

## **Critique of Urban Modernity in Anne Enright's *The Forgotten Waltz***

This research project concentrates upon how social instability and cultural chaos arise on the life of women in the midst of cosmopolitan modernity. To establish the concept of democratic thought and modernity, Enright has presented the main female character Gina also as a narrator, who begins the story of her first encounter with Sean in Enniskerry, village in the Republic of Ireland. In the novel, the protagonist Gina Moynihan represents her alienated life from society. Similar to her, other characters also suffer due to lack communitarian values.

Gina Moynihan has got the extramarital situation to handle. Regarding her extramarital affair she falls in love with much older man Sean, who has got daughter named Evie. She sees her father kissing Gina. This makes Evie to behave in a strange way. She expresses the situation in weird way, in the sense Evie laughs loudly. We can say that Evie reaction's toward the situation was obvious. She was just nine years old, when she saw her father kissing other woman. She was mentally disturbed. Though both Gina Moynihan and Sean Valley have their own business to do but they only focus on their extramarital affair which doesn't have any destination. Protagonist, Gina comes to Dublin in search of their better life and prosperity. However, she becomes like a pendulum in the city. She becomes a puppet in the hands of old married man named Sean Vallely. *The Forgotten Waltz* demonstrates how modernity and city affect the life of women. Far from bringing any betterment to Gina's life, modern time has brought disaster in her life along with other characters. For example: As far as Gina and Sean's relation is concerned, it results anxiety, fear and paranoia in Evie's life.

The thesis explores into the lives of the characters that have several dreams regarding education, development and their expansion in the future life and they have

strong gut to fulfill these dreams even adapting the new cultural behaviors, customs and rules of the city. Gina has done Master's in IT, sort of, we can say. However, it is tragedy that the golden dreams their hardships to fulfill them do not bring any positive outcomes in the life of the poor females in Western world. The research articulates the condition of middle class women who are used only as a tool in the commodity culture and source of entertainment of the higher-class males of the modern society. The pessimistic life of the main character made me furious. Females of England categorically look for “the sovereignty and the unique supremacy of western ideas like universal human rights and democracy, modern secularism, political liberalism, gender equality and individual freedom” ( Carter 87). *The Forgotten Waltz* by Enright depicts about the modern scenario and the effects of urbanization, city and development. When the society turned into modernization and industrialization, not only males but also many women from different parts of the villages migrated to the urban city and started there to live a better life.

In this regard, the notion of *flaneur* was developed to represent especially the educated, higher class males from urban area and whose job is just to stroll in the city, streets and markets to gaze the middle class female who used to go the market and public space for their job. Therefore, the parks, streets, cinema hall and other public spaces were considered to be the setting of those male *flaneurs*. But, the term “flaneuse” was coined by twentieth century sociologist Janet Woolf in her essay, “The Invisibile Flaneuse” (1985) where she defines “flaneuses” as those middle class women who come from different country sides and doing work for the societal development economically.

As far as development is concerned, middle class women contributed their energy to establish the city economically, but unfortunately they were forgotten to

define and portray by the traditional writers and artists. Thus Janet Woolf talks about those uncared female in the modern society. Basically, she speaks for the *flâneuse*. The main character Gina in the fiction has been presented as a typical modern *flâneuse* who has been used as the commodity tool and defined as an unstable lower class not developed and uncivilized female by the so-called higher class males of Dublin.

This research also depicts that how humanitarian values are being lost and how an individual is suffering because of prioritization of people towards money, economy and individualism in the modern world. Many characters have been guided by economy but culturally misguided. Sean being a married man also a father of eight years old daughter and much older than Gina with whom he develops extramarital affair. As Sean Vallely was in extramarital affair, he used to ignore his wife Aileen easily. The extramarital affair between Gina and Sean affect Evie's mental state. The culture of respect is disobeyed and the economic world is shown in priority in the capitalistic world. So, here not only personal life is ruined but also the whole Dublin city is ruined.

Charles Baudelaire in his essay "The Painter of Modern Life", defines modernity as the "fashionable, fleeting and contingent in art, in opposition to the eternal and immutable" (16). Modernity, which is defined as changeable rather than stable is something fragmented. There remains chaos and Cultural Revolution. Here, in the novel we find that characters are indifferent to each other emotionally despite of their physical intimacy. Sean's wife Aileen throws parties and invited one comes and goes without greeting each other. This shows they do not care even to some extent about each other. They just come there to enjoy their time.

