

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Representation of Precarious Existence of the Underprivileged in *The Village by The Sea*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English,
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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Upendra Thakur has completed his thesis entitled **Representation of Precarious Existence of the Underprivileged in *The Village by The Sea*** under my supervision. . He carried out his research from August 2008 (A.D.) to June 2009 (A.D.). I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce

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The thesis titled, *Representation of Precarious Existence of the Underprivileged* in Anita Desai's *The Village by The Sea* by Upendra Thakur submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee:

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Abstract

The novel, *The Village by The Sea* by Anita Desai is aimed at reflecting the financial hazards of a poor Indian family which bases on the agrarian mode of production and utilization especially fishing. Hari, the central character in the text, is a self-made boy struggling against the capitalistic structure of the Indian society. His never-ending pains make his objectives be gained, and Hari eventually stores happiness in the family despite being attacked by incalculable outer social forces. Along with the tireless attempts of Hari in bettering his family economic condition, his sister, Lila accounts for a lot. Her sacrifice and hard labor have indeed energized Hari much to grow bolder to fight against all obvious factors and to bring about happiness and economic prosperity. After all the courageous children i.e. Hari and Lila prove as the sampling to other Indian working class citizens.

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I. Introduction

Desai and her works

Anita Desai was born in Mussorie to a German mother and a Bengali father on June 24, 1937. She spent much of her life in New Delhi. She spoke German at home and Hindi to friends and neighbors. She first learned English when she went to Queen Mary's School at Delhi. It is the language in which she first learned to read and write and so it became her literary language. When asked why English remains her literary language, she says "I think it had a tremendous effect that the first thing you saw written and the first thing you ever read were English. It seemed to me the language of books. I just went on writing it because I always wanted to belong to this world of books" (223).

Anita Desai is a part of a new literary tradition of Indian writing in English, which dates back only to the 1930s or 1940s. Her new style of writing is also different from many Indian writers, as it is much less conservative than Indian literature has been in the past. For these reasons, she says that she is not widely read in India, mainly in Indian Universities. But the situation is quite different now. She is as popular with her Indian readers as she is with her overseas readers. In fact, Universities in India are prescribing her novels for students of English language and literature. Scholars of the world are carrying out extensive research work on Anita Desai's fiction.

Throughout her novels, children's books and short stories, Anita Desai focuses on personal struggles and problems of contemporary life that her Indian characters must cope with. She maintains that her primary goal is to discover the truth. She portrays the cultural and social changes that India had undergone during the post-colonial era.

Anita Desai's way of life is essentially western and the language barrier perhaps explains her almost total lack of awareness of the strength and beauty of writers. As regards, Indian English novel, Anita Desai considers that as compared with the best of English writing in the west. She herself reads Indian novel in English only to remain familiar with them.

Anita Desai in her novel, *The Village by The Sea* craves the picture of Indians and their lifestyle. The overall theme of the novel is poverty of the lower classes. A picture of Hari's house in the village Thul reflects paucity and poverty of the worst types:

“The hut should have been rethatched years ago-the old palm leaves were dry and tattered and slipping off the beams. The earthen walls were crumbling. The windows gaped without any shutters. There was no smoke to be seen curling up from under a cooking pot on a fire as in other huts...” (13)

The family's land is sold to pay debts; they have a small patch of land to grow vegetables; animals are sold. Father is a workless drunkard, mother sick and bed-ridden, and children ill-fed and ill-dressed. The hero Hari's food consists of dry chapattis, a pinch of salt and chilies. This is a faithful depiction of life in the villages. Hari and Lila's education has stopped for lack of funds; there is no provision for the purchase of books for next year for Bela and Kamal. They hardly eat anything but “dry bread, or dry rice, every day”. Their only income is from the occasional sale of bunches of coconuts from their palms to the Malabaris. Hari's house represents other houses in the village with the added disadvantage of lack of a boat, a cow, a job and a fit-for-nothing drunkard of a father, a sick and invalid mother, sisters to be married of and no dowries.

Cross lights are thrown on the theme of poverty and economic hardship from different angles. Ever increasing Indian population is worsening the situation. The cart driver's words to Hari are enlightening on the point: "nothing is enough. We are too many on earth now. Not enough fuel for all, not enough food, not enough jobs or schools, or hospitals, or trains, buses or houses. Too many people, not enough to go around".(27) This theme is further supplemented by the description of the Sri Krishna Eating House of Gowalia Tank, Bombay, the meanest and the shabbiest restaurant, frequented by beggars and coolies. The owner of the restaurant lives in a shack in one of the slums called *zopadpattis* in Bombay. During the monsoon these *zopadpattis* become uninhabitable because of leaky roofs, shaky walls and shabby and damp floors. People there live a precarious existence.

In this novel, Desai stresses that hard labor is imperative for subsistence and survival. Hari works hard in the patch of land for growing vegetables, breaks and sells bunches of coconut, tries to catch fish by net on the sea-shore as long as he is at Thul, and works very hard in Jagu's restaurant, cleaning pots, kneading dough, baking *chaptis*, serving the visitors with food and tea and lighting the stoves and hearths and keeping awake almost all through the night. In the spare time, he learns the art of watch-mending from Mr. Panwallah. His elder sister Lila works equally hard. She attends to her sick mother, looks after her drunken father and her younger sisters Bela and Kamal by working hard for the de Silvas and Sayyid Ali Sahib at Mon Repos. In fact, she manages her family with poise and grit during the absence of Hari and by her hard work, she gets the poor man's plenty.

The other most important theme in the novel is that of change in the nature, the virgin land and human life in the wake of industrialization, a modern disease.

Violation of the virgin soil and the resultant devastation of flora and fauna are only

anticipated, and have not yet occurred but they are terrible enough threatening the farmers, the fishermen and the shepherds living in the coastal belt of fourteen villages from Rewah to Alibagh. Even Bombay, which is fourteen kilometers away, will not be safe from the hazards of industrial pollution of the city and the sea.

