

I. Excluded Chinese History and *Red Sorghum*: An Introduction

Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* (1986) uncovers the Chinese historiography in the mould of the reflection of the marginal voices, presentation of the contemporary culture and the depiction of contemporary discursive culture and socio-political practices which proves the relevance of the reading of the novel from the perspective of Foucauldian notion of discourse. Chinese main stream history has excluded the contribution made by the women and bandits in anti Japanese war of 1930s. What is remarkable in Chinese history is that sidelined communities who are said to be unruly like bandits and women are found to have been fought against Japanese encroachment in China in 1930s. This very remarkable militation against Japanese invasion was spontaneous reaction of those communities. Chinese mainstream history has sidelined anti-Japanese spirit of bandits and women. Mo Yan remaps such exclusion of Chinese history from the perspectives of excluded communities in the novel *Red Sorghum* and presents alternative history to the existing official history of China. Mo Yan, a 58 year old and highly praised, well-respected and honored Chinese writer of his generation from Shangdong province has written four novels, dozens of novellas and many other short stories. Yan launched his career as a nationally recognized novelist as he released *Red Sorghum* in 1986. He has won every national literary prize along with Noble prize for literature in 2013.

Red Sorghum is a frank and disturbing history of a period Mo Yan has recorded in such detail by including excluded history of China which has established him as a talismanic author of modern China for those who want to study the modern history of China since 1930s from the perspective of sidelined people. On the strength of the book *Red Sorghum* Mo Yan won Nobel Prize for literature. As he revisits the Chinese history

to get the contribution of marginalized community recognized and identified and establishes new trend of writing in Chinese literature from marginal perspective, his works are found to have been set on new perspectives upon history through the perspective of margin. In doing so he does not glamorize the Chinese resistance of the Japanese only from the power location.

Red Sorghum chronicles the Sino-Japanese war of 1930's foregrounds the contribution of bandits and women in Chinese resistance against the Japanese occupation in China through the characters Yu Zhan'ao and Dai Fenglian. Mo Yan's attempt to project the Chinese historiography from marginal perspective opens the door for new historicist thrust of how history not only belongs to the powerful and authorized people but also to the supposed margin. *Red Sorghum* is the revisiting of Chinese history from the perspective of marginalized and neglected community as Mo Yan projects the contribution of women and bandits for the sake of their nation as they fought mercilessly against the Japanese occupation in China in 1930s. The narrator's grandmother Dai Fenglian, for instance becomes a legend in the moment of her demise. She plays significant role to unite different loggerheads to chase away the Japanese invaders from China. We are constantly told that she is a great heroine of the resistance when she met her martyrdom. On the other hand undermined bandits group being united under the leadership of guerrilla commander Yu Zhan'ao fights against Japanese invaders in Northern Province of China. Such significant events contributed by marginalized and neglected community for the sake of their motherland are narrated from the perspectives of marginal people in dexterously woven fragmented narrative in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* .

This research hovers around the questions that despite a contribution of bandits and women for the protection of their motherland from foreign invaders, and despite their martyrdom in the course of struggle against Japanese invaders, why is their contribution not found to have been documented in the mainstream history of China. The questions arise as why these significant contributions were not canonized in the mainstream history of China. Why the contribution of women was made feeble? How was such knowledge of resistance of those neglected communities sidelined?

As history was written from power location, evaluation of contribution was made by elite; so, the contributions of the marginalized and the neglected communities like bandits and women were never recognized by mainstream history of China. Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* chronicles the contribution of the marginalized and they resisted the Japanese invasion insisting that history not only belonged to the so-called powerful people but also to the marginalized and neglected communities. Standing on the vantage point of new historicism, Mo Yan foregrounds the contribution of bandits and women in the protection of their motherland from Japanese invaders.

Mo Yan's writing is characterized by new historicist thrust. *Red Sorghum* is the history of the narrator's own family from the 1920s to the 1970s. It concentrates on the brutality of wars the Chinese fought in the thirties, both with the Japanese and with each other at the time when the Japanese attacked China in the early 1930s. Mo Yan graphically and vividly presents this war against the Japanese imperial power in which female character Dai Fenglian played a significant role to get different loggerheads united together to fight against Japanese invaders. This is how Mo Yan rewrites Chinese history of the downtrodden communities.

Red Sorghum has received several critical appraisals since its publication.

Different critics have analyzed the novel from different perspectives which proves the multifocal nature of the novel.

In the way that Chinese landscape painting reshapes the viewer's perspective by offering not one but many focal points; this singularly forceful contemporary Chinese novel reinvents the notion of chronology. The narrator, a young man from the provinces, relates the intertwined histories of the Sino-Japanese war of the 1930s and of his parents and grandparents. A few key episodes serve as recurrent motifs: murders, counter-point battle field massacres. Women are raped by their saviors and by enemy soldiers; the community leader punishes gamblers and thieves with floggings, while the Japanese flog a saboteur as a preamble to skinning him alive. Mo Yan's works are predominantly social commentary, and he is strongly influenced by the social realism of Lu Xun and the magical realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. In terms of traditional Chinese literature, he is deeply inspired by the folklore-based classical epic novel. Mo Yan who himself reads foreign authors in translation, strongly advocates for the reading of World Literature. At a speech to open the 2009 Frankfurt book fair, he discussed Goethe's idea of "World Literature", stating that "literature can overcome the barriers that separate countries and nations."

Mo Yan's works are epic historical novel characterized by hallucinatory realism and containing elements of black humor. A major theme in Mo Yan's works is the constancy of human greed and corruption, despite the influence of ideology, using dazzling, complex, and often graphically violent images. He sets many of his stories near his hometown, *North East Gaomi Township* in Shandong province. Mo Yan says

he realized that he could make his family, people he was familiar with and the villagers. He satirizes the genre of socialist realism by placing workers and bureaucrats into absurd situations. Regarding the narrative structure of the novel, Natasha Walter claims in *On the Move: for a new generation*:

This *Sorghum* is the one whole hearted linking device in a fragmented narrative so close packed with chronological displacements and curtailed actions that Xhan Yi Mou made his Oscar-nominated film form the first chapters alone. Presented the history of narrator's own family from the 1920s to the 1970s it concentrates on the brutal wars the Chinese fought in the thirties both with the Japanese and with each other. (1)

The narrative structure of the novel is non-chronological according to Natasha Walter. The whole story gets told in fragmented narrative about the Sino-Japanese war of the 1930s of the narrators' parents and grandparents. Using chronological displacement Xhan Yi Mou made Oscar-nominated film using one whole-hearted linking device. The central theme of the novel moves around the brutality of war Chinese fought in the thirties both with the Japanese and Chinese with each other.

Regarding the Chinese trend of glamorizing the Chinese's resistances of the Japanese invasion Orville Schell in *Paperback* review remarks:

The graphic and honest portrayal of the blood and gore is remarkable. Mo Yan is a member of the people's liberation army (cultural affairs department) and yet he does not glamorize the Chinese resistance of the Japanese invasion as other Chinese writers have done. A shocking and

vivid scene presents the death by starvation of an old war hero in full view of the political elite who feast behind iron gates.(3)

Kindle edition remarks that Mo Yan doesn't glamorize the Chinese resistance of the Japanese occupation; rather he discloses the cruelty of Sino-Japanese war as central theme of the novel.

Cruelty is a central theme of this novel. Fathers are cruel to daughters, husbands to wives; wives to husbands; bandit to bandit; Japanese soldiers to Chinese soldiers; peasants to mule; dogs to corpse and hero to dog. The never ending ever-revolving carousel of cruelty is at times wearing. But this is not a sugar-coated tale. It needs to shock us. Many images will remain etched on my mind as result of reading this novel, and that proves it is indeed a fine work of literature.

Thus, it is proved that every culture has its symbols equivalent to *Red Sorghum*: a Palestine olive tree, a Canadian maple tree, cotton bush in the American Deep South. But none of them is quite like the Chinese Sorghum in Mo Yan's novel, which is a food, a drink, a shelter as well as an aesthetic end in itself. Vast stretches of *Red Sorghum* shine like a sea of blood. Tall and dense, it reeks of glory, cold and graceful. It promises enchantment.