Enright is the popularly reviewed and widely appreciated. Her writing

explores themes for instance: family relationships, love and sex, Ireland's difficult past and its modern *Zeitgeist*. She always stands for the progressive transformation of society. Many of the critics have seen or reviewed the novel from their own perspectives. Among them, in the daily newspaper, *The New York Times* under book review section, Francine prose who is an American critic makes following remarks about the novel, *The Forgotten Waltz* on its historical reality and representation of Dubliners as titled, 'An Unrepentant Adulterer,'

*The Forgotten Waltz* is a book we read with enjoyment and admiration but not for the usual pleasures of language, suspense, sensibility and so forth. Though the last half contains a few mild surprises, by that point we're not especially curious about what happens to Gina and Sean. For me, the suspense lay in seeing if Enright would weaken and allow her narrator to be redeemed by any of the emotions that are commonly believed (in fiction, if not always in life, as any estate lawyer will tell you) to be improving and redemptive. (2)

She resembles the Dublin main city of Ireland in the novel where we find moral values have been ignored. The people of the city are lacking the culture. The cultural values have been lost and people are being misled towards the wrong way. As the title of an article suggest us that the characters in the novel are not ashamed on their wrong doings. With this all they are giving question marks to their human relations.

Likewise, another critic, Joy Press, in the daily newspaper *Los Angeles Times* has given deep insight by means of love and money to the Enright's novel.

In *The Forgotten Waltz*, Enright balances rapture and grief — as Gina discovers while trying to explain events in an orderly way, these things tend to bleed together. The novel does lose some of its buoyancy as the love and money bubbles start to waver, though. Things that once looked so tempting

now feel threadbare and routine. An affair causes damage in the novel *'The Forgotten Waltz'*. (7)

Joy Press denotes the sub urban culture views or scenario. She comes to analyze the culture of the city Dublin. The novelist presents the real condition of the Ireland during twentieth century and leads to the capitalistic society. The main place related to Ireland that is to say Dublin has been shown. The characters are connected with extramarital affair and indifference attitude. The characters are also connected with the money and how their position differs in the capitalistic world because of the influence of money. Different characters have got some sort of degree but as far as the job is concerned they lack. The condition can be interpreted as bizarre.

Similarly, a famous weekly newspaper, *The Guardian* has published Hermoine Lee's view upon the following novel. He says,

“Anne Enright's novel of love and betrayal is set in Ireland's boom years.” He further adds however, the context, and the object, of this sentimental intensity, is as unromantic as you can imagine. We're worlds and generations away from the risky, convention-defying sexual adventures of Edna O'Brien's isolated girls, the violent repressions of country people in a McGahern story, or the quiet, hopeless longing of William Trevor's small-town lovers”. This is Ireland in the late 2000s, and Enright's people in this novel are consumers and communicators, businesswomen, property owners, Dublin suburbanites. (29)

The very title of the novel seems romantic but opposite to it, the story revolves around uncomfortable situation among different characters. He further brings the reference of famous Irish writers for instance: Edna O'Brien best known for creative feminist writings, McGahern most important Irish writer who succeed to present the trials of developing an individual sense of self in Ireland of the mid- twentieth century through

his fictions. The characters in the novel only talk about business, money and so on. He also focuses how the wealth leads a person to break the relation and also moves around the world of leisure.

A world of money leads a person to the lack of emotions and also lack of the heartfelt conditions. Another scholar John Frank in his article 'Special to The Chronicle' had mentioned what Critic Christopher Benfey has said of Enright's oeuvre: "Bad sex, Enright implies, is of an infinite variety, while good sex, like grace, is mysterious and indescribable." But because volatile sex seems to drive Gina's story, her slanted allusions to it leave a puzzling void at that story's center. (29)

In the novel, Sean can be believed as morally degraded person because he doesn't care about cultural values. He takes everything for granted, even his relation to wife Aileen and daughter Evie. He seems to have extramarital affairs with many other women along with Gina. From such characterization of Sean, we can say that he is a portrayal of twentieth century modern man of Ireland. He is in search of true love which lacks in modern world. The description of vagueness in sex life between modern people has been shown without any hesitation. Sean is economically rich but pure love is missing in his life.

