann Charters claims that "in most of her fiction she explores the theme of familial relationships, sometimes from the male family members' point of view" (1178). Charters further opines that Smiley is fascinated with the subject of family.

What has happened in the twentieth century is that all the forms of systematic thought about society and culture have failed. They have proved themselves to be brutal and ineffective. Right now writers are trying to come up with some other system for thinking about individuals as social beings and society as formed of individuals. Clearly the immediate form between the individual and society is family. (qtd. in Charters 1178)

Charters points out the theme of family as the dominant characteristic of Smiley's novels. A good society and a good culture are maintained by system and discipline. Its development starts from a family with the healthy union between individual and society.

Smiley's 1991 novel *A Thousand Acres*, has been appraised and interpreted from various perspectives since its publication. The novel, that received both highest American literary awards: the Pulitzer Prize and Book Critics' Circle Award, has placed Smiley as one of the established writers of the contemporary period. Its richness and literary position can be recognized through criticisms. The novel unfolds the tragic and bleak picture created within an American Midwest farming family by patriarchal norms, values and establishment. In an interview with Lewis Burke

Frumkes, Smiley said that she wanted to write her novels- *The Greenlanders*, *A Thousand Acres*, *Moo*, and *Lidie*- " in each of the four genres: epic, tragedy, comedy and romance" (12). Hence Smiley confirms in the interview that *A Thousand Acres* is a tragic story. A writer who more focuses on "work" than on "career" says that "*A Thousand Acres*, my own vision of *King Lear*, owes a great deal to my writing *The Greenlanders*" (14). Answering how she felt the film version of the novel *A Thousand Acres*, she said that it was "a project based on enthusiasm, love, and integrity" (14). Smiley accepted the film version without any regrets and doubts.

Catherine Cowen Olsen points out the use of food in the novel to expose the novel as a story of cooking and eating varieties of food. The novel is about farming and eating of what the characters harvest in their land. The whole business of the family is an agriculture that includes both animals and plants.

Anyone who reads *A Thousands Acres* can't help asking this same question about the eating habits of the farmers who inhabit this Midwestern novel. Smiley's aptly named Cook family is cooking or eating, and much of the food sounds heavy and unappetizing. Most of us cringe to think of Midwest-Mex garbanzo bean enchiladas or park liver sausages canned with sauerkraut (to say nothing of tuna noodle casserole), yet these are foods that her characters prepare and expect their family and friends to eat-never mind enjoy. (21)

Olsen relates food with power in the reality of domestic setting. The two daughters Ginny and Rose often seem to be cooking and serving their meals to father like in a "military punctuality at six, twelve and five on their appointed days of each week"(21). By imprisoning the daughters inside the kitchen, Larry Cook exercises the power of patriarchy.

Steve G Kellman reads the novel in the similar line of Olsen. For the writer, Smiley deviates abundantly from Shakespeare's *King Lear* in her treatment of food. He further explains.

While the playwright offers his characters nothing to feed on but one another, the characters in *A Thousand Acres* are almost always either Cooking or eating; food in the language by which the author divulges mysteries of characters plot, and theme. Its prominence in Smiley's text is all the more remarkable in contrast to the fast of Shakespearean model. (12)

Eating and dining play major role in the novel. Almost every major scene of the novel involves eating. Within the eating, meat plays important roles, which one could understand from Harold's organizing of pig roast in the homecoming of his son, Jess.

Moreover, the surname of the major characters in the novel is Cook. In that sense, Smiley emphasizes the role of dining. This argument can further be reinforced by the family business, agriculture. Through agriculture, there is production of crops, which is the live-stock for human consumption.

A Thousand Acres has got many appraisals as a novel that redraws *King Lear* of William Shakespeare. Susan Ayres studies that *A Thousand Acres* is not a story simply of emotions and impulses, rather it is a feminist revision of *King Lear*. For Ayres, it works to appropriate the play of Shakespeare. Her comparative study of the two novels finds out:

Just as Lear's increasing madness takes over the second half of *King Lear*, the memories and ramifications of Larry's incest take over the second half of *A Thousand Acres*. The incest plot provides a feminist

revision of the Lear story by suggesting an alternative narrative of violence stemming from the view point of the silenced sisters. (142)

There are many parallel lines between the plots of the two novels; one of them is the madness of two patriarchs. Whereas in *King Lear* the two sisters mistreat their father and throw him off the kingdom, the two sisters in *A Thousand Acres* are maltreated on the hand of the father by beating and raping.

Regarding the novel as a revision of *King Lear*, Lewis Burke Frumkes while interviewing with Smiley also disclosed that Smiley "won the Pulitzer Prize for *A Thousand Acres*, which was really a tour de force and has been described many times as a modern version of the *King Lear* story", which Smiley herself accepted (12).

Tyler Kessel's interpretation of *A Thousand Acres* proves how innocent people are always dominated and oppressed. So Kessel's thesis explains the nature and manipulation of power and oppression through this novel. Similarly the realization and knowledge of being oppressed helps to combat against the domination and destroy the oppressor.

Larry Cook, the principal antagonist of Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* remained invisible to his daughter Ginny because she had blocked out the memory of Larry's rape and beating for many years. Unable to identify him as a source of her misery, Ginny couldn't resist her father. Ultimately, however, she is able to resist and carve out a livable existence because she comes to see Larry as the center of power exerted over her. (242)

Hence Kessel has read the novel from the perspective of power relation. In the beginning of the novel Larry, the father was an oppressor and Ginny, the daughter

was an oppressed. But the realization and the knowledge of being oppressed help her to combat against and destroy the oppressor.

Sinead McDermott studies that Larry Cook in the novel exploits both nature and human beings. On the one hand, he exploits the field to be economically successful. On the other hand, he silences, and beats and rapes his own daughters. McDermott further writes, "Larry's abuse of his land and his abuse of his daughters are connected: both are justified by a patriarchal discourse of property and implicitly condoned by his community" (395). So the novel also deals with the nature exploitation of nature, domestic violence and incest. Thus, the novel unravels the vices and draws a bleak picture of patriarchy and its domination against women.

Katie Roiphe analyzes that the novel displays the bleakness in the relationship between the family members. A father, who is considered to be respected and dignified person in family and society, himself, crosses the boundary of morality and rapes his own daughters. Roiphe further remarks:

[...] when they were wrong, the respected pillar of the community entered their yellow and pink flowered bedrooms and had sex with them. Rose remembers and Ginny forgets. On finding out the dark secret, the reader is supposed to think with satisfaction, oh yes, now it all falls into place. Ginny's passivity, Rose's hardness, their fear and anger and cruelty, their putting their father out in the furious storm-al make perfect sense. (66)

The relationship between and among the characters is full of complexity. Since characters themselves are guided by their unusual nature, the complexity arises.

Ginny and Rose reveal the dark secrets of their father as well as their own psychic upheavals.

Sinead McDermott analyzes that the novel's ending can't be celebratory for its theme of female resistance, survival and liberation. It shows the problems for the narrative continues to concentrate on the lost past and the lost home. Mc Dermott concludes:

Ginny's nostalgia has left her unable to move on unwillingly to expend narrative energy on the present because she is caught up in the fascinations of the past while clearly this is a potential danger, I would argue that Ginny's continuing engagement with the past should be seen as an achievement rather than a failure in the text. (393)

For McDermott, Memory and forgetting are the dominant issues in the novel. Ginny is finally able to memorize the history of her family and her own within the chain of patriarchy. But her only concentration on the past can not help her life to go smoothly ahead. Rather she should suspend the past and change its meaning according to her life in present.

Kyoko Amano's "Alger's Shadows in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*" exposes that Smiley problematizes the traditional male centered nature of Alger myth of success. Amano enunciates that Larry Cook, a modern version of an Alger hero, proves himself to be a shrewd and evil exploiter by raping his own daughters. Amano further supports

[...] *A Thousand Acres* debunks the Alger myth that arises from stories for boys about boys rise [...] Smiley exposes the false premise of the American premise. Although Alger's novels suggest the possibility of

social rise even for a boy of unknown origin and the Alger myth expresses a popular, belief in the inherent greatness of an ordinary person, all the possibilities embedded in those stories were meant for men. Smiley recognizes that in the Alger myth the dark shadow of men's capitalistic and materialistic pursuit repeatedly suppressed women. (28)

In this way the path of Larry as an Alger hero from rags-to-riches is a false one. Even though Larry seems to be economically successful, its whole contribution goes to the daughters. Hence Smiley's novel becomes a powerful first step to free women who had for long been used by the males in their economic activities.

All in all, *A Thousand Acres* can't simply be regarded as a tragic story; it has diverse subjects ranging from love to hatred, morality and responsibility to incest and abuse, memory to forgetting, domination and oppression to the revolution and emancipation, repression and dark secrets to the appearances and so on. But the contention of this research is to show how the patriarchy is disrupted and subverted by the female character Ginny by breaking the traditional chains.

This research work has been categorized into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the novel *A Thousand Acres* concisely. It works as a capsule guide to the research work. The second chapter deals with the theoretical modality of the analysis. It briefly defines and explains feminism, its origin and development, its varieties and its subversive nature to relate it in the novel. The third chapter is an analysis of the text on the basis of theoretical modality. During the analysis, some extracts from the novel are taken so as to prove the hypothesis in that Smiley presents a character Ginny, who resists and debunks patriarchy as her quest to establish own female identity. In that sense this part is the heart of the thesis. The whole findings get

concluded in chapter four. All the explanations and arguments developed in the preceding three chapters help to explore how Jane Smiley is for feminist subversion against patriarchy in *A Thousand Acres*.