The Village by The Sea has indeed received many criticisms from different readers since its publication. In fact there are variations in them as well. In course of time, an Indian critic, Hari Das states on the basis of his reading to *The Village by The Sea*: “Child characters in the novel do represent the working class people who are socially bound to get to the commercial world for economic gains” (72). As a matter of fact, Hari, the central child character leaves the school and gets committed to involving in the practical life which is too challenging to the person of his age. Similarly another prominent critic, Anna Clare asserts: “*The Village by The Sea* is a touching story of a poor Indian family, actors are the two oldest children Lila and Hari, and how they raise the whole family and live through the hard times”(4). Hence, she makes it crystal clear that the narrative moves around these two characters and their sacrifice for the sake of family brings about the light in the gloomy and dark world of the family.

Child characters are focused much since they pervade the novel and their actions determine the fate of the family which has ever been poverty-stricken. They bring about a dramatic change in the living standard of the family. Furthermore, Samatha Kenedy states: “It is a story of a poor Indian family who are being torn apart by illness and alcohol. The children of family work and fight to keep their family together” (13). The family problems cause children, who are not fully mature, to stand on their own, to earn money in order to support the family members and bring a sort

of harmony over there. How parents are indifferent to the family problems and remain busy in unproductive activities is the matter of marvel.

Teena Sen says: “The novel is an excellent book depicting the misery of children whose parents do not care for them. Really it creates scenery of the plot around the readers” (17). Sen shows the miserable plight of children Hari and Lila who suffer on the hands of socio-economic system in which they have been born. Despite their zeal and interest in study, they feel morally obliged to drop school and start working for the sake of the family. In this way, Ebony Holland avers: “*The Village by The Sea* takes us through a journey to modernization and the introduction of factories and industrialization” (21). Hence his focus is on the transitional aspect of the life that has ever been rural and agrarian and now turns into commercial and industrial one. This change displays the fact the exploitation on the working class turns into a new form. It means feudalism is replaced with capitalism where capitalists overrule the workers in the industries and factories.

In *The Village by The Sea*, a clear philosophy of optimism is brought out. In Hardy’s writings chance always goes against man. In this novel, chance always favors Hari. Whenever the family is beset with a financial crunch, de Silvas pay a visit to Mon Repos. When Hari desires to make it to Bombay, the procession helps him. Good luck and chance take him to Hira Lal, Jagu and Mr. Panwallah, and sends Sayyid Ali to Mon Repos in Thul to enable Lila to earn some money. This novel has a subtitle *A Indian Family Story* and it has been praised for its building up the Indian scene most successfully. Dr. R.K. Dhawan thus comments on this novel:

It is entirely different setting and a different theme as compared to Desai’s other novels. Through the characters of Lila and Hari, who are brother and sister, and who take upon themselves the task of looking

after their younger sisters owing to the ill-health of their mother and the unemployment and dipsomaniac of their father. (17)

Dhawan talks about the family affair handled by the children Hari and Lila and their brave spirit and endless efforts which never seem tireless and rather they keep on making efforts to win the financial crisis of their family. Further his focus is on the plight of children who delegate the poor of India in general.

Dr. J.P. Tripathi points out that Anita Desai is an excellent painter of cities and city life. The gloomy haunting city of Bombay is well-pictured in her *The Village by The Sea*. In this novel, a brilliant and vivid picture of Bombay is presented. Bombay in Monsoon, the enchanted scenes of Chowpatty, “the great looming sides of steamships berthed at docks, cranes lifting and lowering huge bales, men bare-bodied and sweating” huge crowds thronged and moving in the streets, huge buildings and enigmatic life inspiring awe in Hari are brought almost the first time. Countryside is no mere picnic ground but vital part of India scintillating with destiny of human interests and problems. De Silvas come for repose to Thul and Sayyid Ali for serious bird-watching. Adatkar’s association of protest against the industrialization move is for rural welfare. There is no divide between the Haves and Have-nots; they lead a melodious life of mutual help and interdependence. *The Village by The Sea* achieves a happy fusion of the village and the city, the rural and the urban life, the rich and the poor.

In the following chapter, I will mention distinct sorts of Marxism as well as the details of the lower strata in different aspects of society. Furthermore, the third chapter will centralize on the pose of Indian poor people who undergo different sorts of economic challenges. The reflection on plentiful hindrances in the path of poor people’s progress, prosperity, fame and dignity will be vitalized as well.

II. New Marxist Perspective

Marxist criticism, in its diverse forms, ground its theory of economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and his fellow thinker Fredrick Engles on the three main points. The first is that the material production of the society largely determines the evolving history of humanity, of the social relation, of its institution, and of its way of thinking or its overall economic organization. Second, the historical change in the social class structure, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic, political and social advantages. And the third claim is the human consciousness is constituted by an ideology, the beliefs, values and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceived and by recourse to which they explain what they take to be reality. An ideology is the product of the position and interest of the particular class. In any historical era, the dominant ideology, embodies and serves to legitimize the perpetuation, the interest of the dominant economic and social class of the time.

Karl Marx was the most advanced economist, sociology and supreme ideologist who formulated the most revolutionary and scientific theory. His theories disprove the bourgeois economic, political and social system establishing the philosophy of proletariat. He initiated the movement of the proletariat, i.e. the movement of those who do not posses material things but work against those who posses the abounding amounts wealth without labor. This emancipator movement was imitated by Marx at abolishing the concentration of wealth in the hands of tiny minority by seizing the political and legal power from the land of bourgeois class. Marxism as the political theory advocates class struggle of the proletariat against the ruling class until the political power is seized and socialist system is established. This brought a significant change in the bourgeois ideology. It challenged the old view

point of philosophy itself. Marx himself stated clearly that philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways: the point is to change it, explained life and world from a quite different perspective, this theory aims at intensifying the inevitable process of change and brought considerable change in the concept of art and literature as well.