Further, the journal article by Virginia Woolf upon 'Metaphor of the Invented Birth' we find the subject matters related to motherhood, self image, death and so on. Some lines from the text which depicts the central idea, it says:

In the following pages this analogy is extended to include the separation and loss occasioned by birth itself. Kitty leaves the house hurriedly to catch the train for Scotland and the ostensible of solitary life on the Lasswade estate. The ride is described as a passage through the birth canal. "They were.....leaving that blaze of light which seemed.....to contract itself into one

fiery circle. The train rushed with a roar through a tunnel. It seemed to perform an act of amputation: now she cut off from the circle of light.” The “amputaion” or loss of home, the familiar round, accomplished, restoration is made first , during sleep, in her berth on the train, When the distant past “and present became jumbled together” and next, after her arrival, as she enters the morning of the ancestral home. (10)

Basically, here we come to acknowledge various such sensitive issues. Similar to Enright’s novel we find the odd relation of a girl with a city life. Though modern people enjoy the commercial things but ultimately they come to realize that real satisfaction is in natural things. The materialistic thing fails to satisfy human being for long. If we focus on novel, we find that Sean Vallely throws party but neither he knows everyone nor all the people know him. All of them come to enjoy only, there is no any kind of emotional affection among one another. This shows somewhere in the down, people being called themselves modern are fail to live happy life in true sense, rather their life is full of solitary.

In this way, Enright’s *The Forgotten Waltz* has been criticized from different perspectives by different critics. Some have analyzed it on the basis of its theme and its depiction of the realistic cultural scenario of contemporary society. However, different aspects of the novel have been raised but the critique of modernity left behind. Generally, when we think about the word Modernity, the prosperity or development in different aspects come into our mind which is supposed to make human life comfortable. Very few critics have studied on the issues of interpretation of the individual by the capitalistic ideology as one of the main motifs of the character.

This research attempts to show subjectivity. It is library based textual analysis.

So, it merges both theoretical insights in textual analysis. For its methodology this paper relies on different Modernists theorist, for example: George Simmel's Metropolitan Man, Marshall Berman's *The Mire of the Macadam* and most importantly Janet Wolff's *The Invisible Flaneuse*.

The following critics have commented upon the cosmopolitan modernity. Cosmopolitan modernity gives us the concept that all human beings belong to a single community, based on shared moral values. A person who address to the idea of cosmopolitanism in any of its forms is called a cosmopolitan or cosmopolite. A cosmopolitan community might be based on an inclusive morality, a shared economic relationship, or a political structure that encompasses different nations. In cosmopolitan community individuals from different places, gender and race have the mutual respect and identity. However, modernity and gender comments cosmopolitan modernity as gender infected territory dominated by males.

Janet Woolf's *The Invisible Flaneuse: Women and the literature of Modernity* talks about the connection between modernism and feminism, the specific characteristics of modernism with female experiences. She defines modernism in the context of nineteenth century. In eighteenth century during the age of Enlightenment, the Enlightenment philosophers like Voltaire, Kant and several other rationality philosophers, focused on public use of reasoning. At that time, the societies were divided into public and private spheres. And while making categories, they tried to link it to rationality. Males were considered to be intellectual and Females emotional public spheres were associated with those masculine values: intellectual live (public life and those private spheres were associated to females, domesticity, private experiences).

As we know, from the beginning of classical period, the public arenas and



patriarchal norms and values were linked. And it even continued to the Enlightenment the Neoclassical trends and even later. Woolf believes that was something we can call over socialization of public values. Being a sociologist, Woolf talks about society especially the feminine values and linked it to modernity. It is basically, an analysis of modern values from feminist perspectives. Despite all these ideas, the most important person behind the term “flaneur” is the French painter Charles Baudelaire in the painting and arts to present the new dynamic complications of modern life. In the very early period, the traits that mark the “flaneur” were wealth, education, and idleness. He strolls to pass the time that his wealth affords him, treating the people who pass and the objects he sees as texts for his own pleasure. So, the “flaneur” is supposed to be free to probe his surrounding for. Janet Wolff makes discussion about the version of “flaneur” and “flaneuse” as the words are originally coined from France and this was coined to represent the modern society which she defines as:

The *flaneur*, the French term is always used, in English as well as in German is the person who strolls aimlessly in the modern city, observing people and events, perhaps if the *flaneur* happens also to be a writer or an artist with a view to recording these observations in word or image. Although this particular figure has a prehistory in eighteenth century thought, it is generally agreed that its prominence in the literature of modernity dates from Baudelaire’s mid nineteenth –century essays on the modern life. (19)

Before the concept of *flaneuse* the word *flanuer* was developed which centered male and keeps women unidentified. The *flaneur*, however, is exclusively a male. The privilege of passing unnoticed in the city, particularly in the period in which the *flaneur* flourished that is, the mid- nineteenth century to the early twentieth century- was not accorded to women, whose presence on the streets would certainly be

noticed. Not only that as many historians of the period have pointed out, women in public, particularly women wandering without aim, immediately attract the negative stamp of the 'non-respectable' (19).

It is Wolff who coined the term *flaneuse* for the very first time so that she can associate a woman with a city to define the women of nineteenth century.