Chapter - II

Theoretical Modality

Feminism: An Overview

Feminism is the movement of the 1960s concerned with an awareness of women about male-dominated socio-cultural tendency to rule over women unanimously. After the feminist movement of the 1960s the issues of women's rights and their recognition spread world-widely in intellectual domain. On the one hand, feminist theories and critical practices, unfolded the marginal socio-economic status of women, and on the other, they extended enormous consciousness in women to launch collective activities for the equality and freedom of women in the society. It took about two centuries of struggle for recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements for women's social and political rights. Since feminism focuses on manifold areas and issues regarding the situation of women, it has feature of multiple dimension. By exposing women's marginalization, subordination and deprivation in the diverse domains like political, educational and literary, feminism discloses the long-established hierarchy between men and women in the patriarchal social milieu. Since the beginning of human civilization, the fundamental rights of women have been denied culturally politically and economically due to the male-privileged modality of the society. Male patterned assumptions, norms and values of the society always restricted women physically and psychologically to perpetuate men's rule over women. Patriarchal formula of the society statistically determined the value of the women in the periphery and margins of all areas of human life.

Throughout the history, women have been devalued as inferior, passive, kind, beautiful and emotional, whereas men have been regarded with the prestigious

positioning of superiority, rationality and arrogance. Men always enjoyed the position of center, but women were sidelined and marginalized in the peripheral section of the society. Though there is not such natural rule and characteristics to prove hierarchy between men and women, culturally fabricated normativity of the society from ancient to the present, viewed woman as the "other" of man's "self". Men with their culturally designed mindset presupposed that they possessed rights fundamentally to subjugate women and to make women subordinate or an appendage to men. They established a unanimous ruling authority to control women in all aspects of humanity--politics, religion, economy and education. Male supremacist ideology taught and directed women to internalize gender-biased assumption that they are of less value and they are genuinely inferior and unequal to men. The permanent male prejudiced ideology denied the women rights as human beings. The definition of women by men didn't value women as human beings rather they defined them as objects and commodities to fulfill masculine desires.

Feminist critics argued and analyzed how women have been misrepresented, misinterpreted and undervalued by the whole human history. Hence the whole so called "civilized" human history is the male history. From the ancient Holy books to the modernist and postmodernist writings of the twentieth century, the role of women has been denied, controlled and negatively manipulated. They have been blamed for lacking responsibility and intelligence for they are supposed to cause all the troubles in the world. Feminists, so, term such philosophy as Phallogocentric philosophy. The Holy Bible explicitly conveys that Eve insisted Adam to eat the apple from the forbidden fruit, and thereby causing the downfall of human beings. Pandora's opening of the box led to the spreading of the troubles in the human world. God's creation of Eve out of the ribs of Adam also supports to prove the fact that women were given

subordinate role in the masculine supremacist world. Feminists have, so, charged that Christianity and Judaism are the sexist religions that valorized and legitimized men by denigrating and degrading women.

In the male centered ideology, discourse and social reality, the women were supposed as body and men were esteemed as 'soul.' In Platonic term 'soul' transcends everything, whereas body is immanent, temporary and sensual, hence is valueless. So Elizabeth V. Spelman regrets:

What philosophers have had to say about women typically has been nasty, brutish and short. [. . .] Because philosophers have not said much about women, and when they have, it has usually been in short essays or chatty addenda which have not been considered to be part of the central body of their work, it is tempting to regard their expressed views about women as systematic: their remarks on women are unofficial asides which are unrelated to the heart of their philosophical doctrines. (367)

Women have been excluded from the public arenas. The philosophers have marginalized women from their philosophical discourse, for they have not said much about women. In stead of saying something for the women, they sketched women in a derogatory way.

In the classical times, Aristotle, the Greek philosopher asserted antifeminist ideas. Aristotle held that men are superior to women. Jostein Gaarder refers Aristotle who claimed, "A women is 'an unfinished man'. In reproduction woman is passive and receptive whilst man is active and productive; for the child inherits only the male characteristics, [. . .]" (116). The stereotypical representation that Aristotle and others

did, established the hierarchy between man and woman. Such long-standing hierarchy showed men as the leaders, who imposed authority over female. The history of humans has been for the sake of males that caused to establish patriarchal norms, values and systems.

St Thomas Aquinas, in the middle Ages, stated that men were superior and godlike, and their intellectual ability easily impressed women. Gaarder explains Aquinas's views on women, "He also thought that children only inherit the father's characteristics, since a woman was passive and receptive while the man was active and creative" (135). Aquinas' words also echo with the Biblical myth of creation of Eve. The feminists revise all such views since the beginning of western civilization to the crucial historical periods as pervasively patriarchal. There are organized thoughts to perpetuate the subordination of women in diverse cultural domains.

Feminist literary criticism redraws the earlier boundaries that patriarchy created to valorize and privilege men over women. The process of denigration and degradation of women didn't start from a particular historical period. The mythical description also reinforces the idea that the subordination of women was always there. For example, Apollo is worshipped as the symbol of knowledge and supremacy; Eros is considered to be symbol of jealousy and sensuality; and Venus is the symbol of beauty. The position of women remained flexible and subordinated, and is reflected as stereotypical, faithful and devoted wife.

Hence from time to time in the history of so-called western civilization, the males are made superior and grandeur whereas the women are stereotyped and undervalued. Such patriarchal bias could also be found from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to some of the selected passages by D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer and Jean Janet, who "in their fictional fantasies, aggrandize

their aggressive phallic selves and degrade women as submissive sexual objects" (Abrams 88). Such anti-feminist authors and their views are attacked due to the growing consciousness in the women in the twentieth century.

Since feminism was the product of the women's liberation movement of the 1960s, its original nature was political. For Toril Moi, feminist criticism "is a kind of political discourse: a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism"(204). Out of the women's movement, feminist theory emerged and was extended to diverse disciplines including anthropology, sociology, economics, women's studies, psychoanalysis, philosophy, literary criticism and so on. As the inequalities between men and women for long hurt women emotionally and intellectually, the study of gender inequality and discrimination, stereotyping, objectification, oppression, patriarchy remain at the center. It studied women's stereotyping and misrepresentations in the great books of literature. Peter Barry in *Beginning Theory* analyzes, "The movement was, in important ways, literary from the start in the sense that it realized the significance of the images of women promulgated by literature, and saw it as vital to combat them and question their authority and their coherence" (121).

Hence feminism and feminist literary criticism focus upon the issues of who are placed at the margin in a patriarchal culture in which males play the role of authority by limiting females in diverse fields of human life. They study sexual, social, economic, political issues of women which were once thought to be outside the study of literature. Wilfred L. Guerin and others hold:

Indeed feminism and feminist literary criticism are often defined as a matter of what is absent rather than what is present. [. . .] feminist literary criticism is often an attack upon other modes of criticism and

theory, and its social orientation moves beyond traditional literary criticism. In its diversity feminism is concerned with the marginalization of all women: that is, with their being relegated to a secondary position. (196)

After all, feminism attacks the cultural discrimination created by patriarchal prominence which only organized and analyzed the things as per the male interests. But feminist criticism analyzes the things that are not represented, rather than what are done. Hence the inequalities existing in the socio-cultural scenario are the butts reflected and defied by such feminist theorists. Since feminists examine the experiences of women in all races, classes and cultures, multiple forms have been introduced.

The feminist critics seek a way out by challenging such cultural framework dominated by patriarchy. Toril Moi scrutinizes further that all female tradition in literature or criticism can't be a feminist. For her, it is the "political commitment to struggle against all forms of patriarchy and sexism" (206). Hence all the books written by women and on women writers can't always be anti-patriarchal commitment and for women.

Feminists have argued variously. Some of the feminists during 1980s sought to form a distinctly feminist theory of knowledge. Such kind of thinking has been questioned for its validity, too. In feminist epistemology, as Thomas Mautner defines "some hold that the traditional concepts and ideals of truth, objectivity and value-neutrality are to be rejected on the ground that they are used for the male domination" (148). For such writers and critics, whatever males held as truth was circulated as truth for all. And against such circulation of truth as power, the mass rejection from females is necessary which can only secure their lives.

Speaking on feminist criticism, Rosemarie Tong comes to the conclusion that there can't be single theory or perspective. Instead, there are multiple dimensions in such field. In her own words:

[. . .] feminist theory is not one, but many, theories or perspectives and that each feminist theory or perspective attempts to describe women's oppression, to explain its causes and consequences, and to prescribe strategies for women's liberation. The more skillfully a feminist theory can combine description, explanation, and prescription, the better that theory is. (1)

Tong's own analysis explains that feminism is a theory that unfolds the age long oppression and exploitation of women by patriarchal socio-cultural framework. Along with explaining the plights, suffering and other physical and psychological plights the women have been facing, feminism goes on explaining the ways of getting liberation out of such tides and tensions.

Hazard Adams introduces feminism as the most successful of the political movements. For him feminism digs out that women endured double exclusion. On the one hand, many women writings were excluded from the so-called literary canon. On the other hand, the writings of males also excluded and neglected women perspective in their works. In his own words:

Feminism has recovered and revered the writings of many women excluded from the so-called literary canon and raised many voices against the canon's sexual (and racial) exclusiveness. It has shown how male writing has excluded female perspective and even actively opposed or disdained women and so-called female values. (7)

Feminism hence opposes the earlier treatment done to women by patriarchy. The various theoretical positions that feminists hold in diverse fields, commonly work out to raise voice against the so-called canonical perspective. They have campaigned to reveal the actual causes and the processes that disdained women.