Likewise, Saukrabmkumar Shai in *New York Magazine* has given cultural interpretation of the novel as:

It is the beginning of the 20th century and China is in turmoil. Without any preamble, the readers are ruthlessly thrown amidst the events. China is under Japanese occupation and life is anything but easy. The narrator a man is his

youth from the provincial backwaters tells the insuperable histories of the Sino-Japanese war and that of his family that wades through the Chinese civil war and culminates with the Cultural Revolution. (1)

Warfare activities form the central theme of the novel. Moving around such warfare activities and culture, the story is told using non-chronological narration. Such narration is centered on the twentieth century in turmoil. History of the Sino-Japanese war is told being deeply inspired by the folklore-based classical epic novel blending the elements of Chinese trend of the social realism of Lu Xun and magical realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The plot of the novel is developed centering entirely on the war and warfare activities. In regard to the writing trend of Mo Yan critic Michael Larry claims in *Richmond Times Dispatch*:

In 1976, he joined the people's Liberation Army and began to study literature and to write. His first short story was published in literary journal in 1981, according to his biography on the Noble web site. In his writing, Mo Yan draws on his youthful experiences and on settings in the province of his birth, the biography said, referring to his 1987 novel published in English as *Red Sorghum*. (4)

Mo Yan is a member of People's Liberation Army and started his career as a writer including his experiences of his age and generally about the socio-cultural situation of the province. According to his biography Mo Yan achieved the height of a celebrity writer in Chinese literature as he published *Red Sorghum* in 1986 which solely focuses on the socio cultural situation of Shandong province of northern China.

D.E. Perushek in *Red Business Information* writes about the plot woven in fragmented narrative to tell about the story of three generations as dexterously as anything else pivoting around the turbulence of Sino-Japanese war that China fought against Japan in 1930. What we can assume is that D.E. Perushek concentrates his criticism about the historical background of the novel *Red Sorghum* in which he credits blending of fable and history regarding the birth of such powerful, alluring masterpiece by Mo Yan:

Spanning three generations, this novel of family and myth is told through a series of fragmented narrative that depict events of staggering horror set against a landscape of gemlike beauty, as the Chinese battle both Japanese invaders and each other in the turbulent 1930s. a legend in China, where it won major literary awards and Noble Prize for literature in 2012 *Red Sorghum* is a book in which fable and history collide to produce fiction that is entirely new and unforgettable. (7)

So what we can say is that the epic story spans three generations of Chinese family to stay alive in the harsh climate of China's northwestern province of Shandong during the 1930s and 40s. The amoral desperation amidst famine, bandit anarchy and almost hopeless resistance of the invading Japanese army is depicted with ruthless clarity. However, the strongest trait of this novel is the way the author plays with the sense of smell and color. *Red Sorghum* is essentially a chromatic novel that uses the colour red in several metaphors. The *Red Sorghum* that grows in the field of the narrator's village symbolizes blood and passion as opposed to the "back water river" that denotes stagnation and rot. That the Japanese troops decide to confront the defenders on the

bridge over the same rivers tells a lot about China of that theme. Then you have a stinking lake where the water is monstrously green paper back reviews claim “a novel of great intensity, takes the reader for a trip through China in the 1930s. This is the time of the Japanese occupation and book continues through the first years of the communist regime” (1). It is a novel but it will ring a bell with those who have studied the history of that period very graphic prose and horrifying narration of the cruelty of that war. We don't get the strategic vision of the war here but the local realities that affected episodes of deep humanity. Not an easy read not recommended for anyone of fragile character but one of the best books to get the soul of China. Thus it is proved that the novel has been analyzed from multiple perspectives but the issue of New Historicism has been yet untouched which proves the innovation of the research.

In order to excavate unsaid history of China, Foucauldian notion of discourse, genealogy and archaeology are exploited as theoretical tools. Foucault's notion of genealogy says that the belief system, existing knowledge are the production of power relations and manipulate people accordingly and so as the case of history as history according to Foucault is written from the perspectives of people holding authority and voice of the common people of the contemporary society is buried in the womb of time. Consequently othered voices are got silenced. Those silenced voices are excavated from the perspectives of silenced people what Foucault calls genealogical approach of writing history foregrounding the silenced voices. Mo Yan in the novel *Red Sorghum* foregrounds the contribution made by bandits and women in anti-Japanese resistance of 1930s. Moreover, a genealogy often attempts to look beyond the ideologies in question.

Michael Foucault expanded the concept of genealogy in the late twentieth century. Genealogy, and counter history of the position of the subject which traces the development of people and societies through history. His genealogy of the subjects accounts for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of Foucault as he asserts in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", Genealogy is not the search for origins, and is not the construction of a linear development. Instead it seeks to show the plural and questions contradictory past that reveals traces of the influences that power has had on truth.

As one of the most important theories of Foucault, genealogy deconstructs truths arguing that truth is more often than not discovered by chance backed up by the operation of power. So, all truths are questionable. The practice of genealogy according to Foucault closely links to what he calls in *the archaeology of knowledge*:

In short it seems from the empirical observe ability for us of an ensemble to its historical acceptability, to the very period of time in which it is actually observable, the analysis goes by way of the knowledge-power nexus, supporting it, recouping it at the point where it is accepted, moving toward what makes it acceptable, of course, not in general but only where it is accepted. This is what can be characterized as recouping it in its positivity. Here, then is a type of procedure, which, unconcern with legitimizing and consequently excluding the fundamental point of view of law, runs through the cycle of positivity by proceeding from the fact of acceptance to the system of acceptability

analyzed through the knowledge-power interplay. Let us say that this is approximately archaeological level of analysis. (5)

As ‘archaeology’ is the term Foucault used as procedure to write history, archaeology is about examining the discursive traces and orders left by the past in order to rewrite the history. This Foucauldian notion of genealogy, archeology, power and discourse are used as theoretical tools to analyze the events of Chinese history foregrounded in Mo Yan’s *Red Sorghum*. Mo Yan in the novel foregrounds the Chinese history since 1930s to 70s in the process of rewriting the Chinese history from the perspective of neglected communities like bandits and women and their contribution against Japanese invasion over china. Beside Marxian insight of lumpen proletariat is also exploited in this research in order to examine the characteristics of supposed bandits.

To sum up, the present research studies the novel *Red Sorghum*, a story of formidable bandits whose life is fully dedicated towards the chasing away Japanese invaders from their motherland through guerrilla warfare. The first introductory part presents the writer’s presentation of Chinese marginal history via marginal standpoint. The term and the theoretical framework, analyzes the text with significant statements. As the evidence to prove the entire spirit of the research comments how even the neglected people have contributed in safeguarding their homeland. The third chapter is the conclusion of this research work where the theme of the research is precisely presented. In this way, many perspectives with different theories can be used to analyze this novel from the perspective of new historicist foregrounding the Foucauldian concept of genealogical history in order to display the pivotal role of marginal people to create the history of China.

II. Rewriting of Chinese History in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*

Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* uncovers the Chinese history in the mould of the reflection of the marginal voices. As nationalistic and traditional history of China is witnessed to sideline the contribution made by neglected community like bandits and women to protect the China from the Japanese invasion, Japanese imperialism in the course of expansion of its empire attacked Chinese Province named North East Gaomi Township in the thirties and early forties of the twentieth century in which supposed bandits and women have heroically resisted against the Japanese invasion. But what this researcher found that Chinese mainstream history has marginalized those contributions made by neglected community like bandits and women.

Burying such remarkable contribution of mentioned communities mainstream Chinese history is found to have projected history driven by power. Jonathan Fenby in his book *History of Modern China* (2008) a supposed representative book of modern Chinese history doesn't deal with the contribution of those bandits and women in resistance against Japanese occupation in China. Mainly those bandits and women had considerable role to fight against Japanese invasion in China. Fenby in his book draws the references of Kuomintang Party of China and Chinese Communist Party's activities of the 1930s as we witness in these lines from *History of Modern China*:

The year of 1927 had been terrible one for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Only six years old; it was brought to its knees by Chiang Kai Shek's white terror purge and the end of the united front, which led to the ousting of the Party chief, Chen Duxiu, who turned to Trotskyism. Under his replacement, another intellectual, Qu Qiubai, the Party

experienced fresh catastrophes with the failed military revolt in Nanchang, the bloody debacle of the attempted coup in Canton, and the collapse of the Autumn Rising in Hunan, Hubei and Jiangxi.(217)

Power driven history of modern China either deals with the activities of Kuomintang Party or Communist Party of China. It was the decade of 1930s that Japanese imperialism was expanding her empire in the east especially in China to capture the perennial natural resources of China. To resist such invasion upon China sidelined communities like bandits and women had great role but such role is not found to have been dealt by the historians like Fenby but history standing on the vantage point of power location deals only with the power driven history of China.