We can find distinct classes in struggle for the economic, political as well as social advantages. So literature for Marxism should reflect this dialectical totality of a society and the value of literature is judged on the basis of how far it has done this function. Marxism is different from the movement “Art for art’s sake”. It stresses the need that literature should be useful to life. It denounces the modern trend of writing which concentrates on minute subjective picture of the world. Disproving the early concept of art and literature has a social as well as political implication and it must be committed to people. It should aim for the betterment of society.

Although Marx and Engels have not left any systematic works entirely centered on art and literature, they have raised some basic questions about them to their discussion about ‘base’ and ‘superstructure’. So, “The interpretation of the relevance of Marx’s theory to literature is a matter of dispute not merely between Marxists and non-Marxists (Sociologist literature critics, philosophers) but have been and is still the subject of bitter controversy between those claiming to be Marxists”(21). Therefore we find contrary views about art and literature among the Marxist critics and theorists themselves. Lukacs treats literature as the reflection of outside reality. Adorno sees it as the negative knowledge of the actual world talks about revolutionizing the whole sphere of art and literature and puts all efforts on bringing newness in theoretical production. Even so they all agree on the point that

“literature can properly be understood within a larger framework of social reality (Forgacs167).

The distinction between Marxist non-Marxist sociological realistic criticisms is not so sharp. Till nineteenth century all criticisms were sociological. Therefore, criticism is often organized from quite earlier. Of course, it is closely associated to biographical and historical criticism. Fundamental difference between them is that Marxist criticism examines how far a literary work embodies ability in changing human existence and lead it's to the path of progress, prosperity and emancipation whereas others give emphasis on interpretive function and examine whether a work is successful in interpreting life and world appropriately. For this type of criticism is the primary function of art and literature. But Marxism, a living body of thought, aim at revolutionizing the whole economic life establishing new political system led by proletarian Orthodox Marxist theory of literature strongly insist that a work of literature should reflect the class relation and be committed to the cause of working class people. A writer's success or failure should be judge on the basis of his works which exhibit his insight on socio economic situation of the epoch that demands author to produce reality objectively with special attention to class divisions especially, the exploitation of the lower class by the upper. So literature instead of rendering outward superficial appearance of reality, should explore the inner causes. But it is not such an easy task. In order to capture reality successful, an author needs to have deep intellectual power and penetrating vision of the historical forces of the period. Outward superficial depiction of the things like that of naturalism and modernism which bracket off all the inner causes can never lead to reality. Literature for Marxist critics should be auxiliary ideology of working class.

Rena Wellek known as the most influential critic of the twentieth century refuses to recognize any of the new trends in criticism as aboriginal. In his essay “The Main Trend of the twentieth century criticism”. Wellek says that “We are surrounded by survivals, leftover throwback to older stages in the history of criticism”(295). In the same essay, he argues that the new trends of criticism, of course, also have roots in the past, are not without antecedents, and are not absolute original”(115).

According to him, Marxist criticism was rather unorthodox. Frans Mehring (1846-1916) and George Plekhanov (1856-1918) from Germany and Russia respectively were early less orthodox Marxist critics who recognize the autonomy of artistic creation to a certain extent. Wellek states:

They were very unorthodox from the point of view of later Soviet dogma. Both Mehring and Plekhanov recognize certain autonomy of art and think of Marxist criticism rather as the objective science of the social determinants of a literary work than as a doctrine which decides aesthetic questions prescribed subject matter and style of author.(115)

Wellek discusses the development of Marxist theories and states that even in Soviet Russia literature was not given certain autonomy to art till the “Socialist Realism” was imposed in 1932, and the authors were demanded to reproduce reality objectively i.e. accurately “Socialist Realism” not only prescribed the recipe but also asked the authors to be socialist realist literature was directly intervened in accordance with political interest. The writers were openly demanded to use their art for spearheading socialism.

Similarly, Raymond Seldon, in his discussion about “Soviet Socialist Realism” states that “The doctrine expounded by the union of Soviet writers (1932-34) were a codification of Lenin’s pre-revolutionary statements as interpreted during

the 1920” (27). Seldon is of the new view that the theory of art and literature propounded by Soviet Socialist writers against formalist theorists was founded upon the nineteenth century tradition of Russian realism. So it was not aboriginal. He explicitly states that the combination of the essential recipe of Soviet Theory” (27).

After two success of Russian Revolution Marxism drew much attention to politics. It spread not only in Asia but in Europe and America as well. According to Wellek, American intellectual activities were much influenced Marxism during 1930. Granville Hichs and Bernard Smith were two early Marxist critics from America. Similarly Edmund Wilson and Kenneth Burke was Marxist for certain period of their development. Later especially after Second World War, Marxist political as well as intellectual activities were much discouraged in American and they gradually fell in shadow.

George Lukacs, having been attracted to revolutionary activities in his early life, joined a student’s club, Revolutionary socialist students of Budapest which was the beginning of his life long Marxist career. After reading several books by Marx and Engels, he was deeply impressed with the economic and political principal of Marxism. Hatred against capitalism grew him. Therefore, he rejected his father’s business to devote himself to the political and intellectual activities. His use of the term ‘reflection’ is characteristic of his work as a whole. Reflection of reality is the key of his theory of art he advocated the old realist view that the novel reflects reality, not by rendering its mere surface appearance, but by giving us a truer, clearer, more complete and dynamic reflection of reality. He did not believe literature as reflecting reality in the way mirror does. So, reality in literary works and the reality in the actual world need not have one to one correspondence. Artistic representation is no photographic as the artist is not a machine. A picture presented unliterary works like