Feminism flourished with the women's struggle for the political enfranchisement in the USA. So, originally the nature of the feminist movement was political. Such women's movement appeared in different waves in different historical periods. As the first wave feminism that burgeoned in the 1920s had the goal of attaining the women's rights to vote, the goal of the second wave feminism in the 1960s was to gain sexual equality. The second wave of feminism involved issues of reproductive rights like abortion and birth control. So it was referred to as women's liberation. The third wave that tentatively starts from 1990s aims and continues for the similar rights in the second wave.

However, the feminist movement of the twentieth century was backed and heavily influenced by the works of Mary Wollstonecraft, the British feminist writer, whose "*A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) well deserved its rank as the first feminist work" (Adams 394). It was the first women's text with feminine spirit. With the introduction of this book, the women writers started exploring their experiences through books but they have been frequently marginalized by male literary canon.

Wollstonecraft advocated educational and social equalities for women. For her, mind doesn't know the sex but women have been limited within the domesticity and are considered to be docile and emotional by patriarchy. She regrets and attacks the sentimental novels of her time, "Another instance of that feminine weakness of character often produced by a confined education, is a romantic thrust of the mind,

which has been very popularly termed sentimental"(398). Women were imprisoned by denying any opportunities to study the proper books; rather they were given the sentimental novels to shape the mind of the women. Hence she attacks those sentimental novels of her time for their harmful effects on women's intellectual development.

After *A Vindication of Rights of Women* (1792), Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) revolutionized the women's consciousness in the twentieth century. This led to other significant books that expose the female voices. Such books are Simon de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*"(1949), Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970), Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), Mary Ellman's *Thinking About Women* (1968), Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwomen in the Attic* (1979) and so on, which represented a new era not only in the women's consciousness, but in the whole intellectual circle, too.

In this way feminism can be broadly defined as a politics directed at changing existing power relations between men and women. The growing consciousness in women, after the 1960s, sought to break men's hold over women by giving vent to "feminisms", distinct feminist positions.

There are various categorizations of feminism. Some of which are according to the national boundaries. For instance, British feminist criticism has always been Marxist in its emphasis on class and politics. American feminist criticism typically has strong political implications because it has focused on the distinctive experience of women echoing that the personal is political. Similarly, French feminist criticism has more inclination toward psychoanalysis. In other words, apart from categorization of feminism according to national boundaries, one can locate diverse

dimensions like liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, psychoanalytic, black, postcolonial, lesbian feminisms and others.

Liberal feminism is concerned with increasing women's equality without radically changing social and political systems. So, the job of a liberal feminist is to stress women's choice and challenge the social division of labor. Liberal feminism that was popular in the 1950s and 1960s, along with the civil rights movement, viewed that all people, both men and women are created equal by God and deserve equal rights. Liberal feminists believe that oppression in society exists because of the socialization of men and women in patriarchy. Patriarchy denies equality to women, as men are in power position. But, as liberal feminists claim, women are as equally capable as the men are. Neither they argue that the women should be given superior roles and positions nor the vice versa. The thought influenced by J.S. Mill's *Subjection of Women* (1869) focuses on welfare liberalism. It appeals for the collective responsibility for the reformation and advancement in a liberal society with the help of both men and women. Unlike radical, liberal feminists focus on the reformation of society rather than revolutionary changes.

Radical feminists such as Adrienne Rich are concerned with creating a new social order, separate from that of men. So a radical feminist considers sex and motherhood as forced slavery. In opposition to liberal, radical feminism holds the view that society must be restructured in order to dissolve the patriarchy. Rather than limiting themselves with the issues of equal opportunities and the liberal society, they demand the revolution by overthrowing the male-centered norms, values and the systems. For them oppression against women had been practiced throughout the "civilized" human history by patriarchal structure. And the way to free women of different races, ethnicities, cultures and classes is to subvert and disrupt such

patriarchal establishment. The radical feminists demand all women to wage a war against men, patriarchy and the gender system. For them, the rigid social roles are to be rejected and the women should appear different from the men. Their individual feelings, experiences and relationships are to be highlighted by excluding males. It encourages some degree of separatism from men because it recommends putting women first making them a primary concern.

Marxist feminism is a sub-type of feminism which challenges both capitalism and ideology of patriarchy. Marxist feminists combine the study of the feminist issues with the political, economical and social. In other words, they observe the oppression of women and quest for the solution from the point of view of Marxism. For that they attack male based capitalist social structure that caused economic inequality, dependency, political confusion and so on. They realized that the root cause of oppression and exploitation of women is the capitalist social structure which is to be dismantled. As the Marxist feminists go to the point of defining the position of women in terms of socio-economic basis, they see women as proletariat and men as bourgeois. Such situation instigated the feminists to wage a war against that unequal distribution of capitalism. They try to debunk the existing socio-economic structure for the sake of equal opportunity to both the sexes and thereby dismantling economic hierarchy.

Socialist feminism emerged as a combination of Marxist and radical feminisms with a social analysis of patriarchy and capitalism. In other words, socialist feminism connects the oppression of women with the ideas like exploitation, oppression and labor. Socialist feminists see women as being held down as a result of their unequal standing in both the workplace and the domestic sphere. They focus

their energies on broad change that affects society as a whole, and not just on an individual basis.

Black feminism demands the end of sexism, classism and racism. It emerged after the early feminist movements which were led by white middle class women. As Black feminists hold, the white-middle class women sought and advocated social changes such as women's enfranchisement, but they were never for the racial class oppression. Black feminists argue that even if there is no discrimination between the sexes and the classes, it still causes discrimination against many people until there is racial discrimination. Hence for such feminists, liberation of black women necessitates freedom for all. That's why sexism, classism and racism, at once, are to be rejected and ended.

Psychoanalytic feminism attacks both notions of psychoanalytic theories propounded by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. For Freud, there are fundamental differences in the dream images seen by men and women. Freud finds men's dreams as egoist and ambitious whereas erotic dreams are related to women. Furthermore, Freud claims that woman's such destiny is an outcome of biology. But the feminists pour a reaction against his belief and analyze the formation of identities and stress the prior importance of women. Raman Seldon says, "Feminists have reacted bitterly to a view of woman as passive, narcissistic, masochistic and penis-envying" (146). Feminists call Freud's analysis as phallogocentrism and phallogocentrism.

Postcolonial feminism is concerned particularly with the oppression and the marginalization of women because of race, class and ethnicity in the postcolonial societies. Hence they question the notion that gender oppression is the primary force of patriarchy. Post colonial feminism finds loopholes in the portrayals of women in the western and non-western societies, for whereas women in western societies are

described as modern, educated and empowered, the women in non-western societies are represented as passive and voiceless. So, postcolonial feminists basically react against universalization of female experience as put forward by liberal and radical feminisms.

Feminist Subversion against Patriarchy

The emergence of feminist theories as female voice in the 1960s and its chronological evolution as counter discourse to the existing patriarchal discourse create an environment of feminist subversion against patriarchy. Feminism introduced the marginal or unequal status of women in the patriarchal design of the society and it also made women conscious of their degraded and subjugated position in all spheres of life. In fact, feminist critics and scholars vigorously questioned the dominating conventions, myths and values of that society that restricted women's freedom and blocked their individual development. The tradition, norms and ethos of the western society were men-centered to perpetuate men's rule over the women. Intellectual practices of feminist critics began subverting the hierarchy between male and female which was immeasurably rooted in the human world since the beginning of human civilization. Broadly speaking, feminism refers to the tendency of asserting women's rights, independence and authority. More explicitly, it is a conscious movement of women who united themselves to reject the long-standing passivity and oppression. The aim of feminism is to reject the cultural "othering" of women by men and to empower women for their participation in all spheres for the establishment of their equality as men. Patriarchal framework of the society long denied the rights of women which was challenged and subverted after the breakthrough of feminist theories and academic practices.

The deeply rooted patriarchal cultural foundations of the society were systematically questioned with the birth of female voices. Feminist theorists and critics subverted the existing discrepancy between the sexes--male as privileged and female as unprivileged--to maintain co-existence of women with men in the society. Female voice emerged as alternative to male voice for upbringing of the women, who were long silenced in the patriarchy. The presupposed men centered ethos of the society was challenged after the feminist subversion against patriarchy. The unfathomably grounded men-centered patterns got deconstructed by the feminist movement of the 1960s. Conventionally omnipresent male values of the society, which restricted women within certain limitations, were challenged to establish the recognition of women as human beings. Similarly feminism played pivotal role to redraw the boundary between men and women which were drawn unanimously by men to oppress the women in diverse aspects of human life. Hence, such redrawing the boundary of male-dominated social patterning resulted into feminist subversion against patriarchy to provide an equal position to women as men.

Valerie Bryson's words echo that feminist thinking "seeks to understand society in order to challenge and change it"(1). Such female awakening as Bryson and others opine got impetus from the ideas of feminist critics like Mary Wollstonecraft, Kate Millet, Elaine Showalter, Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, and so on. It further suggests the women's conscious coming out from the earlier boundaries created by male domination. Identifying their exploited situation within male culture and values, such feminists have attempted to break such traditions to reshape and reconstruct them. They have challenged earlier male-dominated psyche and practice of society by upbringing the marginalized women into center. Hence M.H. Abrams analyzes:

The often-asserted goal of feminist critics has been to enlarge and reorder, or in radical instances entirely to displace, the literary canon—that is, the set of works which, by a cumulative consensus, have come to be considered "Major" and to serve as the chief subjects of literary history, criticism, scholarship and teaching. (91-92)

Such rebellious nature of the feminist practices against the dominant culture, social norms and institutions aims to replace the earlier canons with the marginalized women. Rather than giving same space to the mainstream considered history, criticism, scholarship, the feminist critics center their study on what were absent about women in such practices.