Another renowned historian Frank Dikotter also does not mention any events happened in Sino-Japanese war in which bandits and women had fought bravely against Japanese occupation in China. Like other historians, he also foregrounds great famine caused by Great Forward Leap and other incidents caused by Kuomintang Party and the final years of the Qing dynasty in China. He writes in *The Guardian* , "...the topics that have most caught our eye seem to be the final years of the Qing, China's last imperial dynasty; the nationalist government of Chiang Kaishek in the 1920s and 1930s; and the history of China's development as part of a wider international society"(5). Dikotter seems to credit modern China's rise to the Chiang Kaishek, imperial dynasty and communist party of China but his sights are not caught by remarkable contribution of bandits and women in anti-Japanese resistance in China in the decade of 1930s. In this way mainstream world history too neglects that part of China which had remarkable

contribution in shaping the modern China's fate. Mainstream history of China has sidelined women and bandits vis-à-vis Sino-Japan War.

Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum* attempts to rewrite the Chinese history projecting the excluded communities' contribution. Mo's position as a new historicist novelist blends the Chinese history with literature and excavates buried facts hidden in the womb of the Chinese history from the perspectives of neglected communities like bandits and women. First person omniscient narrator of the novel narrates the history of his family who is noticed to born in 1939 and forwards the history from 1930 to 1967. The whole story moves around three generation of bandit Yu Zhan'ao and his wife Dai Fenglian, Doughan and the first person narrator of the novel. The narrator's father, aged 15 in the year 1939, is seen hanging on to the coat-tails of Commander Yu Zhan'ao as the poorly armed guerilla troops of forty people advance through the sorghum fields to ambush a Japanese convey. The family background of Commander Yu Zhan'ao is seen quite miserable. He begins his career by stabbing to death a monk who is found to have been sleeping with his widowed mother. The Commander Yu is in fact narrator's father's father, since Father's mother Dai Fenglian, married off to a wealthy leper, promptly escaped with Yu, who thereafter murdered legal leper husband of Dai. Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum* projects bandit Yu and his wife Dai heroes of the anti-Japanese war which is analyzed in this research from the new historicist idea of rewriting history from the perspective of sidelined communities by mainstream history.

The American idea of New Historicism was introduced into Chinese academia in 80s when a selection of New Historicist articles was translated into Chinese and published under the title *New Historicism and Literary Criticism* (1983). Relevant to the

present study is a statement made by the book's editor, Zhang Jingyuan, which represents the Chinese Understanding of the relationship between history and literature in New Historicism, "New Historicism hold that history and literature belong to the same semiotic system, for the elements of fabrication and the modes of narration in history are very similar to the methods employed in literature."(61)

Chinese critics ascribe the contribution of new historical fiction to Mo Yan's novel *Red Sorghum*, the issues he has excavated in the novel with his misty and mystic experiments, is regarded as the most avant-garde writer of the genre. In order to retell the history of China from the perspectives of marginalized community he does the eventalisation of New Historicist approach in the Chinese context making unfilial son a narrator of the novel in *Red Sorghum* to cover more than half a century from the early with a special focus on the war time. Alec Mc Houll and Wendy Grace in *A Foucault Primer* (1993) holds a perspective regarding the formation of statement and eventalisation of such statement in archaeological method of writing history in which statements made from the power location are rewritten :

...archaeological method shows that social histories of thought, knowledge and power are both properties of unique and specific as well as having general properties. Foucault called this method of tracing the systematic (archival) properties of unique and local affairs 'eventalisation'. It is no accident, then, that he refers to the archive as 'the very root of the statement-event.'(41)

The Archaeology of Knowledge is a rewarding read for those who are interested in historiography and method. Foucault describes traditional ways of organizing

‘discourse’ such as the work, the author, the great man, the unifying universal subject, cause and effect, and influence, and then systematically takes these categories apart and proposes alternative methods of organization. He also advocates a principle of discontinuity, by which he means that difference at every level in history should always be drawn attention to, not explained away. Mo in his historiographic fiction *Red Sorghum* loads the archaeological trend of exploring history which was sidelined by traditional Chinese history.

Foucault’s perspective in writing history holds that properties, configuration of the modalities of statements and interiors of history are unique and specific not because history is sum total culmination generated by grandiloquent and lofty personality but simply because of the inherited general properties of history which has significant role in the course of development of civilization. Foucault argues that buried truths should be surfaced by excavating from the womb of the history via eventalisation of local affairs which he likes to call archaeological method of writing history. In the course of eventalising the story in *The Red Sorghum* begins and unfolds in both the Western yearly scheme and traditional Chinese calendar, “the ninth day of the eighth lunar month, “six days later, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival”, “the twenty-third day of the twelfth month in the year, kitchen god is sent to heaven to make his report.” These temporal juxtapositions situate history in the global and the local contexts, the modern and the traditional civilizations, the linear and the cyclical concept of time.

Mo in his novel *Red Sorghum* does the eventalisation of properties of the Chinese history and attempts to rewrites from the perspectives of neglected community

like bandits and women in order to project their contribution in anti- Japanese war took place in 1930s and early of the forties.

The five-chapter novel narrated by a non-filial son of the bandit Yu Zhan'ao opens *Red Sorghum* with the Jiao- Ping highway against the Japanese convey under Yu's leadership after Uncle Arhat, the foreman of the distillery, is brutally skinned alive by the foreigner invaders. As narrator of the novel is sibling of the hero Yu retrospect upon the past and digs out the history of his family.

My father, a bandit's offspring who had passed his fifteenth birthday, was joining the forces of Commander Yu Zhan'ao, a man destined to become a legendary hero, to ambush a Japanese convey on the Jiao-Ping Highway. Grandma, a padded jacket over her shoulders, saw them to the edge of the village. "Stop here," Commander Yu ordered her. She stopped. (4)

Standing on the vantage point of Foucauldian genealogical history Mo rewrites the Chinese history projecting the contribution of the neglected communities' bandits and women in anti- Japanese war took place in 1930s and early 40s. In the extract above Yu a guerilla leader recruits his son of 15 in his troops in order to chase away the Japanese invaders from China. What Mo has stated here is that even supposed sidelined and weak people too had significant role to save their mother land from the invasion of the Japanese invasion. This very historicity of Mo's text is pregnant with New Historicist thrust of excavating unsaid statement as Louis Montrose asserts in his essay *New Historicism*:

...Literary works are no longer regarded either as a fixed set of texts that are set apart from all other form of expression and that contain their own determinate meanings or as a stable set of reflections of historical facts that lie beyond them. Furthermore, he suggested that the contours of art and literature are socially and historically configured: distinctions “between artistic production and other kinds of social production...are not intrinsic to the texts; rather they are made up and constantly redrawn by artists, audience, and reader are themselves “made up and constantly redrawn” by the discursive processes in which they are engaged. (398)

In the course of keeping records of the deeds taken place in history individuals exercising power gets historians to write history eclipsing voice of the voiceless people. Statements are created and recreated in relation to power. As such lofty personality is created by the social institution in the process of making statements from power location but this very process is never goes in fixity and create determinate meaning. According to Montrose truths are formatted under spatial-temporal relation what he likes to coin is social and historical configuration of art and literature. Statements are regularly redrawn.

In this connection Mo in his novel *Red Sorghum* reviews the history of China correcting the wrongly and partially presented configuration of Chinese history. In doing so Mo bringing the special reference of Gaomi County and its inhabitants presents new perspectives from marginal standpoint. North Gaomi County is such province through which Japanese invaders constructs highway to access the Manchuria province in order to exploit the natural resources of that province. Inhabitants of Gaomi

Township face nightmarish as their source of life red sorghum field is destructed by the Japanese in order to construct highway through. Mules which people of Gaomi Township use as a means of transportation are confiscated by the Japanese. Let alone such robbery, Japanese impose atrocity upon the Chinese torturing, rubbing and murdering them. In such pathetic situation of that Gaomi Township bandits turn to be national hero as they fiercely militate against well equipped Japanese invaders using knowledge and artifact of guerilla warfare in the leadership of bandit Yu Zhana'ao. The graphic and honest portrayal of the blood and gore is remarkable. Mo is a member of the People's Liberation Army and yet he does not glamorize the Chinese resistance of the Japanese invasion as other Chinese writers have done. Following extract from the novel *Red Sorghum* exemplifies Mo's portrayal of Gaomi Township, "Northeast Gaomi Township is easily the most beautiful and most repulsive, most unusual and most common, most sacred and most corrupt, most heroic and most bastardly, hardest-drinking and hardest-loving place in the world"(4).