novels, dramas etc. passes through the active and sensitive mind of the author unlike a photographic machine which simply presents everything indifferently as can't react. Perception experiences, moods and personal liking and disliking greatly effect while presenting reality in works of art. So, some degree of objective reality is mixed up with artistic subjective feeling and emotions; therefore ironical representation of reality is never possible. David Forgacs says Marxist Literary Theories "To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through the creative from giving work of the writer. The result, in the case of correctly formed work, will be that the form of the literary work reflects the form of real world"(171). Literary creation is a process of putting selected matters together. During this process of selection, the artist may give priority to one aspect of reality neglecting the others. In the process of creating world of art, the objective reality which lies in the chaotic state is given form and arranged in sequence. He criticizes the modernists separated individual from social process. The use of 'stream of consciousness' technique as a narrative device is unacceptable. The modernist unmediated type of reflection of reality is erroneous. By dynamic historical environment in the interest of rendering subjective dynamic historical environment in the interest of rendering impression, the modernist writers totally fail to present reality. They cut their characters away from the social, historical flux. Luckacs objects this kind of fragmentation and presentation if human being as a lonely being unaffected by the social and economic forces. So, the tremendous change brought by the modernist writers in technique, them and in treatment of time is unacceptable.

Similarly, Theodor Adorno unlike Lukacs developed the negative knowledge model. He criticized Lukacs for appreciating only the dialectical totality in a classical realist work and criticized the formal laws of literature and argued that the

reality in the real world in formless. He stated that Proust and Joyce made use of the interior monologue to expose the way reality is. Interior monologue or stream of consciousness technique was much criticized by Lukacs. But Adorno emphasized that “the interior monologue, for from cutting the literary work off from, reality can expose the way reality actually is (Forgacs 188) Adorno clearly stated “Art is the negative knowledge of the actual world” (Forgacs 189). However, according to David Forgacs by negative knowledge Adorno “Doesn’t mean non knowledge. It means knowledge which and undermine and negate a false or reified condition” (Forgacs 189). Adorno said that literary work does not give us neatly shaped reflection and knowledge of reality but works within reality to expose its contradictions. As stated by Forgacs Adorno “Open up modernist writing to Marxist theory by showing that a different kind of relationship between the text and reality is possible (Forages 190).

Another prominent literary theoretician, Raymond Williams responded positively to the development and trend of the twentieth century art and literature. He thinks that literature has digressed from reality and the realists have ceased to appear. He stated, “It is not only that there is still a concentration of contemporary themes, in many ways, elements of everyday experience are more evident in the modern novel than in the nineteenth novel through the appearance of certain taboos” (William 277). He instead that the twentieth century novels still held to reality. He examined various aspects of literature in his *The Long Revolution*. In this way he wrote:

No human experience is entirely subjective or objective. It is both because we can’t see things as they are apart from any reactions; it is inseparable process. So it is wrong to relate science to object or physical reality is the part of consciousness, in the whole process of our living organization. (23)

He viewed there are many similarities between art and ordinary day to day communication. An artist perceives things and interprets this empirical information with the help of previous knowledge. So, Williams, while interpreting literature from Marxist point of view, saw art and experience as inseparable because the latter is the subject matter of the former in a particular 'dialectical context'. Everyone learns by perceiving the interpreting experiences but the artist needs efforts to describe the new experiences after the procession of internalized sensory information with his previous knowledge in his mind. In his view, art is powerful expression of human experience and creative imagination "The capacity to find and organize new description of experience" (William, 26-32). That an artist's work becomes art only by his extraordinary skill in transmission of this experience "The creative act of any artist in any case, the process of making a meaning a meaning active, by communicating an organized experience to others (William, 32). So it is the artist's power to communicate on which the value of art depends.

The Long Revolution, William presented a valuable discussion regarding the contemporary novels. He divided the whole literary tradition into three phases. In the first phase, legendary subjects linked with invisible super natural power developed where the upper class comes in the top. With the rise of middle class, it shifts to contemporary ordinary, everyday activities, the second phase. Again the attention was gradually shifted to the ugly poor aspect of everyday "Simple reality" in the third phase.

The Concept of Materialism

Human beings can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion anything else we like. They themselves are to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they are to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is

conditioned by their physical organization. By producing their means of subsistence human beings are indirectly producing their actual material life. The way in which human beings produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to reproduce.

The mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expression of their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are what they are, therefore, their expression coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production. Indeed their production only makes its appearance with the increase of population. In its turn this presupposes the intercourse of individuals with one another. The form of this intercourse is again determined by production.

The definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way enter into definite social and political relations. Empirical observation must in each separate instance be made without any mystification and speculation, the connection of the social and political structure with production. The social structure and the state are continually evolving out of the life process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they really are; i.e., as they operate, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will.

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the material intercourse of human beings, appears at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behavior. The same applies

to the mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc. of people. Human beings are the producers of their conceptions, ideas etc. real, active human beings, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of human beings is their actual life process. If in all ideologies human beings and their circumstances appear upside down as in a camera obscure, this phenomenon arises just as much from their physical life-process they demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also necessarily, sail boats of their material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development, but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, change, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life it is the real living individuals themselves and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.

Really this approach is not devoid of premises. It starts out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are human beings, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists, or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists.

Where speculation ends in real life, there a real, positive science begins. The complete representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of human beings is obviously seen. Empty talk about consciousness cases and real knowledge has to take its place. When reality is depicted, philosophy as an independent branch of knowledge loses its medium of existence. At the best its place can only be taken by a summing up of the most general results, abstractions which arise from the observation of the historical development of human beings. Viewed apart from real history these abstractions have in themselves no value what so ever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. But they by no means afford, as does philosophy, for nearly trimming the epochs of history. On the contrary, difficulties begins only when materialists set about the observation and the arrangement- the real depiction-of their historical material, whether of a past epoch or of the present. The removal of these difficulties is governed by premises which it is quite impossible to state here, but which only the study of the actual life process and the activity of the individuals of each will make evident.