None of the authors have discussed is unaware of the different experience of women in the modern city. Sennett, for example, recognizes that the 'right to escape to public privacy was unequally enjoyed by the sexes', since even by the late nineteenth century women could not go alone to a café in Paris or a restaurant in London. As he says, "The Lonely crowd" was a realm of privatized freedom, and the male, whether simply out of domination or greater need, was more likely to escape in it'. He notes, too, that in the earlier period of 'public life' women had to take a good deal more care about the 'signs' of their dress, which would be scrutinized for an indication of their social rank; in the nineteenth century, the scrutiny would be in order to differentiate 'respectable' from 'loose' women. (245)

Woolf tries to define feminism and modernism together. She is trying to develop the argument that both eighteenth century valorization of public use of reasoning and 19<sup>th</sup> century sociology as continuity of eighteenth century notions. And the public spheres were completely exclusion of female experiences in modernity. The experiences of male used to be valorized. It was gender biased. The public experiences were associated to modernity. So in order to attack gender biasness on modernity, Janet Woolf makes the parody of representative modernist figure. She titles her essay as "Invisible Flaneuse" so it is a parody of representative modernist figure. One of the main reasons behind composition of this essay is that during 1831, when women

wanted to roam around the city they were not allowed.

That is why, George Sand wanted to experience Paris life and to learn about the ideas and arts of her time she dressed as a boy, to give herself the freedom she knew women could not share. Addition to it, Janet Wolff says, “New opportunities for women in public as the department store supplanted the arcade, the mobilized gaze became a key element of consumer address” (20).

The main character growing up in the suburban, she left the village dreaming about achievements and become a modern woman so did her mother. The narrator means Gina herself explains about how she used to be treated as:

I also felt, as I went to pack and face the dreaded Sean that the whole business was a little disappointing, let’s face it- as seismic moral shifts go. In the foyer, and on the minibus to the airport, he ignored me so strenuously I felt like writing him a note. “What makes you think I might care? It was hardly worth mentioning; not to Sean and certainly not to Conor. And though this seems hard to believe, I returned to my Dublin life as though nothing had happened; as though the lake, the mountains, the whole of Switzerland, was a lie someone had told, to keep the rest of the world amused. (37)

In the text *The Forgotten Waltz* the life of middle class women in modern European society after migrating from the small countryside of Dublin. The issue of cultural domination, patriarchy, objectification and commoditization of females are the major concern of this research. The life of main character of the novel, who is also a narrator named Gina in the European society is highly discussed as Janet Woolf discussed them as they are the paradigms of the modernity. Gina is a very confident girl. She knows what she wants to do with her life but in the novel her so-called companion guides her constantly. He makes her to follow him but again ignore her easily at a

time.

Walter Benjamin extended the idea; “flaneur” came to rise primarily because of an architectural change in the city of Paris. This change was rooted in building capitalism involved the creation of the arcades, which were passageways through elegant shops and park” (37). Baudelaire’s depiction of “flaneur” in the city that “Baudelaire would be torn rest of his life between the stances of “flaneur” and dandy, a disengaged and cynical voyeur on the one hand, and man of the people who enters into the life of his subjects with passion on the other”. “Flaneur”, as both lines of continuity and ruptures between nineteenth century and “flaneur” as its medium, paradigms, while rethinking of questions of gender and representation in the space of the modernity.

In the text, the society represents the modern society and main characters Gina and her mother represent the all middle class female who are being “flaneuse”, not well recognized and well settled female returning to their native land or village.

Similarly, she comments on her mother’s life in modern city as:

I used to be jealous of those strangers, who looked at my mother and loved for half an hour at a time. Sometimes, it seemed as though we only got the downside: the despair in front of the open wardrobe door, the loneliness when there was no one there to admire. There were times, on the phone, when you could hear the drag in her voice; loss of belief, as though there might be no one listening on the other end of the line. (38)

Gina as a daughter being insecure for her mother as the way city men used to treat her. As we know appearance is given more importance in the modern world her mother was very much conscious about her face. The intention behind Gina’s such revelation is that she wants to tell us that with her mother men in the city used to

fulfilled their sexual desire. Basically, here Gina's mother has been sexually exploited. Men have used her as puppet for their enjoyment. But unfortunately, she doesn't have friend in need. People used to make relations for short time in modern world, where they do not care about each other for long time.

Moreover, we are aware about the fact that in the nineteenth and eighteenth century, the experience of female used to be excluded. Similarly, the "Flaneuse" could not wander as Flaneur. Those female (Flaneuse) were considered as bad characters. During the time, the concept regarding woman used to be conservative. The motive of this essay is to explore the modernity in a broad way. Basically, she is trying to dismantle the inequality between male and female. She argues that Flaneur is a man of a crowd but not man in a crowd. She believes the experiences of female should be included in private as well as public arenas and she does this in her essay. She tries to deconstruct the binary opposition between public and private spheres.