If we go through the history of China we find that supposed mainstream Chinese writers have been found exaggerating and polishing history in regard to the deeds of individuals resided in power location keeping other aspects of China at bay. As Foucault says power constructs truth, such power others knowledge of periphery. But Mo reexamines the Chinese history and brings neglected other in surface and gets acquainted with the heroic deeds of those communities who were always kept at bay. Narrator of the novel who is the offspring of Yu gives details of his family and how in the leadership of his bandit great grand dad battled anti-Japanese war which Mo chronicles in his novel:

I RETURNED TO NORTHEAST GAOMI TOWNSHIP to compile a family chronicle, focusing on the famous battle on the banks of the Black Water River that involved my father and ended with the death of a Jap general. An old woman of ninety - two sang to me, to the accompaniment of bamboo clappers: “Northeast Gaomi Township, so many men, at Black Water River the battle began, commander Yu raised his hand, cannon fire to heaven, the Jap attack broken...” (13)

According to this extract what we claim that Mo has generated statements in his novel digging out the contributions made by bandits. The anti- Japanese war which was fought in the Black Water River used to be told from the power location such as of Communist Party of China and Kuomintang Party but Mo gets story told from the perspective of sidelined community like bandits. Foucault’s idea of rethinking and discontinuity in terms of discourse, power and knowledge traces the similarities with the ideas projected in Mo’s novel *Red Sorghum* as it counters the official history of China. This very idea of thinking from the perspectives of other is stated in the lines of *A Foucault Primer* by Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace:

Foucault’s analysis of scientific change as discontinuous shows that it is not seamless and rational; that it does not progress from stage to stage, getting closer and closer to the truth; that it is not guided by any underlying principle which remains essential and fixed while all around it changes. This ‘thesis’ of discontinuity is indeed a key element in his analysis and critique of ‘official’ or ‘dominant’ knowledges. It also

enters into his investigations of those forms of knowledge which are much less official. (4)

As Foucault argues that history is not guided by any underlying principle and is not fixed too then it does not go in culmination rather analyzing the official history should investigate upon it from the perspective of unsaid vantage point. This very point of analysis of history from the perspectives of less official is brought forth by Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum*. During the time of chronic starvation rampant in China in the decade of 30s as Japanese entered into China they led destruction as they started to construct highway damaging the sorghum field peasants being accompanied by bandits fought bravely against Japanese occupation. As Mo narrates the situation of China via Omnipresent I narrator:

In county records I discovered that in 1938, the twenty-seventh year of the republic, four hundred thousand man days were spent by local workers from Gaomi, Pingdu, and Jiao counties in the service of the Japanese army to build the Jiao- Ping highway. The agricultural loss was incalculable, and the villagers bordering the highway were stripped clean of draft animals. (14)

Mo details the events took place in China in the late 30s of the twentieth century from the perspectives of peasants as they were helpless in front of organized atrocity of the Japanese were accompanied by the bandits to resist against Japanese invasion. The bandits consciously or unconsciously being guided by become united to fight against the Japanese which is the historicity of Mo Yan's novel *Red Sorghum* as newhistoricist coins as, "the historicity of the text and textuality of histories."(410)

Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* counters those grandiloquent history as official history of China is found to have been written either from the perspectives of elite of Kuomintang Party or Communist Party of China in anti-Japanese war. Getting the history told from the perspectives of what Foucault calls delinquent Mo establishes the contribution of those supposed marginal communities. In one of the debates Yu Zhan'ao, a bandit counters the argument of local representative of Kuomintang Nationalist Party of China, Detachment Leader Leng says him that "... better than being a bandit."(27) In reply Yu says: "Who's a bandit? Who isn't a bandit? Anyone who fights the Japanese is a national hero. Last year I knocked off three Japanese sentries and inherited three automatic rifles. You're no bandit, but how many Japs have you killed? You haven't taken a hair off a single jap's ass."(27)

Mo in these lines seems to be projecting via Yu that even a neglected cluster of society play significant role during the time of national crisis no matter which particular class do they belong? Yu Zhan'ao a bandit leader confidently and proudly asserts with supposed civilized person of the society that to be bandit or not to be bandit does not matters but it is an act that matters in the course of fighting against Japanese and lists down his acts against anti-Japanese war with Leng. Yu is a hero of the novel who speaks the voice of the subjugated clusters of the then Chinese history wherein using his knowledge of guerilla warfare fights against Japanese invasion in China. The very soil of Shandong province where Chinese fought against Japanese is the result of their devotion to their soil wherein they produce life-giving crop *Red Sorghum*. Peasants, women and even the bandits don't bear such invasion and organize guerilla troops to fight against Japanese invaders. The very deed of Yu against Japanese invaders

exemplifies that individuals though they have knowledge and contribution is not recorded in official history as individuals holding state authority and power get historian to write history projecting their contribution only in cuckoo fashion tendency. This is what Foucault's projection of excavating the deeds of delinquent via his archaeological method of rewriting history as Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace states in *A Foucault Primer*:

One element of this critical phase, therefore, involves an attention to subjugated or 'marginal' knowledges, especially those which have been disqualified, taken less than seriously or deemed inadequate by official histories. These might be called 'naïve' knowledges, because they are located lowdown on most official hierarchies of ideas. Certainly they are ranked 'beneath' science. They are the discourses of the madman, the patient, the delinquent, the pervert, and other persons who, in their respective times, held knowledges about themselves which diverged from the established categories. (16)

What Foucault seems to notice in the mentioned extract that people like bandit Yu supposed criminals of society have special knowledge, that may have wider, even international, currency but such knowledge of such unruly people is always treated oppose to well-tempered subjects and their knowledge used in the time of need was not recognized by nationalistic discourse. Foucault according to the logics mentioned in the given extract insists on to reveal insufficiently elaborated naïve knowledge located down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition that have been disqualified by official history.

Classical Marxism names the delinquents like beggars, prostitutes, gangsters, racketeers, swindlers, petty criminals, tramps, chronic unemployed or unemployables, persons who have been cast out by industry and all sorts of declassed, degraded or degenerated elements the lumpen proletariat and does not consider them a friendly force of change. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* (1852), Marx gives this description of the lumpen proletariat as miscreant as well as rag:

Alongside decayed roués with dubious means of subsistence and of dubious origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, lazzaroni pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, maquereaux [pimps], brothel keepers, porters, literati, organ grinders, rag pickers, knife grinders, tinkers, beggars — in short, the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass, thrown hither and thither, which the French call la bohème.(3)

Classical Marxism does not consider the lumpens helpful to any kind of progressive movement and appeals them to be corrected to be friendly power of revolution but Mo in his novel *Red Sorghum* stands on the opposite to this vantage point and forwards the events in which bandits i.e. lumpens have bravely militated against the Japanese troops in order to protect their motherland from the invasion of the then Japanese imperialism in 1930s and early forties in China. Following lines of *Red Sorghum* projects contribution of the bandits and falsifies the discourse made by supposed well-tempered subjects regarding their indifference towards the crisis that sometime nation has to face.

However, this was to change in the seventeenth century with what Foucault terms the ‘Great Confinement’, a movement across Europe which saw the establishment of institutions which locked up people who were deemed to be ‘unreasonable’. This not only included mad people, but the unemployed, single mothers, defrocked priests, failed suicides, heretics, prostitutes, debauchees – in short anyone who was deemed to be socially unproductive or disruptive. Hero of the novel Yu Zhana’ao, according to the Chinese history is a combined image of the local despot Cao Kemming and the bandit Guo Guizi. Cao Mengjiu is the historic magistrate who, according to the county records, executed eighty- odd bandits and only one of them, Guo Guizi from Northeast Gaomi Township managed to escape. Yu Zhao’ao a major character in *The Red Sorghum* represents Gou Guizi. Who managing escapement organizes guerilla and annihilated thirty eight Japanese troops including the Japanese Lieutenant general Nakaoka Mikata in one of the battles. In this historical connection Mo in the novel *Red Sorghum* foregrounds:

...and the old Jap’s skull splintered, releasing a pool of blood on the surface of the water. The second soldier scrambled frantically to the far side of the stanchion. Grandad pushed Father to the ground as another hail of Jap bullets swept over them and thudded crazily into the field. “Good boy,” Grandad said, “You are my son, all right!” What Father and Granddad didn’t know was that old Jap they’d just killed was none other than the famous general Nakaoka Jiko. (77)

These extracted lines prove the heroic deed of the bandits Yu and his guerilla team in which the fierce battle took place in the Black Water River with the Japanese troops.