Literature and Ideology

An ideology is an organized collection of ideas. The word ideology was coined by Count Antoine Destutt de Tracy in the late 18th century to define a science of ideas. An ideology can be thought of as a comprehensive vision, as a way of looking at things, as in common sense and several philosophical tendencies, or a set of ideas proposed by the dominant class of a society to all members of this society. The main purpose behind an ideology is to offer change in society through normative thought process. Ideologies are systems of abstract thought applied to public matters

and thus make this concept central to politics. Implicitly every political tendency entails an ideology whether or not it is propounded as an explicit system of thought.

Louis Althusser proposed a materialistic conception of ideology, which made the use a special type of discourse: the discourse. A number of propositions, which are never untrue, suggest a number of other propositions, which are. In this way, the essence of the discourse is what is not told but is suggested. He presented a statement ‘All are equal before the law’, which is a theoretical groundwork of current legal systems, suggests that all people may be of equal worth or have equal ‘opportunities’. This is not true, for the concept of private property over the means of production results in some people being able to own more than others, and their property brings power and influence.

Althusser has also invented the concept of “Ideological State Apparatuses” to explain his theory of ideology. His first thesis was that “*Ideology Has No History*”: since the epistemological break is a continuous process, science and philosophy must always struggle against ideology, which is, according to Marx, defined as the reproduction of the possibilities of production. His second thesis, “Ideas are material”, explains his materialistic attitude, which he illustrated with the “scandalous advice” of Pascal toward unbehaviorism, as there may be, as Pierre Macherey put it, a “subjectivity without subject”; in other words, a form of non-personal liberty, as in Deleuze’s conception of becoming-other.

Many political parties base their political action and programme on an ideology. In social studies, a political ideology is a certain ethical set of ideas, principles, doctrines, myths or symbols of a social movement, institution, class or large group that explains how society should work, and offers some political and cultural blueprint for a certain social order. A political ideology largely concerns itself

with how to allocate power and to what ends it should be used. Some parties follow a certain ideology very closely, while others may take broad inspiration from a group of related ideologies without specifically embracing any one of them.

To Althusser art exists as a relatively unproblematic category. He has attacked these presuppositions, insisting instead on the work of art as essentially contradictory. Complicit with this ideology, it contains gaps and silences that, when explored, begin to unravel its overt claims and ultimately expose its more implicit ideological agenda. Althusser prefers to focus on works as creations of the genius of an author. His work has allowed him to utilize a highly politicized conception of the Lacanian unconscious, extending its application to an entire class. In his book *The Political Unconscious*, he argues that the political is “the absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation.” The collective political unconscious, “the repository of the repression of history by ideology, can be brought to awareness through appropriately historicized and politicized readings that are aware of both current and previous historical ideological attempts to contain the meanings, implications, and contradictions of texts. To British Marxist Eagleton, Althusser has contributed the conception of Marxism as a “scientific theory of human societies and of the practice of transforming them,” though in recent years Eagleton, has also explored the theoretical assumptions of other, more humanistic theorists such as Benjamin and the German Marxist social philosopher Jurgen Habermas.

Fredrick Engels remarks in *Ludwig Forereach and the end of classical German philosophy* (1888) that art is far richer and moves ‘opaque’ than political and economic theory because it is less purely ideological. It is important here to grasp the precise meaning for Marxism of ‘ideology: ideology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class society, the values,

ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent from a true knowledge of society as a whole. In this sense 'The Waste Land' is ideological: it shows a man making sense of this experience in ways that prohibit a true understanding of his society, ways that are consequently false. All art spring from an ideological conception of the world; there is no such thing, Plekhanov comments, as a work of entirely devoid of ideological content. But Engle's remark suggests that art has a more complex relationship to ideology than law and political theory, which rather more transparently embody the interest of a ruling class. The question then, is what relationship art has to ideology.

In fact, this is not as easy question to answer. Two extreme, opposite positions are possible here. One is that literature is nothing but ideology in a certain artistic form that works of literature is just expressions of the ideologies of their time. They are prisoners of false consciousness unable to reach beyond it to arrive at the truth. It is position characteristic of much 'Vulgar Marxist' criticism, which tend to see literary works merely as reflections of dominant ideologies. As such, it is unable to explain for one thing, The opposite case literature actually challenges the ideological assumptions of its time. The opposite case seizes on the fact that so much literature challenge the ideology (1969), always transcends the ideology hides from view.

Both of these cases seem too simple. A more subtle account of the relationship between literature and ideology is provided by the French Marxist theorist Louis Althusser. Althusser argues that art can not reduce to ideology: it has, rather, a particular relationship to it. Ideology signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world is, of course, the kind of experience literature gives us too- what it feels like to live in particular conditions, rather than a conceptual analysis

of those conditions. However, art does more than just passively reflect that experience. It is held within ideology, but also manages to distance itself from it, to the point where it permits us to 'feel' and 'perceive' the ideology from which springs. In doing this, art does not enable us to know the truth which ideology conceals, since for Althusser 'knowledge in the strict sense means scientific knowledge, the kind of knowledge of say, capitalism which Marx's capital rather than Disken's 'Hard Times' allows us. The difference between science and art is not that they deal with different ways. Science gives us conceptual knowledge of a situation; art gives us the experience of that situation, which is equivalent to ideology. But by doing this, it allow us to 'see' the nature of that ideology, and thus begins to move us toward that full understanding of ideology which is scientific knowledge.

Thus, what literature can do this is more fully developed by one of the Althusser's colleagues, Pierre Macherey. In his 'Pour Theories de la Production Literature' (1966), Macherey distinguishes between what he term 'illusion' and 'fiction'. Illusion, the ordinary ideological experience of men is the material on which the writer goes to work; but in working on it transforms into something different, and lend it a shape and structure. It is by giving ideology a determinate form, fixing it within certain fictional limits of that ideology. In doing this, Macherey claims, art contributes to our deliverance from the ideology illusion.