Rita Felski problematizes traditional theories of modernity. She basically questioned modernist theories from feminist perspective focusing on the way men and women used to be treated in the modern society. She further explores the gendered meanings of such notions as nostalgia, consumption, feminine writing, the popular sublime, evolution, revolution, and perversion. She adds:

What is the gender of modernity? How can anything as abstract as a historical period have a sex? In the context of the current interest in the 'historicity of textuality and the textuality of history, 'the idea is not as strange as it may initially appear. If our sense of the past is inevitably shaped by the explanatory logic of narrative, then the stories that we create in turn reveal the inescapable presence and power of gender symbolism. (2)

Felski believes that modernity favors male than female. She rejects the conventional

notion regarding females. She further asserts that the voice of female has been repressed. Modern literature works under patriarchal norms and values. It seems unfriendly towards the feminine gender. She addresses more general theoretical questions about the gender politics of the modern time by reading various kinds of critical texts of late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century. Through such creative strategy she assumes to analyze topic from a different perspectives and tries to give careful attention to the various genres and forms of modernism through which our knowledge towards it can be formed in a different way. She further argues:

I began by asking myself the following questions: How would our understanding of modernity change if instead of taking male experience as paradigmatic, we were to look instead at texts written primarily by or about women? And what if feminine phenomena, often seen as having a secondary or marginal status, were given a central importance in the analysis of the culture of modernity? What difference would such a procedure make? The stories resulting from such an investigation would not, I surmised, be completely alien or unrecognizable ones, given the complex entanglement and mutual imbrication of men's and women's histories. But they might well throw some significant new light on that seemingly exhausted issue, the aesthetics and the politics of modernity. (10)

Fleski has tried to make her argument more strong by raising questions to those who think themselves as modern by ignoring women in the society. Similar to, Helen Cixous, she also depicts the idea that women will be progressive when they start to write their own stories by themselves. The behavior towards women would be changed if, men together with women involved in the revolution process of equality. Until and unless both the parties are not active enough the position of women will

remain as usual, submissive. The true essence of modernity lies in equal status of men and women but unfortunately, so-called modernist people have been misguided with other various negative features of it. The main motive of Felski here is that, she wants to see the result what happens if men and women move ahead with mutual understanding in order to give equal position to women in the modern time.

Women have been considered as voiceless and powerless but to recreate history one can do through writing. As Helen Cixous underlines in her essay “The Laugh of the Medusa,” writing enables woman to “return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display” (395). We women were considered as the puppet to fulfill the sexual desire of men so we need to revolt against it through writing. She makes us aware that writing can be used as weapon to rebel and let men know what women want.

George Simmel’s *The Metropolitan and Mental life* deals with the idea that how the metropolitan environment shapes the life of city dwellers. Basically, it focuses on psychology of an individual. As far as this essay is concerned, Simmel was assigned to lecture on the topic "what is the role of intellectual in Metropolitan City by the scholars in present cities exhibitions" (1903). On the other hand, Simmel made some changes on the topic and he attempted to show departures from those existing views about metropolitan society and the title finalized as “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (45).

Simmel argues city dwellers respond to the shocks of Metropolitan world with their intellect rather than the heart and taking refuge in reserve rather than human contact. He further asserts that city life produces new social relations and new type of person. He believes the continuous stimulation caused by the crowded urban spaces lead city dwellers to develop a defensive reaction to the metropolis. Here, Simmel

tries to address the problems of individuals in modern life. He forwards the assumption that the major challenge for city people is to preserve their individuality of his/her existence. It is because there are other social forces being rapidly changed.

As we know the advancement of science and technology which also make life move with speed. With such various issues city dwellers have compelled to face problem in order to save their individuality. After analyzing different aspects of city life by Simmel, he tries to give answer to some of the questions through this essay. For instance: How the people of city come to deal with the changing metropolis world and also how the individuals of such world will adjust in it. Gina comments on the lifestyle Sean have:

And when he finally washed up on my doorstep at two in the morning, after who knows what stroms; when he finally broke free of her that spring and came to me, he did not come to live, but just to escape. He still spends the occasional night out- I assume in Enniskerry. I do not ask. In Ireland, if you leave the house, he says. You have to sleep there to keep your claim. Which was all news to me, but there you go. You think it is about sex, and then you remember the money. (153)

Gina talks about Sean's point of view towards the life in the modern world. Actually, he gets confused between relations he have with his daughter and Gina. He wants to live his life with his daughter but not with his wife. Sean comes to believe that money is what all matters in the modern world. He wants to fulfill all the materialistic desire his daughter have, but sometimes he failed. The big reason behind departure of Sean's with his wife Aileen is money. Aileen is someone who has got dream of being counted as rich in the city. Sean is being unable to earn much money over the night and it is impossible for the common people to do. The uncomfortable relation between



Sean and Aileen affect Evie's life.