This heroic act in the leadership bandit is not less praiseworthy in comparison with the battle that cadres of Communist Party of China fought but such praise worthy deed of bandits was sidelined by the Nationalistic history of China. But Mo subverts and undermines the nationalistic history and standing on the fulcrum of subjugated subject projects their contributions. This is a typical example of subversion of the assumption of the classical Marxism.

In *Red Sorghum*, Mo Yan portrays the brutal realities of war, which had not been portrayed before; he spares readers none of the brutalities of war, which the other writers have sanitized from their works in order to show the revolutionary ideals of a just war. The key characters of *Red Sorghum* do not consider themselves to be part of any organized fighting force, nor do they consider themselves to be fighting on the side of righteousness. In fact even their very survival from day to day is in question. For these fighters there is no PLA, no Communist Party, no chairman Mao. They fight to survive; they fight for their land, their native soil. To be a hero is to fight Japanese. In this novel even a local bandit becomes a hero, local home-grown ruffians like commander Yu become the hero of *Red Sorghum* as following lines of the novel supports the heroic deed of bandit Yu:

He watched a Japanese soldier emerge from under the still- unburned canopy of the second truck, open the door, and drag out a skinny old Jap in white gloves and black leather riding boots, a sword on his hip.

Hugging the side of the truck, they slipped off the bridge by shinnying down a stanchion. Father raised his browning, but his hand shook like a leaf, and the old Jap's ass kept hopping up and down in his sights. He

clenched his teeth, closed his eyes, and fired. The browning roared: the bullet went straight into the water, turning a white eel belly up. The jap officer dived into the water. “Dad,” Father yelled, “an officer!”(79).

These lines speak detail about the war which Chinese people fought against the Japanese in *The Black Water River* in the leadership of Yu, a bandit becomes the hero of war. As everything is confiscated by Japanese and they force Chinese peasants to work to construct Jiao-Ping highway as unpaid labor. Though the troops of Yu fight costly battle in Black Water River yet they overcome the Japanese, succeeds to sabotage Japanese troops including officer. This war has historical significance in a sense that the subjects that fought battle were, “sedimentary strata” of the Chinese society which was kept under the surface by power location. But Mo in his novel *Red Sorghum* has “given way to discoveries” to make those othered subjects and their contribution appear in the surface. This very othered subjects were the target of Japanese invasion in order to confiscate their property, lives and cruelly tortured to death to carry out the construction the of Jiao-Ping highway reacted bravely against such inhuman deed and in such situation the power and authority holders of the then China were in clash themselves as China herself was experiencing chronic civil war. Kuomintang party and Chinese Communist Party guided by party interest were noticed to have been indifferent towards the existing problems that the Chinese people were facing. Mo in *Red Sorghum* projects the anti- Japanese hero is neither of Communist Party of China nor of the Kuomintang Party but a bandit heading a band of peasant guerillas. As critic Lu Tonglin has pointed out that Mo Yan’s choice, “choice of outlaws and adulterers as anti- Japanese heroes mocks the Communist party’s self-portrait of the national in anti-Japanese war.” The

armed force of bandits and peasants in the novel is not enlightened or organized by a proletarian party, but is brought together by national consciousness and nativism.

Contrary to the party state doctrine of revolutionary historical fiction in the Maoist period, Mo Yan's new historical fiction first differentiates patriotism from partisanship and then deconstructs patriotism in panpsychism.

Red Sorghum is the projection of marginal knowledge in which the knowledge of marginal community women and supposed bad-tempered i.e. proved to be ends and means to resist against Japanese invasion in China. Foucauldian archaeological method involves an attention to subjugated or marginal knowledges, especially those which have been disqualified, taken less than seriously or deemed inadequate by official histories. These might be called 'naïve' knowledges as they are "located low down on most official hierarchies of ideas" as it has been stated in *Ideology and consciousness*. Definitely they are ranked below science. They are the discourse of the delinquents, the perverts, the bandits, and other persons who are diverged from the established categories what generally people refers to these people as unruly as opposed to supposed well-tempered subjects. The knowledges what we call discourses in Foucauldian discipline of these delinquents seems to have historical significant and international currency. It is therefore Foucault's archaeological method insists on to unbury the hidden, repressed, and subjugated knowledges by established discourses. In *Ideology and consciousness* supporting the revival of subjugated knowleges Foucault writes:

By subjugated knowledges I mean two things: on the one hand, I am referring to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in

a functionalist coherence or formal systematisation... Subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised... and which criticism—which obviously draws on scholarship— has been able to reveal. On the other hand, I believe that by subjugated knowledges one should understand something else ...a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity... It is through the reappearance of this knowledge, of these local popular knowledges, these disqualified knowledges, that criticism performs its work. (81)

Foucault's method insists on the inquiry into the history in order to reveal the subjugated knowledge which once is disqualified by power location. Supposed naïve knowledge are made to reappearance which are always laid down beneath the surface by the discourse of scientificity. Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* being an agent of those supposed bad-tempered subjects make to appearance in the surface with their knowledge. In one of the contexts Yu Zhan'ao, bandits involves in the debate regarding the system that China should adopt after the Japanese are chased away from China. In order to justify the political consciousness of delinquents following lines from the novel are extracted:

That has nothing to do with me. All I know that no one would dare take a bite out of my dick. What would you say if the Communist were in

charge? Granddad snorted contemptuously out of one nostril. How about the Nationalists? He snorted out of the other nostril (97).

Mo Yan seems to value Communists over Nationalists with Father's admiration for Commander Jiang and Granddad's instruction to Father: "If I die, come get these guns and use them as a bartering chip to join up with the Jiao -Gao Regiment. They're at least better than Detachment Leader Leng's troops"(45). But then the Party's role during the war is disinterred and it's larger – than- life image in the Grand National history is undermined through several episodes. Both Granddad and Father are disappointed by the Communist Party of China. So, when Five Troubles, a member of the Iron Society, tells Yu that he is neither a Communist nor a Nationalist and he hates them both, Yu approves, "I Like your spirit" (53). And when Five Troubles asks Yu who should rule over China after the Japanese are driven out, Yu replies in such a way that neither Communist nor Nationalists should rule China as they are guided by party interest only, they don't have any concern of people according to Yu. So what we can claim that even these unruly subjects have political consciousness and worries regarding their native land.

With the use of vulgar slang in this dirty dialogue, the author sets both of the political parties at defiance. By delineating the complex struggle on the Shangdong scene, Mo Yan exposes the fact that the primary concern of both the communists and the Nationalists is not the people, but the party. Yu is a bandit but despite being a bandit he seems to be serious regarding the future of the country and does not seem to support any parties but insists to establish monarchy. Without polishing Chinese history Mo as a historian speculates in his survey of the struggle in Shandong during the war, fighting

between the two Chinese sides may have been more intense than fighting with the Japanese.

Mo does not leave his any traces of partisanship in any parties like Kuomintang Party and Communist Party of China as he has explored unsaid truths of the modern China in his novel *Red Sorghum* rather subjects who was excluded from modern Chinese history is projected in his novel. Yu is the representative of bandits in *Red Sorghum* who leads anti-Japanese guerilla troops and engages in significant historically significant debate who should rule China after Japanese are defeated? As such is the case but what we have witnessed is that such concern, awareness, and voices of the community who is not in state authority gets sidelined from power location. Mo in the course of rewriting the Chinese history in order to bring unsaid statements, he seems to forward himself as an agent of those neglected community like bandits and women whose contributions are never weighed less than the contributions made by supposed individuals of power location. This very act of rewriting the history from the otherwise perspectives is an act of reviewing of statements which Foucault claims are made in relation to power. He states in his methodological book, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, “wish to question the value of such model” (121).

Foucault in this quote urges to question the readymade statements which formulate discourse in relation to power as he defines discourse in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, “...the term discourse can be defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation” (121). As Foucault focuses the studies of discourse in relation to power location, very modality of Foucault is dexterously used by Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum* with special reference of discourse made in the Chinese history.