Both Althusser and Macherey at crucial point are ambiguous and obscure; but the relation they purpose between literature and ideology is nonetheless deeply suggestive. Ideology for both critics is more than amorphous body of free-floating images and ideas; in any society it has a certain structural coherence. Because it possesses such relative coherence, it can be the object of scientific analysis. A scientific criticism would seek to explain the literary work in the term of the

ideological structure of which it is part, yet which it transforms in its art: it would search out the principal which both ties the work to ideology and distances it from it. The finest Marxist criticism has indeed done precisely that; Marcherrey's starting-point is Lenin's brilliant analysis to Tolstoy (14). To do this, however means grasping the literary work as a formal structure; and it is to this question that we can now turn.

Literary form is ideological. In a suggestive comment in *Literature and Revolution*, Leon Trotsky Maintains ' The relation between form and content is determined by the fact that the new form is discovered, proclaimed and evolved under the pressure of an inner need, of a collective psychological demand which, like everything else... has its social roots'. Significant developments in literary form, then, result from significant changes in ideology. They embody new ways of perceiving social reality and new relations between artist and audience. This is evident enough if we look at well-charted examples like the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century England.

The novel *The Village by The Sea* carries up the dominant theme related with the class conflict. The entire novel moves around the common social problem i.e., the struggle of the poor for survival extant almost in all societies where there is the capitalistic system. In fact Desai stresses that hard labor is imperative for subsistence and survival. Hari works hard in the patch of land for growing vegetables, breaks and sells bunches of coconut, tries to catch fish by net on the sea-shore as long as he is at Thul, and works very hard in Jagu's restaurant, cleaning pots, kneading dough, baking and others in order to save a little amount of money so that he can reach to the position for accomplishing his responsibility of a head of the family that has been undergoing the critical situation in regard to economy which has gone so poor due to irresponsible manner of his drinking father and the other social forces. His elder sister

Lila works equally hard. In fact, she manages her family with poise and grit during the absence of Hari and by her hard work, she gets the poor man's plenty. Hence it has become obvious that work is the best tool to resolve with. The poor do not have anything except labor. Those, who fail to sell it on time, remain incapable of getting any favorable result. It is consciousness which awakens one to mind the business s/he has to deal with. Hari as a responsible member mentally wakes up in time and gets determined to earning money which is the most wanted thing in his family since only money can help him to fight against problems and difficulties. As the matter of fact Hari as an individual seems to have been fighting against the extant system which has drawn a line between the poor and the rich. The poor are forced to live doggy lives and serve the rich while the people having wealth enjoy living on the labor of the poor with any grace and kindness. In the capitalistic system the gap between haves and have-nots is getting wider and wider. Similarly it is equally prominent to state over here that some Marxists are not in the view point there is class struggle in the rural areas as well. Rather they appraise the life of the village and state that the village is domination-free. But the British Marxist, Raymond Williams is in the opinion of the fact that people in the rural areas undergo a number of problems and complications only due to poverty. Those having acres of land enslave the landless. In case they are left behind by the feudal lords, they get victims in the hands of selfish politicians and money-lenders.

A very famous Indian Marxist Prem Rai opines on the novel, *The Village by The Sea*: "The struggle of Hari and Lila for survival in nature, and their hard work raises the family from abysmal poverty to subsistence level"(116). Speaking truly the plot of *The Village by The Sea* is based on substantial and solid human action namely the heroic struggles of Hari and Lila, which is serious and significant. In fact every

conscious human being does the same what Hari has done in the novel in order to get rid of poverty. The entire novel deals with Hari seeking a release from Thul, his earning of money in Bombay and return and the possibility of future economic independence. The struggle done by Hari in Bomby is significant enough to be noted in the context of the class conflict prevailing in the capitalistic society. Hari, a helpless young boy, is dangling in the world of experience. Before this he was unknown to difficulties of the city. In fact people are self-centered and money-minded in the city. Hari has a magnificent dream of earning money and supporting his family members who are undergoing a number of crises regarding food, lodge and clothing. The struggles Hari does in Bombay are very much adventurous and knowledge-oriented. His meeting with Jagu, the owner of the restaurant who pays a rupee a day to his workers as wage, opens Hari's path of earning on his own. In this context a critic, Paul Andrew from America reflects on *The Village by The Sea*: "The theme of overall poverty of the lower classes and the general masses of India is further supplemented by the description of the Krishna Eating House of Gowalia Tank, Bombay, the meanest and the shabbiest restaurant, frequented by beggars and coolies" (65). Hence his commentary focuses the real situation of the poor in India. Furthermore, it carries up the Marxist tenets, which proves the fact *The Village by The Sea* is a good Indian text and indeed deals with the actual condition of the poverty-stricken people.

III. An Escape from Destitution

The capitalistic mode of the society governs the all aspects of the civilization with its ideology that is to say it lures the poor showing the temporarily pleasing modern products. The capitalism victimizes the innocent poor who have been dwelling in the remote area since time memorial. It imposes ideas of following urban lifestyle by ignoring the conventional one. The misery of their life commences right from the time they are tempted with commercial world. In fact the capitalistic world materializes people in such a way that human beings turn unemotional. The similar situation appears in the life of the central character, Hari who represents the working class. Human life is directly concerned with diverse indispensable essentialities that are not so easy to be fulfilled. To meet such needs one has to make a number of efforts having certain objectives. Life is not like a house of dust built by children to play with. Rather it is a great mystery that only few can comprehend well and know how to deal with it. It is universally known that those, who are either psychologically or physically powerful and capable, can face difficulties and hardships in order to live wonderfully and prestigiously. But the coward and mentally and physically weak people fail to tackle distinct challenges. In fact our life is cyclic and keeps on poignant around ups and downs. Therefore, one needs to be hopeful and positive towards life. Poverty is indeed a bad thing that worsens the expression of human life. Hope endows us with energy and power to fight against foes everywhere. It even helps one work hard and endows us energy to kill poverty gradually and slowly. Thus it gets pretty clear that poverty in one's life is provisional which can be avoided through regular efforts.