According to Simmel, there are multiple changes taking place in such metropolitan world. The people are very busy. He believes that if the city people do not able to cope up with the changes that have been taking place then their stimulation goes on hitting their psychology. Addition to it, he compares and contrast the lives of village and city. Life in village moves very slowly and villagers have sufficient time to reflect upon the things what is going on or what they perceived and experienced. But in cities, lots of changing taking place. Our mind cannot reflect upon every single detail. We start losing interest in something. All the changes at rapid scale and its burden cannot be hold by our brains. We may take many things for granted. Similarly, we develop blasé attitude. The blasé attitude develops first from the rapidly changing and closely compressed constricting stimulations of the nerves. Basically, it is the mental characteristics of metropolitan life. Gina narrates about her condition as alienated:

It was three o'clock when I arrived and darkness was already in the air. I parked for a moment and saw no sign of life, but my nephew Jack was in the front room and he opened the door before I had the chance to knock. He stared me up and down, wondering how to respond to the amazing fact that I was real. Then he decided on indifference. (183)

When the people are interconnected by heart, they are expected to spend more quality time together but Gina hardly visits her sister. This particular paragraph describes how her nephew unable to connect with her as an individual. This shows in the modern time, people are less connected through heart. Jack behaved as an outsider towards his aunt. It happens when city people are being unreal. The image of fakeness is within Jack. Here, we can experience a kind of indifference in relation between

Jack and Gina.

Now, while focusing on other mode of metropolitan life it is said to be Irony. In the city, there is much probabilities of discrepancy between appearance and reality. What one appears may not be in a reality. Issues related to hear do not become influential in metropolitan environment because the brain gets maximum used. We try to use our rationality or intellect to influence other in metropolitan lives. Our emotional attachment is very less likely to be there in cities but it is not the case in villages. So, people in metropolitan life prioritize head rather than heart. Simmel says that the metropolitan man as the man of head not the man of heart is one of the features of metropolitan city. Similar to this idea, Gina is really in dilemma why she is in a situation, where she is not supposed to. So, she goes to the restrospection of her own experience as:

I don't know why. But I am being hard on my husband, who I loved, and who is now fighting with me about money, never mind broken dreams. In fact everyone is fighting with me about money: my sister, too. Who would have thought love could be so expensive? I should sit down and calculate it out at so much per kiss. The price of this house plus the price of that house, divided by two, plus the price of the house we are in. Thousands. Every time I touch him. Hundreds of thousands. Because we took it too far. We should have stuck to car parks and hotel bedrooms (no, really, we should really have stuck to car parks and hotel bedrooms). If we keep going the price will come down- per event, as it were. Twenty years of love can be consummated for tuppence.

After a lifetime it is almost free. (147)

Gina's husband calls her selfish but she replies him saying so you are. They both call each other selfish. Her husband thinks that in the name of love she is giving more

importance to materialistic property. Basically, in the above lines we found Gina's confession regarding what others think about her. Even Gina's sister has a problem with her in terms of money. Being frustrated, she questioned about the relation between money and love. There is no any connection between these two aspects of human life. But unfortunately modern people try to find love with money.

One of the major characteristics of individuals in metropolitan cities is that those city dwellers are very calculative. They try to evaluate everything in terms of money. We can call them money minded. More often capitalistic values are emphasized. Human values, emotions get commodified. In cities, qualitative (love, emotion) get transformed to quantitative values (money). All these values like money, economy and insistence on intellectuality are favorable for development of a blasé attitude which is a kind of indifference. The people in cities develop a reserve attitude. They don't reveal their lives to others. They don't trust upon fellow human beings.

In this very essay, Simmel tries to show the connection between external atmosphere (environment) and internal psychic lives of the individuals. We may agree that he tries to highlight every area of the city people but at the same time failed to represent it in a specific way. What I am trying to say is that he talks about different issues but in a general way. And most importantly, he sounds a bit hypothetical because every metropolitan city may not have the same kind of attitude regarding the way they live their lives.

Marshall Berman's "The Mire of Macadam" in *All that is Solid Melts into Air* describes how everything gets changed in day to day modern life. It means nothing can be stable in city. As we know Marshall Berman is better known as a Marxist critic. He has got great impact of French poet Charles Baudelaire and German Jewish and cultural critic Walter Benjamin in his life. During nineteenth century, several

changes have been taking place in France. As Baudelaire is a representative modernist writer, he used present characters in margin and identifies himself to characters.