Feminism believes that men and women are inherently equal, but discrimination was always there in the cultural, political, economic practices. And so a band of feminists appeared to question the conventionally supposed beliefs for the harmonious environment in the society. Chris Beasley argues, "the point of view of feminist writers is that the western thought is 'male stream' and thus its authority needs to be questioned "(3). For Beasley, feminism aims to eliminate the subordination of and oppression upon women forever. It raises voices to exterminate all kinds of wrong social treatments with women.

However, the contribution to revision the male-centered system was initially made by *A Vindication of Rights of Women* (1792), the work by Mary Wollstonecraft. Wollstonecraft opposed the system of education of her time, for the system provided women to study sentimental novels. She argued for sexual equality and "put special emphasis on education protesting against a system that kept women in a state of ignorance" (qtd. in Mautner 456-57). Wollstonecraft particularly refuted the ideas of the philosopher Rousseau who differentiated between the natures and abilities of men

and women, and such defined roles placed men as citizens and women as the wives and mothers. Bryson in *Feminist Political Theory* discloses that Wollstonecraft opposes Rousseau's male-dominated ideology in four ways. For Bryson, "she refused to accept that women were less capable of reason than men" (22). Secondly she demands a woman to be "an independent being who is both capable of and entitled to a rational education". Hence a woman is not made for men's delight. In her third disagreement, she asserts that as men and women are given equal and shared possession by God, "virtue must be the same for both sexes" (23). By challenging the old established male ideas, Wollstonecraft, in her fourth disagreement with Rousseau, advocated for women's suffrage, legal rights, and equal participation with men in the worlds of politics and paid employment. Such ideas, of course, were rebellious in her time and so they taught values of identifying, rejecting, questioning, protesting and so on to the feminists and feminist literary critics in the twentieth century. So she can be taken as the first feminist with subversive nature.

Rosemarie Tong also finds Wollstonecraft as a pioneering female heroine challenging male birth right, advocating women's equality and rationality. For Tong, she became able to liberate women from male violence and oppression by arguing against. Tong says:

[. . .] Wollstonecraft did present a vision of a woman strong in mind and body who is not slave to her passions, her husbands or children.

For Wollstonecraft, the ideal woman is interested in fulfilling herself it by self-fulfillment is meant any sort of pondering to duty distracting desires than in exercising self-control. (16)

Wollstonecraft never believed that women possess emotional, fragile and submissive nature only. For her, they can equally perform the reason. As patriarchy doesn't show

sincerity in thinking, in turn, degrades and subjugates women, Wollstonecraft pours challenging anger.

After Wollstonecraft in the nineteenth century, female voices spread abundantly for the rights and equality of the women in public sphere. The women began forming their organization and commission with the demand of same amount of payment as the male counterparts in the job of public importance. Such step also rescued situation in the time of industrial revolution. Similarly some of the novelists of the time, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Bronte Sisters extended awareness through their novels regarding the coexistence of women with that of men in the society.

Mainly the twentieth century remained landmark phase to deal the manifold concerns of the position of women in all spheres of life--social, political, cultural, economic. To raise the status of women rescuing them from their long remaining peripheral location determined by patriarchy, twentieth century feminist critics and scholars contributed greatly. By exposing the age-old binary between male and female in all aspects of humanity and by subverting these binaries considering them as not natural, but mere construction of the society and civilization, the feminist critics like Virginia Woolf, Simon de Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter, Mary Ellman, Kate Millet, and others played crucial role.

Virginia Woolf, in her critical work *A Room of One's Own* (1929), advocates for the equality of the women with men in the society asserting the existing socio-cultural values as sexually discriminatory. Questioning the dominant male literary traditions since ancient to the present, Woolf puts forward alternative literary conventions in which men and women get equal space to develop their literary creativity and potentiality. By challenging the prevalent norms and showing the alternative ways for the women's possibility of creativity, Woolf argues:

[. . .] when they come to set their thoughts on paper--that is that they had no tradition behind them, or one so short and partial that it was of little help. For we think back through our mothers if we are women. It is useless to go to the great men writers for help, however much one may go to them for pleasure. Lamb, Browne, Thackeray, Newman, Sterne, Dickens, De Quincey--whoever it may be--never helped a woman yet [. . .]. (824)

With her radical feminist thought, Woolf awakens the female writers to be self-reliant and self-dependent. She is clear in her remark that if women writers knock the doors of male writers for help, male writers in stead of helping them, limit them within male ideology for the perpetuation of male normativity in literary activities. Debunking such tradition in literature, Woolf makes an announcement for the women writers to found their own literary space to liberate themselves as independent beings in the arena of literary endeavors. Hence Woolf wants to reconfigure the systems and values that were unanimously drawn and free from the perspectives of male.

Simon de Beauvoir, in her book *The Second Sex* (1949), has emphatically subverted the existing hierarchy between men and women. She defies the male conviction of othering women as not a natural fact but as a cultural construction. The definition of women as "other" and "the second sex" are mere fabrications of dominant patriarchal socio-cultural viewpoint. She resists, "One is not born, but rather becomes man"(7). Through this line she tends to dismantle the long-standing dichotomy prevalent between men and women. The degraded or the "othered" woman is not what she is in real sense, but what she is at present is ideologically modulated. Beauvoir intends to say the predicament of present woman as "other" is

due to the omni-present patriarchal biases of the civilization which the conscious women should discard to exist themselves as independent human beings.

Similarly, Beauvoir, in her most quoted work *The Second Sex* (1949), heavily challenges the socially constructed myths. Myths always valorize patriarchy subjugating women. They create verticality between men and women. Man is primarily one and the woman is other. Man is subject, active practical whereas woman is passive, object and impractical. She attacks the patriarchal myths of women presuming the female essence. In her own words, "the myth must not be confused with recognition of significance" (997). Beauvoir makes a staunch appeal to falsify the male dominated myths. They are false; they hinder the way to transcendence to women and validate that they should remain silent and serve men. That's why, such culturally patterned myths should be deconstructed to rescue women from their male-designed peripheral location.

Elaine Showalter through her often quoted work *A Literature of their Own* (1977) encourages women to create their own independent ideology so that women can free themselves from patriarchal oppression. Showalter's revision of women writers of the Victorian period adds new bricks to defy the existing male monopoly in literature. Her categorization of women writers into three phases asserts to dissect the position of women in the contemporary time. The first phase is the feminine phase (1840-1880) in which female writers imitate and internalize the existing male literary conventions. To Showalter, these female writers --George Eliot and Bronte Sisters saw the possibility of women welfare in the existing male canon. The second phase, she termed, is feminist phase(1880-1920) in which the feminists of the time are called radical who protested against the male values, cultures, literatures and other standards that oppressed the women in multiple ways. Actually, this phase determined the

efforts for political and social equality and the women's literature was able to advocate minority rights and protested against unjust treatment of women. Elizabeth Gaskell and Francis Trollope exemplified the feminist literature. The third phase (1920 onwards) is female phase, which rejected both imitation and protest, and turned to female experience as the source of women's autonomous art. The writers of this phase envisioned separate female aesthetics, contemplated the possibility of distinct female language, celebrated the internal experience and consciousness. In this way, Showalter's proposition of the women's independent position subverts the traditional binary between men and women.

Mary Ellman, in her work *Thinking about Women* raised the feminist issues of oppression in patriarchal framework. Her work, the modern American criticism, brings out the derogatory stereotypes of women in male created literature. With her subversive point of view, she opposes such stereotypical representation of women considering them as mere constructions.

Kate Millet boldly questions the power holding role of patriarchy in her *Sexual Politics* (1977). She opposed the direct or indirect oppression of women by the male power. For her, 'sex' is a biological phenomenon, but gender is a concept which is culturally acquired sexual identity. She regrets all such cultural constructs. Raman Seldon analyzes, "Millet and other feminists have attacked social scientists who treat the culturally learned 'female' characteristics (passivity, etc) as natural, [. . .]. Sex 'roles' as perpetuated in society are in her view repressive" (138). For her, one can't create hierarchy between men and women in the lines of society that the culture has drawn. Rather the imposed epithets are to be exposed as spurious. Wilfred L. Guerin and others overview, "[. . .] her reading of D.H. Lawrence, Norman Mailer, Henry Miller, and Jean Janet offered a powerful challenge to traditional social

values of capitalism, violence against women, crude sexuality, and male power in general, while it also assaulted the reigning formalism in literary criticism of her day"(199). As the writers argue, women endured more severe treatment than other kinds of discriminations. Her identification of degrading representation of women marked the repudiation of the patriarchy, its ideology and culture.

Feminism, as a political movement, awakened women to bring a change in the society for women's right of liberty, equality, property, education and so on. This female awareness movement helped to change the condition of women. In a patriarchy, women were constrained by society and culture. But female awareness movement encouraged women to challenge what it means to be female in a male governed society. It tried to dismantle the conventional pattern to establish nonsexist ones. The issues like identity, self individuality and freedom became the common features for feminists to awaken women.