Desai very luminously states the fact that family harmony unity energies one to overcome every sort of problem. Hari, the central figure in the novel, *The Village*

by *The Sea*, leaves school and is strong-minded to earning money to liberate his family from fiscal crisis. Though he is too young to take such responsibility, he is morally bound to do so. There is no way out before him. Along with this decree his sister, Lila's role seems equally crucial and remarkable. As the matter of fact, Lila feels responsible as well in helping the family facing different challenges. The very fact can evidently be through the speech of Lila here: "She had given up going to school long ago, so that she could stay home and do the cooking and washing and look after the others. She got up to start"(8). Hence it has come to be obvious that Lila can not remain silent without participating in the family affair in order to lessen the ongoing financial challenge. Rather she has already decided to work as a family warden to help her brother Hari. She does not want to leave her brother, Hari alone in the world of struggle for economic gain. She is really so selfless as she has already kicked out the school in order to accomplish her moral duty. Despite being unskilled to do something of great income, she is strong-minded to performing as a family caretaker. Lila's adventurous and bold personality can be seen in her task she accomplishes: "But he no longer fished, he had sold his boat to pay his debts, her mother was too ill and weak to get out of her bed, and it was Lila who came to begin the morning with an offering of flowers to the sea"(3). Along with Lila's dedication towards her family, her family's critical situation can closely be observed in the extract as well. On one hand the family has had to pay debts and on the other hand mother is deadly sick. It refers the fact that the family is in the need of two things: money and family caretaker. As the obligation of the family Hari and Lila are prepared to fulfill the demand one as a money earner and other as a family caretaker respectively. The joint effort of these two children is to demolish the walls of the existing problem of the family.

In fact hope plays a vital role in *The Village by The Sea*. It is hope and courage of Hari that he ultimately becomes successful in bringing about happiness in his family. When Hari meets Ramu a village friend he gets clued-up that a factory is going to be built in Thul soon. This message keeps flashing in his mind all the morning. Now he has a sort of hope that he will have job over there. He wants to reform his family condition by changing his career. Speaking concretely he does not like to work in the field anymore since he has not had so much land that he can grow a lot to reach the demand of his family. But along with his hope to have job in the factory, he doubts his effectiveness to suit the factory work. He thinks he can not get the job for he has not finished school. Though he can read and write and add figures, he has not taken an examination and has no degree to work in the factory. He does not understand how then he can hope to get a job. At the same time he is not sure if one really needs a degree to work in a factory. He feels that any man can operate machines and use tools if his hands are sturdy. In that case he is qualified for his hands have become sturdy by hard work in the field and by fishing in the sea. Thus he is irresolute between hopes and doubts about the possibility of getting a job in the factory. The unsure mental position of Hari can minutely be observed in the extract below:

But all the time he thought of the factory and a job. Could he get one, too? Could he work in a factory and earn money? No, he thought, he had not finished school. Although he could read and write and add figures, he had not taken an exam and had no degree, so how could he get a job?(13)

Despite seeing all these difficulties in having a job in the factory, he does not entirely lose his hope. He is from the bottom strata of the society. He does not have anything

in advance except his positive vision for the future and hard-laboring personality.

Thus it is proven here that the working class people live with hope and willingness for struggle. The very hope can strongly be supported with evidence from the text as well.

Hari a fully sanguine and positive person assures his sister, Lila in this way:

“Something will come along, Lila,’ he said at last. ‘The boys in the village say a factory is to be built in Thul and everyone will get jobs there. Perhaps I will get one too (16).” Lila as a vital decision maker in the family is too much concerned about the source of income. She can really do something for the betterment of the family as she is always looking for solutions to resolve the extant problems. As Hari loves Lila and takes her as a strong partner to fight against all sorts of financial crises, he does not prefer to see her sad and cynical. In this both brother and sister enjoy doing everything with common consent. In fact their intimacy clarifies the fact they are friends more than sibling rivalry. Hari’s attempt to win the faith of Lila that he is growing mentally and deserves to bring about inventive changes in is the matter of appreciation. Lila gets to the conclusion that her brother even at his young age has become capable of changing the family arrangement through his zealous efforts. Now she opines the change is a process that constantly moving on and this is how change will even come to her family as well. Thus she avers with positive attitude:

Lila nodded. She felt relieved now to think Hari was growing up and would soon be able to find work and earn money. Of course he was still young, a year younger than her, and she could not expect him to work and earn like a man. Change would not come suddenly or quickly to their home and family, but it would come. She had to believe that it would come. (17)

Hence it gets pretty clear that the age doesn't matter everywhere. Rather it is the hope and passion for something that energizes one to cope with the situation. Those who feel accountable always get ready to undergo the test of life which is full of various ups and downs. Indeed Hari is such a liable family member who deals with circumstances very tactfully in order to prosper his family.