Mo revisits the Chinese history not from the hitherto benighted domain that makes such statement that lofty personality only makes history rather he loads his *Red Sorghum* counter ideas to the official Chinese history and foregrounds the othered voices questioning the common trend, perspectives and understanding in regard to truth what Foucault calls genealogy. In philosophy, genealogy is a historical technique in which one questions the commonly understood emergence of various philosophical and social beliefs by attempting to account for the scope, breadth or totality of ideology within the time period in question, as opposed to focusing on a singular or dominant ideology. Moreover, a genealogy often attempts to look beyond the ideologies in question, for the conditions of their possibility. Genealogy is not the construction of a linear development as philosopher relating to history of ideas and Marxism used to think and claim that history is the linear process goes in continuation and culmination with. Instead it seeks to show the plural and sometimes contradictory past that reveals traces of the influence that power has had on truth as Foucault has said in *What is Critique?*:

In short, it seems that from the empirical observability for us of an ensemble to its historical acceptability, to the very period of time in which it is actually observable, the analysis goes by way of the knowledge-power nexus, supporting it, recouping it at the point where it is accepted, moving toward what makes it acceptable, of course, not in general, but only where it is accepted. This is what can be characterized as recouping it in its positivity. Here, then, is a type of procedure, which, unconcerned with legitimizing and consequently excluding the

fundamental point of view of the law, runs through the cycle of positivity by proceeding from the fact of acceptance to the system of acceptability analyzed through the knowledge-power interplay. Let us say that this is, approximately, the archaeological level [of analysis] (61).

As one of the important theories of Michel Foucault, genealogy deconstructs truth, arguing that truth is, more often than not, discovered by chance, and backed up by the operation of Power and knowledge or the consideration of interest. Therefore, all truths are questionable. Pointing out the unreliability of truth, the theory flatly refuses the uniformity and regularity of history, emphasizing the irregularity and inconstancy of truth and collapsing the notion that history progresses in a linear order. As such is the position of genealogical notion towards history gets direct and close connection to what Foucault calls archeological method. As genealogical history standing on the vantage point of archaeological method deconstructs, undermines and subverts the discourse of history so Mo Yan does in his novel *Red Sorghum*. Traditional notion of gender and sexuality is that females are submissive, passive, docile and meek but Mo counters such discourse made by patriarchy foregrounding the female character Dai Fenglian in *Red Sorghum*. Chinese are noticed to have been loggerhead as they conflict each other even in the time of the Japanese invasion in China but the very female character Dai gets those loggerhead united to fight against Japanese until they defeat them.

The two faces, of Uncle Arhat and Grandma, appeared and reappeared in the wine vat. Father dunked the jug into the vat, filled it with blood-darkened wine, and carried it inside. Candles burned brightly on the table, around which Commander Yu and Detachment Leader Leng were glaring at each other and breathing heavily.

Grandma stood between them, her left hand resting on Leng's revolver, her right hand on commander Yu's pistol. Father heard Grandma say, "Even if you can't agree, you mustn't abandon justice and honor. This isn't the time or place to fight. Take your furry out on the Japanese.(35)

The role Dai plays in anti-Japanese war as a woman is not expected in patriarchal society they have to be confined within domestic periphery as discourse of patriarchy notions that individuals are constituted as a subject across a number of power relations which are exercised over him or her. Lois Tyson in her book *Critical Theory Today* writes about gender role in traditional patriarchal society:

By patriarchal woman I mean, of course, a woman who has internalized the norms and values of patriarchy, which can be defined, in short, as any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles. Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and deceive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. (85)

According to the discourse made by patriarchy females are by inborn inferior as it is coined biological essentialism but this logocentric notion what feminist counters as phallogocentric attitude is subverted by Mo as it is witnessed the role played by a female character Dai in the above mentioned text of *Red Sorghum*. Patriarchy does not permit women to perform any role as it is traditionally performed by male and claims biological differences between the sexes that are considered part of our unchanging essence as male and female. Mo Yan has projected such female character in order to let the manifestation of suppressed voice in the Chinese history who performs supposed

challenging work in the course of anti-Japanese war. Dai Fengliang, supposed meek subject has played historically significant role in anti-Japanese war who gets martyrdom in the course of bringing fist cakes made up of sorghum to anti-Japanese guerilla troops led by her bandit husband Yu Zhan'ao. Yu a bandits being guided by his responsibility to his native land and in order to do away with the Japanese invasion in china organizes guerilla troops which sometime has to clash with the troops of Detachment Leader Leng who represents the then ruling party of China Kuomintang Party in Shandong Chinese province. In such situation Dai a female character strongly urges to be united to them so that Chinese would succeed to escape away the Japanese from China. This very role played by Dai projects the contribution of women in modern Chinese history which Mo Yan has articulated in his novel.

For Mo Yan history as an unfinished project is always subject to subjective modification as his narrator tends to modify the female character of native culture is guided by the consciousness of independence of the self of the Dai Fenglian. In this connection Alec McHoul and Wendy Grace drawing the reference of Foucault's idea of sexuality and ethics of pleasure write in *A Foucault Primer*:

As a tentative gesture, and in accordance with Foucault's ethics of pleasure, one could say that eroticism is a series of acts which must be conducted in terms of reciprocity of bodily pleasures. Importantly, this reciprocity is not 'given' but must be created. The notion of sexual reciprocity is a way of opposing both rape (that total lack of reciprocity) and the 'convenient' reference of this reciprocity to law or marriage arrangements. In a quite radical sense, then, Foucault's excursions into

antiquity are very much part of his 'ontology of the present', and bear on the conditions under which we operate, and might yet operate, as sexual beings (125).

Mo Yan in his novel seems to question the traditional practice of marriage forwarding the female character where in marriage is considered to be holy custom in order to practice supposed healthy sexual life Dai does not find "reciprocity" in her conjugal life rather she hates marriage arranged by her parents with leper. In the sentence, "I believe my grandma could have done anything she desired, for she was a hero of the resistance, a trailblazer for the sexual liberation of the self, a model of women's independence."

(14) The appellation "grandma" representing an ancestry is modified by the modern ideas of "liberation of the self" and "women's independence." The appellation "grandma" representing an ancestry is modified by the modern ideas of "liberation of the self" and "women's independence." It is the rebellious modern subjectivity that the story appears to be anti-feudal when Grandma resists arranged marriage with a leper boy. She does not only question the traditional notion of arranged marriage rather she gives u-turn to the traditional notion of sex, sexuality and ethics of pleasure. Mo Yan using First person narrator.

And it is in Mo Yan's own subjective way that modern Chinese history is written as a story of bandits. Both bandits and women as it is represented in *Red Sorghum* had historical role to fight against the Japanese invasion. Rebellious character of women is portrayed through female character Dai whose heroic deed against the Japanese imperialism as well as traditional patriarchal society is graphically and vividly presented in the following lines of the novel:

She heard innuendos from her girlfriends that the Shan boy was afflicted with leprosy, her dreams began to evaporate. Yet, When she heard her anxieties with her parents, Great –Granddad hemmed and hawed, while Great –Grandma scolded the girlfriends, accusing them of sour grapes.(40)

According to the narrator Great- Grandma Dai was not easy woman who could not be easily convinced even in the strict traditional feudal patriarchal society. As we know that marriage is considered is taken as the ,”will of heaven” and decision of which is taken by parents in patriarchal society but what we notice in the given extract is that Dai rejects to be married with the boy chosen by her parents. Mo Yan presents such history of China which was always silenced by power. Dai a female character of the novel exemplifies very idea of projection of sidelined subjects standing against to the recognition of patriarchal thought.

Surprisingly it is the very Chinese feudal tradition to make girl’s feet, “tiny bound” in order to attract rich boy to marry. The very process of making girl’s feet tiny bound used to torture girls in feudal china. Following lines uttered by narrator from the novel evidences the desire of women for liberation: “...knew the importance of the bound feet to a girl, and had begun binding her daughter’s feet when she was six years old, tightening the binding her daughter’s feet when she was six years old, tightening the bindings every day” (45).

A yard in length, the cloth bindings were wound around all but the big toes until the bones cracked and the toes turned under. The pain was excruciating. My mother also had bound feet, and just seeing them saddened me so much that I felt compelled to

shout: “Down with feudalism! Long live liberated feet! “The results of Grandma’s suffering were two three – inch golden lotuses, and by the age of sixteen she had grown into a well- developed beauty (40).