Chapter - III

Textual Analysis of *A Thousand Acres*: Feminist Subversion against Patriarchy

Jane Smiley advocates for the abolition of vices rooted in the structure of patriarchy in *A Thousand Acres*. With her first hand experience of familial life, Smiley draws attention of the readers to scrutinize the system of family dominated by patriarchy and its exploitative nature. The subjects in her corpus vary like politics, farming, horse training, child rearing, literature, marriage, family and so on. Her novel, *A Thousand Acres*, also shares many of such issues, but she takes significant departure in this novel by depicting the bitter and tragic reality of an American Mid-western farming family due to oppressive patriarchal socio-economic framework. The plight of the female characters remains bounded within the four walls of domesticity. Ginny, the protagonist breaks such earlier boundaries created by patriarchal authority, an antagonistic force embodied by her own father, Larry Cook. By resisting and then weakening the patriarchal normativities, Ginny creates her own identity which stands as an emblematic female identity.

Larry Cook, who represents the patriarchs, has three daughters, namely, Ginny, Rose and Caroline. Larry Cook, as an oppressive force, remains invisible as an oppressor to his daughters, especially Rose and Ginny. Because they couldn't identify him as an evil source of their misery and pain, they support the patriarch to burgeon his socio-economic status. For many years, they seem to have blocked out the memory of Larry's beating and raping, but the revelation of the truth by Rose in the middle part of the narration, and Ginny's awakening from a long slumber caused by patriarchal domination, help Ginny to take the required initiatives of resisting her father, thwarting the whole patriarchy and its normativities, and carving out a niche in her own.

After the untimely demise of Mrs. Cook, the whole responsibility of the farm and family lies on the head of Ginny and her father's all activities get supported by her. Larry Cook decides to divide the farm among his three daughters, as Ginny and Rose are married; Caroline works as a lawyer in Des Moines; and he has been older day by day. The youngest girl, Caroline resists and is thrown out of the farm. Before dividing the farm, Larry puts a condition in the preincorporation agreement that in the case the farm is mismanaged or abused, he can claim the land back to him. The family life proceeds ahead, and the daughters and their husbands take responsibility of Larry and the farm. The daughters, especially Ginny, neglect own feelings, ideas and the overall career by supporting the father's business routinely. Ginny confines her emotions and feelings within the walls of her heart without letting them out, as her plight of being confined within domesticity. During this long period, father exploits two daughters badly. In their young life he exploits and tortures them sexually and physically, whereas in their adulthood, he misrepresents and undervalues them. As Ginny fails to realize and memorize the terrific activities of the patriarch, she follows the footsteps of the patriarch without doubts and disagreements. This is how she erases her self and subjectivity-- destroyed and kept silent by herself, her father and her husband, Tyler. It's her inability to identify particularly Larry as an evil source of her misery.

At the same time, in the domestic affairs, the conflicts arise between the father and other members, especially the daughters. Even if the conflicts are based on simple issues, they rise abundantly and become serious. Ginny and Rose actively perform their duties of serving the farm and the families, when their husbands, Ty and Pete respectively, work in the field reverently. Acting crazily, Larry Cook with the support of thrown out daughter Caroline files a suit in court against the daughters and their

husbands on the charge of "mismanagement or abuse" of the farm because there is creation of hostility between Larry and other members and he wants to get the farm back. On the other hand, Ginny's memory of Larry's rape of her in the childhood after Rose's revelation of truth in the middle part of the novel instigates in her a sense of rebellion slowly and gradually. She gets awakened to take a real departure from the earlier domestic path of her life. In the case, the plaintiff, Larry, loses and the defendants win. Even in the condition, she has already won the case, Ginny not only goes away from the abusive father, she leaves her 'nice' and 'innocent' husband, Tyler as well thinking and realizing that the whole patriarchal set up and its logic that a good girl should obey and agree are to be dismantled. For that she relocates and gets employed at Perkins Restaurant as a waitress suggesting a feminist escape from and the subversion of the patriarchal structure of farm and domesticity. With the sense of rebirth of herself, she begins a new life of independence and self-control with hope and children.

Smiley doesn't jump into conclusion to show Ginny a subversive female figure suddenly. Rather she digs out some of the dark secrets of patriarchy that for a long span of time become unbearable to her. To exploit females and maintain the dominance over them, patriarchy holds different logic that tames the bleakness. In the Cook family, Larry Cook and his wife are provided with different roles. Ginny depicts, "He on the progress of the yearly work and the condition of the animals in the pastures, she on the look and size of the house and garden, the colors of the buildings"(5). The expression harmonizes with the patriarchal concepts of males and females as their roles to be performed outside and inside the domesticity respectively. After the mother's death, Ginny also performs same roles endowed by the male normativities. While narrating her earlier ways of life, Ginny says:

[. . .] I was cooking for three households--for my father, who insisted on living alone in our old farmhouse, for Rose and her husband Pete, in their house across the road from Daddy, and also for my husband, Tyler, and myself. [. . .] My morning at the stove started before five and didn't end until eight-thirty. (7)

A domestic sphere is particularly of women and Ginny becomes the direct victim of such male-dominated logic. Larry Cook, first, restricts his wife from going outside and involving in some business, he does so to his daughter after the wife's death. Such of the patriarch's way enables him to perpetuate his dominance and exploitation of the female members of his family.

Larry Cook abuses and exploits the responsible daughter in turn. Wherever Ginny performs her duties diligently and with responsibility, Larry either threatens, frightens, abuses, scolds or neglects her. Ginny takes her work as granted without any sort of doubt, resentment and protest, but Larry becomes impatient. Ginny describes his corrupt nature, "I cooked what I always did for him--pork chops baked with tomatoes [. . .], fried potatoes, a salad, and two or three different kinds of pickles. [. . .] Daddy ate at our house on Tuesdays, Rose's on Fridays. Even that made him impatient"(47). It's vain for the daughters to support him in every steps of his life. For Ginny, "He resisted efforts to change his habits--chickens on Tuesdays, or a slice of cake in stead of pie, or an absence of pickles meant dissatisfaction and even resentment" (48). Larry Cook reveals his exploitative nature crushing the daughter's feelings and obstructing their ways of life. In fact it's impossible to pay a total attention to other's ways and nature by neglecting own feelings and ways of life, and then getting abuses in turn. Larry Cook, a representative patriarch, displays his

oppressive self by maltreating own daughter, who always follows his rigid routine without any questions.

By playing with the words differently, Smiley digs out diverse bleak pictures from Larry Cook. As a dictator in the family, Mr. Cook is whimsical without taking a little consideration toward others' feelings and sentiments. His daughter describes his conceited nature:

We sat silently while Daddy drank his coffee then pushed back his chair and got up to go. I followed him to the door. I said, "Call me if you need anything. It'd be nice if you'd stay." I always said this, and he never actually answered but I was given to believe that he might stay next time. (49-50)

On the one hand, Larry perpetuates male dominance and exploitation by keeping silent when the loving and caring Ginny offers to accompany him in his each steps of life. With his inability of understanding his own daughter's feelings, he tortures her emotionally and psychologically. On the other hand, Ginny loses her progression and her identity unconsciously since her life becomes embedded within the life of the patriarch.

After the demise of their mother, Ginny and Rose bear the burden of domestic life in their childhood without any disagreements, for they have to obey and agree with the patriarchal family authority. To be good farm girl, they should serve the farm, their husbands and their father without even thinking on their own. The protagonist narrator speaks, "My father, though simply declared that Rose and I were old enough to care for our sister, that was that"(63). Even if they are not mature, the responsibility falls on their head whereas the father himself is not considerate enough

to care all of them. Except being irresponsible father, Larry also possesses inability to listen to the daughters, regardless of their care for him. His words echo harshly, "Quit telling me what to do," when Ginny suggests him to save the "nice" "oak wood" from the rain (81). Instead of taking suggestions, and looking back and moving forth, the patriarch scolds and scorns them who persistently and reverently support to upgrade his socio-economic status.

A Thousand Acres attempts to shatter patriarchal logic of denying female perspective. Female perspectives always get drowned in the pool created by patriarchal domination. This further suggests that the female wishes, ideas, opinions, expressions, perspectives are crushed with the patriarch's disease of superiority complex. Larry, like other patriarchs, discriminates between males and females as males are considered to be bold, active, rational, and females as timid, passive, emotional and without any perspectives. Ginny is directly affected by such logic. She expresses, "Of course, it was silly to talk about 'my point of view'. When my father asserted his point of view, mine vanished" (176). In fact the girls and the women are not supposed to have a point of view separate from that of the man who heads the household. Ginny unsuccessfully tries to convince her father to respect the daughters and to consider their point of view. But when he rejects her speech, condemns her ingratitude and calls her "my girl," her assertiveness collapses (175).

The condition in which the females raise voice for themselves, they are handled easily by various patriarchal tricks. In other words, the patriarchs possess the ability of absorbing the resistance into a sort of hegemony. In *A Thousand Acres*, by disagreeing and questioning her father, Ginny tries to repudiate to follow his path of life. In her own words, she says, "I don't think you can say that we're lazy. Anyway, I don't think you show us any respect, Daddy. I don't think you ever think about

anything from our point of view"(175). Larry Cook consents her in sweet words, "You know, my girl, I never talked to my father like this. It wasn't up to me to judge him, or criticize his ways. Let me tell you a story about those old days, and maybe you'll be reminded what you have to be grateful for"(175). With the use of convincing and sweet words in sweet tone, Larry Cook tries to foil the resisting Ginny. By winning her consent, he wants to prove himself superior to other female members. By hook or crook, he tries to impose his authority and permanent domination upon the daughters. Where he is already immoral, he conveys the moral message of obeying and being civilized, so as to perpetuate the black reign and authority upon the daughters in the domestic affairs. Smiley ironizes patriarchy by exemplifying Larry, who performs immoral and criminal activities against them, whom he instructs to be moral and nice.