Walter Benjamin also directly brought the notion of “loss of aura” from Baudelaire’s poem “Loss of Halo” and applauded the loss of aura because in loss of aura, the earlier objects value get lost and the proletarians, common people etc can also use the goods. The common people would not have access to those goods used by higher classes (elites) before the mechanical production, there is loss of aura and lower classes people also get access to high class goods, paintings, books etc. Hence, the notion of “loss of aura” is an adaptation from Charles Baudelaire “loss of Halo”.

The archetypical modern man, as we see him here, is a pedestrian thrown into the maelstrom of modern city traffic, a man alone contending against an agglomeration of mass and energy that is heavy, fast and lethal. The burgeoning street and boulevard traffic knows no spatial or temporal bounds, spills over into every urban space, imposes its tempo on everyday’s time, transforms the whole modern environment into a ‘moving’ chaos’. The chaos here lies not in the movers themselves- the individual walkers or drivers, each of whom may be pursuing the most efficient route for himself- but in their interaction, in the totality of their movements in a common space. This makes the boulevard a perfect symbol of capitalist unit, leading to anarchic irrationality in the social system that brings all these units together. (234)

According to Marshall Berman, Modernism is all about acceptance of ordinary or day to day events. It was Baudelaire who gave very influential definition of modernism in his book. In general, he was not only a poet but also the theorist. In his theoretical text, *The Painter of Modern Life* (1863), Baudelaire defines modernity as “ephemeral, fugitive and contingent”. He basically, glorifies modernist art and literature for its

perpetual self critique and self renewal. Here, ephemeral refers to lasts for short time, fugitive refers to difficult to describe and contingent refers to uncertain to occur.

The narrator, Gina is describing the life of middle class people in modern city. Here, she explains how the people suffer in the capitalistic world.

The house in Terenure had been on the market four months already, and a flood of people had been through the place, opening cupboards, pulling up the corners of carpets, sniffing the air. My living room, the sofa where I sat, my mother's bed, were all – they still are – on the internet for anyone to click on and dismiss: the stairs we slid down on our bellies, the dark bedroom over the garage, the stain around the lights switch. I found a discussion board online where they were laughing at the price- but other than that, it was hard to know what thought. My father was not there to ruin the day. My mother was not there to make it all better. My sister was not speaking to me. My lover was in the cold bosom of his family, wearing a paper hat. (181)

While we go through the above lines, we realize that Gina becomes homeless to sustain in the materialistic world. According to the time, she needs more price for her house which is in internet to sell. She is alone at this point of time. She loses her mother while giving more importance to extramarital affair with Sean. The human relation in modern city is guided by money. It is like, if you do have enough money and property, then the relation between each other can be maintained though only to show –off. The silent feature of the commodity economy, as Marx explains, is the endless metamorphosis of its market values.

In this economy, anything goes if it pays, and no human possibility is ever wiped off the books; culture becomes an enormous warehouse in which everything is kept in stock on the chance that someday, somewhere, it might sell. Thus, the halo

that the modern poet lets go (or throws off) as obsolete may, by virtue of its very obsolescence, metamorphosis into an icon, an object of nostalgic veneration for those who, like the 'bad poets' X and Y, are trying to escape from modernity.

It is Berman, who talks about Benjamin's attempt to see the affinity between Marx and Baudelaire. Berman as a Marxist but whatever Marx was doing through his theory was also being done by Baudelaire through his poems. In his poems too, Baudelaire talks about marginalized people. He glorifies those Flaneurs, marginalized people like prostitutes, sex workers and other common people. They have direct experiences of modernity than those aristocratic people. Marginalized people are glorified by Baudelaire as hero in his works. In this respect too, Marx talks about those proletarians the divisions in society, modes of production and so on. For Marx, when those proletarians unite, then communism can be achieved. Charles Baudelaire also talks about classes of society and arouse consciousness in lower class people through his works. The capitalistic concept destroys the human relations. Gina describes that now she hasn't control over her own rather Sean is the one who overpower her. As Gina narrates:

I have saved this man's life, but there are things I am not allowed to – that I do not need to – know. The money thing, for example. I don't know whether he can break even in Budapest, or what is happening to his house by the beach, which is now up for sale too. I think, to be fair; he doesn't know either. I mean, its fine. Everything is fine, just so long as no one blinks, no one moves. Meanwhile, it is there on the web for everyone to click over and ignore – the shells on the windowsills in Ballymoney, and whether Clonskeagh has gone Sale Agreed. Myself and Sean have loved a whole little of For Sale signs into being. And no one is about to buy anything. Not in this show. (205)