This is the typical practice of feudalism where girls are prepared to lure boys so that their marriage would be with good husband. What Mo wants to show that none of the parties existing in the then china were interesting to address the existing problems that majority of women were facing rather parties were deeply interested in promoting their ideologies. Mentioned extract asserts that female are treated as objects so that they can be prepared to enticing like good just to attract boys. According to the omniscient first person narrator the pain that girls used to put up with in the process of making their feet tiny bound binding it used to agonize a lot. Even in the time of such domination upon female, as per the notice given by the narrator, girls had deep longing for liberation from such torturing act. Mo here does not glamorize any Chinese hero of proletariat revolution rather he brings such character who fought against patriarchal society and make considerable contribution in anti-Japanese war about which Chinese mainstream history seems to be unnoticed. The major female character Dai in the novel *Red Sorghum* directly revolt against patriarchal domination and centers her own choice, marries with bandit Yu Zhan’ao, inspires, encourages and she herself accompanied to him in anti-Japanese war. Discourse of gender states that women are incapable but opposite to this discourse Dai Fenglian seems to have special capacity to fight and revolt against patriarchy domination and dies her death as a role model of women liberation and heroine of anti- Japanese war. This is the typical stand of Mo Yan as he excavates the Chinese history from the perspective of neglected people.

Mo Yan projecting himself as an agent of those sidelined community gets first person omniscient narrator to tell the details that took place in China during 30s to mid 60s of twentieth century wherein China was in great turmoil. 1930 was the decade of chaos and disorder in Chinese history as Japan attacked China and Chinese were themselves fighting each other. Communist Party of China was just getting its formation whose literature focused on continuity of history and used to present larger-than-life heroes glorified for fighting the just revolutionary cause but Chinese people in the Gaomi district in Shandong had deep concern with their day to day existence. So Mo with the rapturous images imagery of crushed and broken sorghum, sorghum corpses, sorghum everywhere, crying everywhere presents such female character Grandmother Dai as the true heroine of *Red Sorghum*. Amidst the casualty of war Dai emerges as the most interesting and colorful character in the novel and the protagonist who links the entire story together. Her heroism stems from a strength of character and integrity that defies the usual heroic characteristics.

These sorts of character which defied traditional notion of heroism and notion of gender is generally found to have been dominated by totality of history. Such model leads to exteriority of the statements. Thus analysis of statements proceeds through as Foucault states in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, "...discovering what special place it occupies, what ramifications of the system of formation make it possible to map its localization, how is it isolated in the general dispersion of statements"(136). It is a process that social institutions holding power construct statements and individuals practicing power and authority let statements to exist beneath manifestation level of statements and in the spans of time produced and reproduced in relation to power.

Foucault's method here embraces a principle of rarity. The rarity of statements is the explicit object of the analysis of discursive formations rather than a single set of statements yielding an unending number of interpretations. In order to manifest the excluded aspects of Chinese history Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* chronicles specific conditions in which bandits and women had fought for the sake of their motherland as the very symbol of *Red Sorghum* describes the conditions of peasants, women when they were under turmoil. In this regard the struggle of peasants for their soil and against Japanese encroachment seems noticeable as we can notice it in the following line of the novel.

Uncle Arhat had died the year before on the Jia- Ping highway. His corpse, after being hacked to pieces, had been scattered around the area. As the skin was being stripped from his body, his flesh jump and quivered, as if he were a huge a huge skinned frog. Images of that corpse sent shivers up Father's spine (9).

Mentioned extract utters about the atrocity faced by Chinese people during the Sino-Japanese war of 1930s. Character Arhat is a family member of Dai Fenglian and Yu zhan'ao. Arhat is a foreman of their distillery factory and he manages the sorghum to make wine. In doing so Uncle Arhat uses mule to transport goods but those mules are confiscated by the Japanese troops to carry stone to make bridge in black Water river. What is remarkable here is that uncle Arhat stands against the Japanese troops as he does not let Japanese to take his mules. This is the very case due to which Japanese skin him alive in from of the Chinese peasants and his relatives intending that no one would interfere and revolt against Japanese in China. Such remarkable rebellion against

Japanese invasion in China by peasants, women and bandits is canopied by official history of China and went to be rare as those events were kept in sedimentary strata of history from power location in China. This rarity and exteriority of statements happened due to the condition of being dominated by official history is analyzed which Mo has projected in his novel.

Mo Yan projecting the setting of Gaomi district in Shandong imparts the message who fought against Japanese imperialism was the result of their devotion towards their land. Despite being a bandit Yu Zhan'ao fought for the soil while Dai a major female character who was always considered lowly creature in the discursive practice of history, gender and sex proves her neglected strength in order to be a trailblazer of national liberation movement as well as female liberation movement. The soil that is fore grounded from Shandong province of China is the soil to which the people are attached, and where life giving crops of Red Sorghum are planted each year. The people depend on the sorghum for their livelihood, and it is synonymous with life itself in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum*. Mo Yan's articulation of such deed of the supposed lowly and lumpen subjects is the projection of exterior statements which always went in isolation and dispersion from the official history of China. Following lines from the utterance of narrator evidences heroic acts of female character Dai Fenglian:

The Dai Fenglian in her clapper- song was my grandma. I listened with barely concealed excitement, for her tale proved that the strategy of stopping the Jap convoy with rakes had sprung from the mind of my own kin, a member of the weaker sex. No wonder my grandma is feted as a trailblazer of the anti-Japanese resistance and a national hero. (13)

Discourse, collection of statements are made in relation to power has considered female a “weaker sex” but very weaker sex Dai Fenglian has played significant as a role model of national liberation movement as well as leader of women liberation movement.

Discursive practices involve systems that allow statements to emerge as things and to be used or ignored as things. Very discursive practice of China sidelined such considerable deed of neglected community by power location but Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* as a voice of the voiceless subjects manifests in his novel as counter voice to the discursive practice of China. Such system of statements made collectively in the course of discursive practice what Foucault calls is ‘archive’. The archive is the law of what can be said and the law of what is said is transformed, used, and preserved. Thus, the archive is defined as the system of the formulation and transformation of statements. Archives are made and transformed as per the interest of power location and archaeological method proceeds through the description of the statements as historical materiality.

Mo Yan as his interest to manifest those practice of network of power which sidelined otherwise history are projected in his works. In this process Mo’s innovative way of looking history which is projected in his novel including the voiceless people states the multiplicity of the truths which Mo Yan tells from the perspectives of those sidelined community like ‘weaker sex’ i.e. women and ‘bad tempered’ i.e. bandits. As such is the reality Hans Bertens argues in his book *Literary Theory: The Basics*:

Most people will be aware that in the past false claims to knowledge have served as instruments of power, of social suppression. Take for instance the supposed inferiority of women and people, which endless

generations of males have accepted as factuality true, as part of their knowledge of the world. Looking back, we see that we are dealing with binary oppositions that power turned into factual knowledge. Knowledge is enabled by the rules of a certain discourse, which decide what qualifies as knowledge and what does not. (155)

According to Foucault, knowledge is produced by power creating binary opposition. People for generations take it for granted. Very knowledge practiced for generation to generation are the product of power but this very tendency of practicing power and maintenance of discourse of history and gender as such women are weaker sex, they don't have any courage to cope up with the challenges, they are not rational creature, they are guided by emotions have been questioned and challenged by foregrounding the strength, rationality, courage shown by women via Female character of the novel *Red Sorghum* by Mo Yan which is said to be the genealogical standpoint of rewriting Chinese history highlighting the contributions of neglected community. Language as a centre of social power constructs truth from power location and in the history power holders constructed truth to define women as inferior and bandits as outlaws and bad tempered. This supposed truth which was supposed to be ultimate truth is deconstructed by Mo Yan.

Chinese official history has curtailed the history of marginal people. All most all history written from the official and sophisticated level does not let layperson to get their voice heard. Mo Yan has projected himself as an agent of those laypersons and loads his revision of Chinese history with the struggle of women against patriarchy, bandit's spontaneous native consciousness against Japanese encroachment, and peasants

struggle amidst the atrocity of war. In order to represent the chaos, anxiety, turbulences of war and native consciousness of the voiceless people Mo Yan presents Omnipresent First person character who knows things that none of the characters know. Though omnipresent narrators are characteristic of historiography, so that their recounts are not limited by time and space, they are usually in the third person. In *Red Sorghum* the ubiquitous capacity belongs to a first- person narrator, who moves freely back and forth between scenes occurring at times and tells all the details of the events and situations from various characters' viewpoints.