A Thousand Acres heavily comes upon the imposition of patriarchal normativities and their spurious effects on the innocent females. Larry Cook imposes such values and norms which the daughters take for granted. While talking with Jess Clark about Caroline's marriage, Rose reveals, "According to Daddy, it's almost too late to breed her"(10). Larry's imposition of such values portrays negative female picture that discriminates and emotionally tortures females. After all, the patriarchs impose such values for they always possess their will to power. Ginny loathes, "I was uncomfortably aware that my father always sought impossibility and taught us, using the Erickson's as his examples, to do the same to discipline the farm and ourselves to a life and order transcending many things, but especially mere whim"(46). Larry's catechism reveals two aspects. On the one hand, he is a poor moral teacher for he possesses bleakness in his morality. On the other, he is the representative of the whole

patriarchal normativities in which females are taught to be disciplined for the male authority.

Patriarchy never respected female values; rather it devalues and denigrated them. The females fail to bear the excessiveness of patriarchy during the end of *A Thousand Acres*. With the constant resistance and foiling of patriarchal filthiness, Ginny gets victory finally by carving out a niche in herself with freedom. One of such filthinesses, patriarchy tames is its ferocious nature. Larry's posture, behavior, attitude and practice are so fearful that they bolster to suppress and impose his authority upon the daughters to get better economic status. Even though he has the biological relationship of a father with Ginny, Larry truants her and other daughters from the very beginning of their lives. They are not only the fears in themselves; they represent whole patriarchal norms and values deeply rooted in socialization as well. Ginny's silenced voice addresses the readers:

My earliest memories of him are of being afraid to look at him in the eye, to look at him at all. He was too big and his voice was too deep. If I'd to speak to him, I addressed his overalls, his shirt, his boots. If he lifted me near his face, I shrank away from him. If he kissed me, I endured it, offered a little hug in return. At the same time his fearsomeness was reassuring when I thought about things like robbers or monsters, [. . .]. (19)

Father's terrific nature affects Ginny throughout the life leaving her in a life full of pressures and tensions. Living under his domination, Ginny represses her potentiality and creativity, and thereby fails to establish herself as a creative genius in a society dominantly of males. Her remembrance of her early childhood suggests the idea that patriarchs possess the dictatorial nature that leaves females always in a life to live in

fears. The creation of fears upon daughters perpetuates male domination of locating females in the domestic realm forever.

A Thousand Acres, beyond such obnoxious and spurious patriarchal consequences, also exposes how females are compelled to endure physical, psychological and emotional tortures in the dominant male system. Ginny and her sisters are rampantly affected by authoritarian tortures. Except Ginny's husband, Tyler, most of the husbands deviate from the talks to their wives, who live a life by suppressing own emotions. Ginny reveals, "A lot of women I knew complained that their husbands hardly talked to them. There are always a lot of clubs in the farm towns, which the wives are ostensibly doing good works, but good works are always afloat in a river of talk, and that's the real point I thought"(25). The husbands' keeping distance between them and their wives connotes that they consider themselves superior to women. They think that the wives are not the suitable persons to talk with, as they are not supposed to possess ideas and perspectives in the conversation. Such male ideology of denigrating women as the second class human being creates a sort of emotional and psychological shock in women. By keeping things away and disabling women to get information, and not sharing happiness and sorrow with them, males expose their cruel nature. In such system, the patriarchs argue that women should only obey what men command regardless of the issues to talk.

Larry Cook, as Ginny describes, in many cases, neglects the daughters' talks with him. His irresponsible nature adds the extent of psychological and emotional pains and sorrows in his own daughters. Ginny says, "We had long passed the point of eloquent silences"(177). Larry's not responding and not sharing with the daughters works as a strategy to oppress the daughters through silence. This is the manifestation of patriarchal oblivion that penetrates into the psyche and the heart badly. Harold

Clark, another patriarch, opines in parallel lines with Larry Cook. His belief of keeping women away from information denigrates the whole female race. In his disagreement with Ginny, he hides the information, "If you'd have been sons, you'd understand that. Women don't understand that"(204). Harold's expression works enough to cause pain in the female heart. On the one hand, he defines women as athinking, irrational and dull; on the other, he denigrates women by showing them inferior to men.

Larry doesn't fall behind to abuse the daughters verbally, too, which leaves the unmentionable, inerasable and indelible scars on the daughters' emotions. As the plot develops, after Ginny has already remembered her shameful past with Daddy, the conflicts between them take height and get disclosed. Larry screams, "You barren whore! I know all about you, you slut. You have been creeping here and there all your life, making up to this one and that one. But you're not really a woman, are you? I don't know what you are, just a bitch, is all, just a dried-up whore bitch"(181). The extremely furious father reveals his extremely morally degraded nature for he abuses his own daughter with the offensive words like "barren", "whore" and "bitch". By using the barbaric and vulgar language, Larry discloses the barbaric, inhuman and mindless spots planted into his heart. Larry's abuse of his own married daughters, in this way, marks the crossing of the moral boundary created by civilization. There is no relationship between Ginny's inability of giving girth to children and her disagreements in the domestic life, yet Larry uses such filthy and garbage-ridden words in his fury. Larry again expresses, "I'll throw you whores off this place [. . .] I curse you! You never have children, Ginny, you haven't got a hope. And your children are going to laugh when you die"(183). Larry abuses them with the ominous sounding words of sheer curse. With the black spots of such vulgar words, the

patriarch exercises his authoritarian reign, on the one hand. On the other, such verbal curse not only shocks the girls, it also prepares them to take a strong reaction to subvert the whole Larry's framework of domesticity.

A Thousand Acres abundantly presents the physical violence and torture in the domestic realm. Destined to be confined within domesticity, Ginny and Rose are the butts of violence and torture. In the early part of narration, Ginny reports, "Then, one night, he broke her arm"(31). It's fearful to see Pete, Rose's husband acting crazily. His craziness comprised of wild acts, threats, insults, and sometimes the attacks as he did to Rose by breaking her arm. The load of all the household activities on the shoulder of Ginny again supports how the females are oppressed and exploited. Ginny clarifies, "But apart from cooking, cloths washing, and major housecleaning, my father needed little help with his domestic routine"(66). Nevertheless, there is no patience and positive response. Rather he neglects and silences her. Father's stupidity could be grasped from Rose's fury, too. She exposes, "But he did fuck us and he did beat us. He beat us more than he fucked us. He beat us routinely"(302). Rose's frustration with the father is the result of father's corrupt past.

Initially, Ginny, too, works as an agent of patriarchy as she pays too much attention to her father, who, instead doesn't respond at all. As he neglects her perspectives which could be beneficial for him, too, Ginny gets nervous. She feels, "He didn't glance at me or respond, even to dismiss me"(67). Larry Cook seems to be considering his daughters as the tools and objects to get his economic status burgeoned.

A Thousand Acres pitifully discloses that males take females as objects and commodities to fulfill and meet their ends. As the commodities and objects don't speak against the consumers, the females are also made not to express any criticism of

their husbands and other males in the male dominated system. But *A Thousand Acres* is more than any male extremities. When Ginny and Rose were teenagers and their mother was sick, Larry raped them. It was Rose who always remembered Larry's incest but Ginny forgot by repressing it. As Rose reveals, "He was having sex with you," Ginny disagrees with embarrassment (189). Ginny as a daughter couldn't believe that her father had a sex with her and she immediately responds, "He was not!"(189). But Rose tries to aware her by explaining everything about father's shameful past when Rose was thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen. Rose and Ginny talk thus:

"Because after he stopped going in to you, he started coming in to me, and those are the things he said to me, and that's what we did. We had sex in my bed."

"You were thirteen!"

"And fourteen, and fifteen and sixteen"

"I don't believe it!" (190)

Larry's rape of his daughters in childhood proves that he tamed the corn of black seeds into his heart and nature. Moreover, he stands as an embodiment of cruel and morally corrupt persons who blinds himself by crossing the very much common barriers of humanity and relationships.

As a head of the family and as a rule maker, Larry abused the daughters by showing and applying his power with a sort of consent. Describing how he hegemonized, Rose says, "I thought it was okay if he said it was, since he was the rule maker. He didn't rape me Ginny, he seduced me [. . .]. He said he loved me"(190).

Smiley's novel explains clearly how the family dominated and reigned by patriarchs is

full of domestic crimes and violence against women. On the one hand, Larry dies alive by seducing and having sexual pleasure from his own daughters. On the other, by seducing and keeping them under the illusion of love, he perpetuates his corrupt nature of will to power, which necessitates to be destroyed.

While dividing the farm between Ginny and Rose, as Caroline had already disagreed--Larry discloses his authoritarian psyche suggesting that patriarchy has the penchant for power. Larry keeps saying, "Yeah, I'll be sitting here watching other people work for me, while you're out running that tractor, trying to pay it off. I bet you can't even hear that radio thing with the engine noise" (39). With Larry's superior voice, not only the girls, but their husbands are also directly going to be affected. Hence Smiley proves her aim of showing black picture of patriarchy in all cases and to all races.

The daughters attempt to resist against such excessive father figure from time to time, but they become unable to really identify him as an evil being. Beyond this, their ideas of resistance get absorbed into hegemony by the father, Larry Cook, who becomes able to persuade his already furious daughter, Ginny. Larry says, "You know, my girl, I never talked to my father like this. It wasn't up to me to judge him and criticize his ways"(175). Ginny moves ahead by reconciling with him.