Gina explains how Sean controls her day to day living. Her ambition was different in life, but what she became is different. Her intention to visit city is, she wanted to be empowered, but unfortunately she comes to meet Sean, who even doesn't respect her as she does to him. She has faced many difficulties in the so-called modern cities. Somehow, money is one of the main reasons to create problems in her life. She has contributed all that she had, time and money but didn't work for long. Sean blames only Gina, for all losses they faced. At the end, she has to return in her original place in a ruined condition. We can say that, she doesn't achieve anything, she thought of. Although things are not going as she has expected but she happens to say, 'Everything is fine'. The conversation between them is only about buying and selling properties. This is all, what modern city gives people in return to their hard work.

Never the less, now the way women have been portrayed in different sorts of genre in terms of literature is quite impressive. In the novel, *The Forgotten Waltz* Enright has presented the changing scenario of Dublin during nineteenth and twentieth century. The narrator herself has become victim of modern city. The novel is all about her difficult journey in the Dublin city. Sean has used her as source of entertainment. He doesn't value her as a woman. Basically, he is misguided by features of modernity. While he was in relation with Gina, he ignores his wife and daughter. Even, Gina for a while forgets her morality when she was in relation with Sean. They used to be intimated anywhere they like, so Evie daughter of Sean caught them in an awkward situation. It affects her mentally as well as emotionally. This is how the so-called modern values have impacted negatively upon children.

Modern people are culturally degraded. Women's contribution to the progress of the city has been unrecognizable. Men in the modern city forget that women have given their time and money for the development of the city. But sadly, men have

loosed their humanitarian values towards women. They see women in the form of commodity. Along with these issues, the novelist has raised question on how modern people use their mind rather than heart. In the novel, we find that people enjoy house party but do not know each other. Scholar has defined modernity as changeable and it is.

In the modern city, nothing remains for last long neither human relations nor money. For instance: Sean's relation with his wife, daughter and Gina do not remain same forever. He valorizes each one of them to fulfill his own motive. He is a self-centered man of modern city. He even makes human relation fake. Although, Gina had relation with Sean but later she apart from him and makes herself free. Gina despites of all her obstacles become strong individual to handle different issues of her life, whether it is about having extra marital affair with Sean or quantitative sorts of relations with her husband. Irony is within the modern values itself. In the modern society, there is vast difference on how one behaved and appeared. It is said that equal opportunities will be given to both males and females but unfortunately this practice lacks in reality. Gina is well- educated but doesn't get opportunities to show her talent in business industry because as we know, the modern industry doesn't believe women are worth enough. Till the second half of the novel, Gina has been overpowered by Sean in a sense that, he used to play with her body and emotions.

So, later Gina comes to realize that she needs to involve in public areas by ignoring Sean. She plans to join office and this is how her new life begins. Gina acknowledges the fact that an individual identity is most important in order to survive in modern world. She further tries to cope up with her situation and decides to start life. At the end of the novel, Gina promises herself that she will live her life with dignity in future. She asserts that one should always protect his/her individuality.





## Works Cited

- Berman, Marshall. "The Mire of the Macadam". *All that is Solid Melts Into Air*. 1983, pp. 155-64.
- Cixous, Helene. "The Laugh of the Medusa." *The Longman Anthology of Women's Literature*. Edited by Mary K. Deshazer. Addison- Wesley Educational Publishers, 2001.
- Fleski, Rita. "The Gender of Modernity." Routledge, 2009.
- Frank, Joan. "In Envy Country." *Times Union*, 13 April 2012.  
<https://www.timesunion.com/living/article/Book-review-3480585.php>
- Kushen, Betty. "Virginia Woolf: Metaphor of the Inverted Birth." *American Imago*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Vol. 38, no. 3, 1981, pp. 279-304.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26303765>.
- Lee, Hermoine. "Love and betrayal is set in Ireland's boom years." *The Guardian*, 1 May 2011. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/may/01/forgotten-waltz-anne-enright-review>
- Press, Joy. "An affair causes damage." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 November 2011.  
<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/26/entertainment/la-et-book-anne-enright-20111026>
- Prose, Francine. "An Unrepentant Adulter." *The New York Times*, 30 September. 2011. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/02/books/review/the-forgotten-waltz-by-anne-enright-book-review.html>
- Simmel, George. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." *The Sociology of George Simmel*. Edited by Kurt H. Wolff. Free Press of Glencoe, 1950.
- Woolf, Janet. "The invisible Flaneuse: Women and the literature of modernity." *The Problems of Modernity: Aforono and Benjamin*. Edited by Andrew Benjamin. 1988.