Since the I- narrator is born in the 1939 and therefore unable to witness the war in 1930s and his grandparents' deeds before then, he utilizes his father as a focalizer and his mother as a story teller : "Mother told me once", "Mother said" to present the past and "the past of the past." By holding both his own and his parents' points of view, he not only able to see what his parents see, but is also capable of chasing his father's fantasies of his granddad's thoughts. Yet sporadically he goes beyond to limits of the visions of his father's generation, showing what he 'knows' about his father does not know, "He never knew how many sexual comedies my grandma had performed on this dirt path, but I knew. And he never knew that her naked body, pure as glossy white jade, had lain on the black soil beneath the shadows of sorghum stalks, but I knew" (6). Through the omnipresent first person narrator Mo skillfully weaves the plot of the novel projecting suppressed subjects. In the lines mentioned here what we trace is that female character Dai was iconic she not only work as a 'trailblazer' of national liberation movement but also a rebellious against all sorts of imposition upon female in a patriarchal society.

In the course of development of civilization discourse on history, sexuality, and gender role were created in such a way which happened to be ultimate truth. According to Foucault linguistic statements are traced by power location and those statements are formatted and reformatted and produces its multiplicity as Foucault states in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*:

...rarity of statements, the incomplete, fragmented form of the enunciative field, the fact that few things, in all, can be said, explain that statements are not, like the air we breathe, an infinite transparency; but things that are transmitted and preserved, that have value, and which one tries to appropriate; that are repeated, reproduced, and transformed; to which pre established networks are adapted, and to which a status is given in the institutions; things that are duplicated not only by copy or translation, but by exegesis, commentary, and the internal proliferation of meanings to be found in them are multiplied. (136)

The process of giving valuation to the statements carried out by institutions. In such process statements which what Foucault calls the property of discourse are produced, reproduced, duplicated, and appropriated by the institutions that hold the power.

Different kinds of statements constitute power and power gives birth to the knowledge. In the course of analyzing the rarity and exteriority, the respective models of totality, transcendental consciousness, and the quest for the recovery of origin. What Foucault insists on his new model of analysis is that proliferation of meanings to be found and analysis of discourse in its condition of reality which are found in multiplicity.

In the recourse to the history of China articulated by power location Mo Yan gets the voice of marginal people emerged whose contribution is unavoidable. Monumental as it is known as totality of history created by the party of proletariat and other power holder gets counter voice by the work of Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum*. Following lines of the novel prove the struggle and considerable contribution made by supposed weaker sex in anti-Japanese war wherein character Dai passes away at the age of thirty- three while carrying fist cakes to the guerillas:

His shout was a command: a hail of bullets tore through the air from three machine guns mounted on the Japanese trucks. The sound was dull and muted, like the gloomy barking of dogs on a rainy night. Father watched as two shells opened holes in the breast of Grandma's jacket. She cried out in ecstasy, then crumpled to the ground, her carrying pole falling across her back. One of the baskets of fisticakes rolled down the southern slope of the dike, the other down the northern slope. Snow-white cakes, green onions, and diced eggs were scattered in the grass on both sides of the dike. (64)

These lines evidences that a grandmother of narrator named Dai Fenglian is a heroic woman who dies her death on the way to sorghum field carrying food to the guerillas troops fighting against Japanese invaders in the leadership of former bandit Yu Zhan'ao. She is shot down by Japanese as she was going to serve fist cake to guerillas. This heroic act of Dai evidences the contribution of women about whom official history of China is noticed to have been ignored and indifferent but Mo Yan projects such deed which were sidelined. In the recourse to the Chinese history standing above party line of

Communist Party of China Mo as a spokes person and agent of communities which were always neglected are projected in his novel *Red Sorghum*.

Chinese Official history always curtailed the history of marginal people and neglected the contribution made by supposed unruly subjects in anti-Japanese war. The devotion, events, actions and lives of simple people is downtrodden by mainstream history. Mo Yan has best attempted to present the Chinese history from the perspective of margin and foregrounds the knowledge which had been proved best to drive away the Japanese from China. In the last chapter of the novel, *Red Sorghum* "Strange Death" his protagonist speaks the atrocities of Japanese that the Chinese people had to face:

The Japanese soldier let out a strange scream and released her belt.

Grabbing his bleeding nose, he glared at second grandma, as though seeing her in a new light. His buddies roared with laughter as he pulled a grimy handkerchief out of his pocket and held against his nose. He stood up, His expression swiftly transformed from that of a poet passionately declaiming his undying love into the savage look of a jackal, which suited him better. He picked up his rifle and held the glinting tip of his bayonet against Second Grandma's belly. The final shriek burst from her mouth as she squeezed her eyes shut. (321)

The above mention lines evidence the atrocities of Japanese soldier upon Chinese citizens. Chinese citizens and their contributions for their nation were often neglected in Chinese official history. This very issue is foreground by Mo Yan in his novel *Red Sorghum*, as he rewrites the history of China from the perspective of those neglected and suffocated people who are dumped unnoticeably by Chinese official history.

III. Remapping of Chinese Official History in Yan's *Red Sorghum*

Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* highlighting the contribution made by bandits and women in anti-Japanese war presents alternative history to mainstream history of China visa-a-vis Sino-Japanese war. Mo from the perspective of the marginalized communities reinvents the Chinese history embedding the contribution made during anti Japanese war in China in 1930s and the early 1940s. *Red Sorghum* gets the story of bandits and women told. Mo Yan in *Red Sorghum* presents such supposed bastardly community highlighting their contribution in anti Japanese resistance. Such deed made by neglected communities like women and bandits are highlighted in the novel which is found to have been undermined by Chinese official history. As an agent of those boycotted community what Mo Yan does is that history written from the power location highlighting elite class is subverted in *Red Sorghum* which is full of vitality for the land of those supposed marginalized communities, showing the magnificent picture standing and pleasant, boundless love surging waves of red sorghum. Gaomi's sublime picture corresponds to the wide, grand, plump, bright, bloody language. Mo Yan in the language traces occurred in this land of the narrator and his grandfather, grandmother, father when the magnificent battle, showing a delicate and unique life experience.

Via protagonists Yu Zhan'ao and Dai Fenglian what Mo Yan has shown in the novel is that history written in China by Chinese historian was one sided which projected the deed of Communist party of China and Quomintang party only. Such presentation of history from the perspective of the subject who was in power has not presented real happenings in the history as mainstream history was presented via power

location. Mo Yan's attempt to recourse the Chinese history is foregrounded in *Red Sorghum*.

In the background of building, through the Mo Yan Carnival language form to show the readers the early anti Japanese War mood of the times, both depressed, desolate, sad, dreary, and happiness, struggle, anger, in this complex mood played the melody of the times, the expression of a melancholy sense of tragedy in between conflict and struggle, with turbulent social evils have caused to the people, because the invasion brought devastating damage. Mo Yan strain every nerve to almost all of the war scenes have been carefully carved, regardless of the size of war scenes, even human and dog swallowed up in the body contest also with many strokes, showing a picture with the bloody scene, flesh and blood flying in all directions. In the intersection of flesh Mo Yan painted a piece, as red as blood red sorghum, the whole world is blood red.

In the way that Chinese novel *Red Sorghum* by Mo Yan reshapes the viewer's perspective by offering not one but many focal points, this singularly forceful contemporary Chinese novel reinvents the notion of notion of Chinese linear history. The narrator, a young man from the provinces, relates the intertwined histories of the Sino-Japanese war of the 1930s and of his parents and grandparents. A few key episodes serve as recurrent motifs: murders counterpoint battlefield massacres; women are raped by their saviors and by enemy soldiers; the community leader punishes gamblers and thieves with floggings, while the Japanese flog a saboteur as a preamble to skinning him alive. Mo Yan turns these events over and over, introducing each a fragment at a time and exploring their significance as they pass from one character's

experience into another's memory. At first Yan's insistence on graphic and gruesome descriptions and his interest in bodily functions make the novel rough going.

Eventually, however, his emphasis on the ignoble becomes a protest against the universal tendency to idealize the past. Instead, Mo Yan recreates a world defined by brutality and extends its horizons past wars and cultural revolutions; the ultimate cruelty emerges as oblivion.

Mo Yan in order to present Chinese history from the perspective of the othered, loads his novel highlighting the contribution made by neglected communities like bandits and women. These communities as we find in official history are unmentioned. In the course of Sino-Japanese war bandits and women for the sake of their motherland had fought bravely which was sidelined in official Chinese history. Such remarkable contribution made by bandits and women is foregrounded in Mo Yan's *Red Sorghum* standing on the vantage point of marginal voice Mo via characters like Yu Zhan'ao and Dai rewrites the history of china which was always neglected by mainstream Chinese history.

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