In many cases females themselves co-operate and support the wrong deeds of patriarchy. Ginny delayed and hesitated to break the walls of domesticity which led her to more tragic life under the grip of patriarchy. Ginny speaks:

No aspects of his plans was undermined, put off, questioned. How many thousands of times have I seen him in the fields, driving the tractor or the combine, steadily, with certainty from one end of the

field to another. How many thousands of times has this sight aroused in me a distant, amused affection for my father [. . .]. (136)

Ginny negates her self and assists her father's business getting nothing in return, but only the abuses, exploitation and denigration. During the time when she has to pour her bucket of anger and revolt against him, she sympathizes with her father's plight without even realizing his pretentious patriarchal self. Her thoughts illustrate her inability to identify him as an evil source of her misery and degraded condition. So in the early part of the narration she works as an agent of patriarchy which doesn't let her to free herself and to see him for what he stands.

Later on, Ginny realizes and identifies her own mother as a true agent to perpetuate patriarchal domination. In stead of liberating her own daughters from the paws of patriarchy, Mrs. Cook supported her husband's cruel authority. Ginny resents, "She kept the house clean and raised the same way the neighbour were raising their children, which meant that she promoted my father's authority and was not especially affectionate or curious about our feelings"(223). Ginny wants to create and apply different sort of child rearing system without being guided by patriarchal neighborhood and society, but her mother's ways were basically patriarchal. Rather than questioning and avoiding the unnecessary systems and bonds of patriarchy, the females like Ginny's mother follow the male norms without doubt and protest. For them, loving and understanding the feelings of children was less important than to walk on the path directed by patriarchy.

Because females lack to doubt, protest and question, patriarchy considers them non-existent in front of the superiority of males. For Ginny, her father "impresses us by blows with the weight of his 'I' and feathery non-existence of ourselves, our questions, our doubts, our differences of opinion. That was Daddy"(306). Larry

possesses the feelings and behaviors as if he is omni-scient, omni-potent and omni-present. In that respect, he attempts to place himself on the position of God--in front of whom the human beings have tiny existence--and females on the position to pray him by serving him in the domestic life forever.

A Thousand Acres demonstrates the ugly and corrupt nature of patriarchy that not only invites the tragedy in the lives of innocent characters like Ginny and Rose; it equally shatters the status of antagonist, Larry Cook, with the pitiful end of his life. In the background, Larry's irresponsibility and neglect of his daughters; one-sided perspective of looking at things; his exploitation of daughters verbally, morally, psychologically, sexually, emotionally and physically; his ferocious nature; his regard of females as objects and non-existent creatures; and others pile up and work a lot in the deterioration and downfall of family.

Ginny, the protagonist and first person narrator of the novel followed the footsteps of patriarchy until the middle part of the narration. Sometimes by obeying and reconciling with patriarchy, and sometimes by keeping silent, and being responsible and caring daughter, Ginny never questioned and argued with her father, and his rules and systems. Two things happened once. One the one hand, and more importantly, she comes to remember her father's raping of her and her sister after the sister reveals the truth in the middle part of the story. This is how, a sort of inciting rebellious force entered into her that identified the real reason of her plight. Hence, even though the readers get the big reason of rebellion and fighting against patriarchy to thwart it only in the middle part of the novel, Ginny possessed that from early. On the other hand, the hostility between the daughters and the father emerges with the crazy acts of the father who files a suit against the daughters and their husbands on the

charge of mismanagement of the farm along the lines of the preincorporation agreement between the two sides.

Ginny displays dynamic characteristics which results into feminist rebellion. Smiley's depiction of Larry Cook as a lustful father against his own daughters also creates a sense of rebellion in the mind and heart of the readers. Hence Smiley succeeds by touching and reaching into the heart of readers by presenting Ginny as the dynamic character in parallel to the feelings of the readers. From the beginning of the story, Ginny presents herself as a loving, caring, and responsible daughter by repressing the sense of rebellion against the excessiveness of father. With her experience with patriarchy, she demonstrates her uneasiness and hostility with the father and the husband knowingly or unknowingly. Unlike many husbands and wives of the time, Ginny and Ty have feelings for each other and smooth conversations whatsoever Ginny hides the matter about her miscarriages. She releases, "Ty thought we had had three miscarriages. [. . .]. Actually I had had five, [. . .], that all I had to do was pretend to put the diaphragm in, that pregnancy could become my private project"(26). For Ginny, with her decision of taking pregnancy as her private project, her horizon of thinking gets broadened. As she tries to keep her husband away from knowing about her miscarriages which he also shares to know, she seems to blind patriarchy without information, and attempts to weaken the position and status of patriarchy.

Ginny's later expressions indicate her quest for freedom from farm and her father. Before her memory of the brutal atrocities of father with her, Ginny gets wondered to hear a term "freedom" from Jess Clark, who talks with Rose. In Ginny's own words, "It was such a lovely word, that last word, 'freedom' a word that always startled and refreshed me when I heard it"(109). With such expression, Ginny would

like to live a life independently without being oppressed and exploited. Ginny enunciates the effect of her talks with Jess Clark in the next chapter when she finds a sort of change in her perspective toward men. Ginny proceeds, "Since my talks with Jess Clark the day I planted tomatoes, my sense of men I knew had undergone a subtle shift"(113). Rather than taking the things as granted, for Ginny, it's mandatory to question what men perform. Smiley presents Ginny as more developed in her thoughts about looking at things. With her female awakening, the daughter and the father go on to be more hostile to each other. Being irritated with the rigid routine of the father, Ginny evokes, "I sensed him looking down at me but I didn't look up, I just headed for the back door"(114). Ginny produces the mixed voice of tiredness and rebellion since the patriarch only thinks about himself neglecting the pains, sufferings and very much private aspects and situations of the females.

Ginny cares and suggests her father not to exercise in the old age which he regards an insult. He sounds as if women shouldn't produce words and ideas, rather they should be silent and respectful. Father's words irritate the daughter, who questions, "I don't think you can say that we are lazy. Anyway I don't think you show us any respect, Daddy I don't think you ever think about anything from our point of view"(175). Ginny's use of the word "think" in the above lines itself indicates that she has developed a sort of perspective, thinking ideas to question the things that are negatively manipulated about women. She disagrees with father's behavior and attitudes and puts the same issue ahead while talking to Rose, "Rose, he thinks, he has a right to do everything. He thinks it's basically his"(179). This suggests that the rights of father are not unlimited. He needs to maintain same sort of limit, responsibility and a sense of humanity, but goes beyond and is questioned by the daughters for his crazy activities.

Ginny, as she had either forgotten or repressed the memory of her father's raping of her and her sister, couldn't identify her own status, rather assisted and followed male normativities smoothly. But Rose's revelation of the barbaric and immoral extremities of the father, the miniature amount of earlier sense of rebellion gets strengthened. The remembrance and realization of the corruption committed by the father creates disdainful attitude toward him in Ginny, who starts questioning all the trunks and branches of patriarchy that for long degraded and devalued females leaving them in a pitiful situation. She looks for a way out from the bond of patriarchy to thwart its unnecessary clutches. Necessarily, the first target should be the principal antagonist, Larry Cook.

The task for the female protagonist demands great effort, courage and persistence in difficult situation. Finally she demonstrates her ability in overthrowing patriarchal suppression in order to create a more human world. For a long time, after her remembrance of the father's shameful past, Ginny hesitates to take the steps ahead, rather she ponders upon herself and the evil act performed by the father. Harold Clark lies on the path of her attack on patriarchy. She strengthens herself by creating anger against him with confidence as he dominates and discriminates between the sexes. Ginny frightens him, "You'd better shut up, Harold"(204). Her reaction against Harold, the patriarch, foreshadows her growing rebellion and attack against the great patriarch, Larry Cook.

Father's craziness, irresponsibility's and activities guided by mono-mania has already irritated Ginny and the memory of the father's blunder of raping her, adds a complete hostility between the father and the daughter. While returning from church celebration on Sunday after the Fourth of July with Rose and her daughters, Ginny

produces the words completely of different sorts with the quest for freedom existing continuity of life. She exhorts:

I kept saying, where are we going? Where are we going? Certain there was somewhere to go. But we went straight home, as if there were no escape, as if the play we'd begun could not end. Since then I've often thought we could have taken our own advices, driven to Twin Cities and found jobs as waitresses, measured out our days together in a garden apartment, the girls in one bedroom, Rose and I in the other, anonymous, ducking forever a dusting that we never asked for, that was our father's gift to us. (220)

Ginny evocates that women should take their own advices and suggestions. Rather than waiting for the husbands' jobs outside, it's better to involve oneself in the jobs like that of waitresses for Ginny. Emancipation for women becomes possible with the taking of the strong steps of being economically, socially and mentally independent which only marks the subversion of patriarchal ideology, and thereby leads to their quest for individuality.

The tension between the father and the daughters reaches to an apex after the father accuses the daughters and their husbands for 'mismanagement or abuse' of the farm by standing on the preincorporation agreement of getting the farm back. Acting crazily, the father takes help of Caroline, his youngest daughter, who was earlier thrown out of the farm and, is now advocating for him. The Smiths and the Lewis bolster themselves by utilizing the farm diligently to prove themselves victorious over Larry Cook, who acts crazily in the court and loses the case. The judge gives the final verdict this way:

Obviously, the mental condition of the chief plaintiff, Mr. Cook, must also come under consideration. Were the property to revert to him, it's not clear, given the deep divisions in the family, who would farm it. But this is only corollary consideration. The law is clear I find in favor of the defendants, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Lewis, and Mr. Smith. (325)

Even though the family is split with the farm case in court and it foreshadows the more tragedy the family going to bear. The fair and innocents daughters at the end of the story get victory. In this way, the daughters' victory by defending the case and Larry's defeat, short of manipulating his arguments to get the land back to farm, suggest the female victory over the males. Ginny's oppressed situation and repressed emotions attempt to emancipate from all kinds of clutches and branches of patriarchy. Hostility between Ginny and her husband, Tyler, has already been created. Ginny reveals, "We had spoken very little since our argument"(266). Ginny's being aloof from and sharing less with Ty also incites the plot toward complete hostility between males and females.

Ginny develops differently and finds changes in her self. Her dynamism could be grasped from her own words, "Rather than feeling 'not myself' I felt intensely, newly, more myself than ever before"(306). The difference Ginny finds between her early hood and her matured adulthood gets qualified with her escape from the last clutch of patriarchy in the form of her husband and flees away from him leaving him in the domestic affairs. Ginny identifies him, too, as one of the patriarchs, who cause the downfall of the females. She bade farewell to Ty by yelling, "Now it's all yours!" (330). The words resonate that things have turned topsy-turvy in accordance to the roles given to males and females by patriarchy. Patriarchal logic of defining males and females in terms of binary oppositions, like females derogatorily with domesticity

and males with privileged position like getting job and working outside has been overturned by Ginny in her last speech with Tyler. She takes the bold step of leaving home alone at night that again subverts the patriarchal logic by proving herself bold, rational, active and independent female figure, who can't be less than males in the performance of the life.

Emancipation from the life of farm and domesticity provides Ginny enough relief. Her waitressing job at Perkins Restaurant means her total escape from the imperial structure of farm and her father, but without forgetting them. Beyond so, her move to St Paul as she leaves Ty also marks the beginning of her new life of independence and self-control with hope. She is satisfied with her life after she breaks the chains of patriarchy. Ginny proudly says:

The thing I loved most about the restaurant was the small talk. People bantered and smiled, thanked you, made more polite requests, chatted about early visits or the whether or where they were headed. It went on and on, day and night, pleasant and meant to create pleasantness. Eileen, the manageress, encouraged us to follow company guidelines about creating small talk, when it was absent [. . .]. (332)

All kinds of tensions and conflicts lie in distance from Ginny's life after her rebellion against patriarchy. The unpleasantness she was living with daddy and Ty have been replaced by her life with the manageress, Eileen, at Perkins with satisfaction. Now, even the death news of her father with a heart attack doesn't stir her seriously for he committed all kinds of crimes with her.

Ginny displays her strength by taking each responsibility of Linda and Pammy, the daughters of Rose after she dies of her breast cancer. Carving out a niche

in her own and being responsible guardian of the two girls with the income she gets from her job of witnessing, Ginny challenges the traditional male beliefs. It's clear that she bears great difficulty, yet she realizes her present life equally comfortable, full of relief and self-dependence.

Jane Smiley has not only presented Ginny as a subversive figure, her sisters Rose and Caroline also support Smiley's goal of questioning, arguing, and turning aside from patriarchal framework. Whereas Ginny becomes able to weaken male-dominated logic and practice, Rose gets failed because of her health and difficult situation. But Caroline rather supports the patriarch finally, and she completely becomes unable to resist and challenge. Caroline stands as a true agent of patriarchy. But during the first significant point of plot development, she resists her father's decision of dividing the farm among her sisters. When the father decides to divide the farm, Caroline resists, "This is ridiculous. He's drunk"(21). Unlike being traditional farm girl or farmwife, Caroline seems to be modern and rebellious. Ginny also describes modern and revolutionary ideas, "Sometimes without thinking she would marvel at us, saying hard! Why didn't either of you ever leave? I can't believe you never had any plans"(64). Caroline sounds as if she tries to liberate her sisters from the paws of patriarchy. In another instance, she also reveals that she is 'not going to be a farmwife", rather she would be "A farmer"(81). For Caroline, males can't only be the owner of the farm; females are equally capable, efficient and bold enough to be farmers. All these examples prove that Caroline also possesses modern and anti-patriarchal ways disagreeing with the ways of farm and domesticity. But her ideas became short-lived. During the hostility between the father and the daughters, she goes to support and argue for the mad father who has exploited her sisters in all ways.

Rose's steps against the oppressive father are salutary. Like her sister Ginny, she creates hostility with the patriarchal normativities. She joins hand in hand with Ginny as the plight of both sisters is similar--both of them were exploited morally, psychologically, physically, verbally and so on. Both of them have been beaten and raped by their own father, Larry Cook. Even when Rose takes responsibility of the father, he uses abusive words. Rose defends herself, "You can't just roll over to us. You may be our father, but that doesn't give you the right to say anything to Ginny or to me" (82). Rose revolts against the father's evil treatment done to them. Whenever and whatever the father acts crazily in the later part of the plot, Rose laughs, which suggests her ridiculing of the patriarchal vileness and corruption. In the court, when Larry told that somebody took Caroline's pulse, Ginny says, "Rose let out a bark of laughter"(320). There are numerous other instances that support Rose's rebellion against patriarchy. It's particularly because of her bad health; she dies earlier than Ginny and can't totally weaken male-centered norms. Ginny stands as a towering figure to give message to the down-trodden females under patriarchy. Hence Smiley presents Ginny as a true female heroine advocating for the liberation of all females.

Ginny's plot of subversion and disruption of patriarchy also gets strengthened by the presence and absence of the characters in the beginning and ending of the novel. In the beginning, many of the female characters are shown either dead or weak. By the end of the novel, it's the males, who are either dead or weak leaving only the females alive, stronger and active. Ginny explains that Larry's sisters Martha and Louise died of flu early and her grandmother Edith also died at the age of 43. Her own mother died early leaving Ginny and her sisters in weaker situation. Similarly Harold's wife and Jess's fiancée also died untimely. Such many instances explain that women are either made insignificant or are treated badly in patriarchy. Ginny's

description of "Edith was made silent" also proves so (132). But as the females get victory over males, there's insignificance of males. Harold gets blinded in an accident caused by himself, Pete meets alcoholic accident and dies; Larry gets mad, loses the case, and dies with heart attack; Ty has a pitiable life after Ginny abandons him. Hence, Smiley becomes successful in attaining the goal of female subversion by overthrowing the male-centered social structure and leaving the female heroine, Ginny, victorious with many other females. In that sense, Ginny not only stands as a protagonist and narrator, but as a mouthpiece of Smiley to debunk the discriminatory patriarchal set up as well.

Chapter - IV

Conclusion

After analyzing the novel in detail, the researcher comes to the conclusion that Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*, as a novel written with the feminist purpose, succeeds by giving voice to the traditionally oppressed female reality and subverts the oppressive patriarchy.

The researcher has found that patriarchy possesses oppressive nature that causes the tragic and bitter consequences in family and society. Patriarchal vices represented by Larry Cook led the family its disintegration. For example, Ginny, the principal character and the narrator, has an antagonism with the father, Larry Cook, a patriarchal authority possessing such bad characteristics of dominating, exploiting, and abusing Ginny and her sister in the domesticity. Larry Cook became irresponsible and neglected the daughters and their sentiments, whereas the daughters always took care of the whole responsibility of father's daily business. He behaved and practised one-sided male perspective by dominating females' points of views, ideas and sentiments. He exploited and abused the daughters in various ways--verbal, emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, moral, and so on. His display of ferocious posture and behavior always taunted and frightened the daughters for his persistence of dominance over them. Beyond such vices, Larry Cook also regarded them as the objects and the commodities to bolster his socio-economic status of a good farmer. He considered them as insignificant creatures.

Because of such patriarchal activities the whole family got divided into two: oppressor male and oppressed female. Ultimately Ginny was compelled to take strong reaction to overthrow and weaken the vile and corrupt male practices and

normativities. Instead of supporting and taking responsibility of corrupt father in his business and then bearing unnecessary tensions and pressures given by him, she turned aside and followed the life of freedom. Along with that, the knowledge of father's rape of her, and his accusation of mismanagement of the farm, incited in her a strong sense of rebellion against him. In this way, she revolted against the discriminatory laws of the father, sometimes with the help of her sister and sometimes alone. The remembrance and realization of the corruption committed by the father, created disdainful feeling toward him in Ginny, who started questioning and truncating all the trunks and branches of oppressive patriarchy that had for long exploited females. To break the walls and bonds of patriarchy and domesticity, Ginny with Rose, neglected the father in his business; defeated him in court case filed by father himself against the daughters and their husbands; and abandoned him and his farm finally. With her emancipation from the life of the farm under the father, Ginny abandoned her husband and the domestic life with him -- both of which Ginny considered as the strong branches of patriarchy to put females under the restrictions forever.

The study also concludes that the oppressive patriarchy not only causes the downfall of females, and the females reaction against its excessive oppression upon them, it also digs a ditch for its own cremation. Larry Cook continuously stands as a harmful force to Ginny and others, even when they are supporting him. In return, he is neglected and dies with madness. With Larry, all males' lives come to an end except Tyler, Ginny's husband, who is again abandoned by Ginny, thinking that no patriarchal figure lets the women to progress in their lives. All such arguments have supported Smiley's feminist purpose of sidelining the male authority and bringing the

already sidelined, marginalized, and misplaced women back to the center, as Ginny, along with other females, lives a satisfied life with independence and self-decision.

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