Similarly one thing is of great implication that there is a sort of tussle between the villagers and the urban dwellers. The city people consider that the villagers are so unaware that they can be dealt with in any way they want. This is why they always fool villagers. No doubt villagers are more innocent and humane than the city dwellers. It is factual that most of the villagers are poor and this poverty compels them to believe the way the rich show to the villagers. But all the villagers are gullible at equal level. Hari, a valiant and somehow more thoughtful than others in his village, sees every thing so critically and brilliantly in order to save him from all kinds of victimization. The extort below would help us to see Hari's bold and critical stand:

Only Hari never touched him and looked at him accusingly always. Every time he saw Pinto he was reminded of his father's foolishness. Of course many other men in the village had been fooled as well. In fact, it had happened before- clever tricksters from the city coming and duping the ignorant villagers. It maddened Hari to think about it. He was not clever but he was not going to be fooled.(31)

As a matter of fact poor people always have a dream of becoming rich soon since nobody likes to remain in complexity and scarcity. Only difference is that some make efforts to come out of the very despondent situation and others remain passive and do not attempt for anything. When poverty reaches to the crest, the committed to change the economic situation do not see what is legal and what is illegal. Rather they get

ready to engross in any sort of business. Hari is about to work for Biju who is a smuggler. Hari does not think of the consequence after he is caught by the police. He simply thinks that he will be capable of fulfilling demands of his family. His plan to buy gold necklaces and silver toe-rings to his sisters clarifies the fact that he is too much concerned to family problems. But when he is awakened that police will put him into jail and perhaps they will take him to Bombay, he doesn't get serious. Rather he becomes happy, for he hopes he will get a job over there. Hence it gets clear that the poor live on labor and they always want to sell that. This is why they are always in search of a place to work at. In fact they do not show any apprehension to other things except the use of their labor. If they do not work, they will be in peril to survive. It is their survival which compels them to turn dissolute and involve in the illegal business. To associate this fact with the text the extract below will be a strong support:

‘Oh, don't wok for Biju, Hari. You just said he's a smuggler. He may turn you into a smuggler too.’ Then I'll be rich, like him,’ Hari chuckled, ‘and buy you gold necklaces and silver toe-rings’. But, ‘Oh no,’ they cried in alarm. ‘The police will catch you and put you in jail.’

Then they will take me to Bombay. At least I will get to Bombay. (44)

It is astonishing when people state that class struggle is only in the urban area and expose the rural sectors as the struggle-free zone. Every civilization has two classes of people: Haves and Have-nots. Thul a village dependent on cultivation has people of distinct levels. Biju a boat owner exploit the villagers through exposing greed of jobs on his boat. His boat-building activity provides enthusiasm to the village boys. Hari is invariably one among the boys who come and watch the great event. Biju gets the Alibagh workmen to build the boat because he does not have faith in the villagers of Thul though they had been building boats all their lives. This creates bitterness and

jealousy in the hearts of the villagers and makes them ridicule and jeer at the workmen from Thul. Thus there is a lot of noise there on the scene and this makes Biju become angry and shout at them. Biju's efforts to sit on a small folding chair uncomfortably provide some sort of comic delight to the village boys and others. Desai also describes the house of Biju called *Anand Bhawan* but says that it looks depressing on account of the trees surrounding the house. Biju's house and his possessions proclaim his wealth in loud terms. This provides a contrast to the poor villagers like Hari and his family living on the brink of poverty and want.

The people in the village don't have many options. There are a very few choices. This is why they are bound to do whatever job is at hand. The socio-economic situation compels them in such a way that they can't modify the job of low income and wish the new one which could alter their living style. In the same way Hari sees a very few possibilities:

He saw now that there were two or three possibilities. Even if all he could do

Now was to fish and sell coconuts, later on he would be able to choose between a factory job, a job on a big fishing boat like Biju's or a job in Bombay if someone helped him to get there. Although it excited him to think that life held so many possibilities, it also frightened him. The men in Thul had never had to make such choices; they had never had to consider anything beyond fishing and farming along these shores.(48)

Hari's encounter with de Silva's family makes him qualified a lot. Indeed he feels appallingly angry about his father's drunkenness and de Silva's insulting words about his father. He is not sure if Mr. de Silva will bear in mind his promise to give him a car-cleaner's job if he manages to go to Bombay. He is not sure if Biju will give him a

job on his boat when it is built. So he thinks that it will be good if he gets a job in the factory. But he is disappointed to see no signs of development at the factory site. In spite of seeing less possibility for a job, he is still curious to know a lot about Bombay a big city where he could get his chance. Hari is living with hope for progress and development of his family.

Speaking truly Hari always exercises his mind thinking constantly about the way of earning money. He does not see any opportunity in Thul that he can do something for betterment of his family. He keeps on thinking. In course of time he decides to leave Thul and go away in order to find his fortune. He finds only problems around him. His mother is deadly ill and other family members are starving. Thus he gets committed to doing something to dribble out prevailing problems. Hence the extract as follows reflects his thought process:

He knew in his heart that he would leave one day. Thul could not hold him for long- at least not the Thul of the coconut groves and the fishing fleet. Perhaps if it really did turn into a factory site one day, he would stay on here, living a new kind of life. Otherwise he and his family would surely and slowly starve, fall ill like his mother, and die. No! He would go away- cross the sea in a boat, somehow find his fortune in Bombay, either with Mr de Silva's help or even without it. He felt very much alone. (60)

Hari is browbeaten at different places. Even a policeman does not leave a pebble to turn. He scolds Hari using abusive words. In fact villagers are unknown to the traffic rules since they do not get used to the policies of the city. The bad treatment with Hari by the policeman shows the fact how the innocent and uneducated are dealt with by the authority in the capitalistic society. It can be proven with an extract from the

original text here: ‘Where have you come from, fool? The policeman roared at Hari. “Never seen traffic lights? Don’t you know how to cross a street? Come straight from the pumpkin fields, have you?”(116)

Lila’s role as a hard-laboring and accountable family member is heroic and creditable. It is truthful Lila’s family liability is a vital part of the family’s success and progress. In the absence of Hari at home, the arrival of the de Silvas at Thul serves as a shot in the arm to Lila. She can do something to get medical help for her mother through them by working for them and earning some money out of it. It will be bizarre that when Hari goes to meet the de Silvas at Bombay, he will miss them there as they have come to Thul. Desai is able to provide a twist to the story by making Hari go in search of the de Silvas at their Bombay dwelling while they have gone to Thul for their summer holiday. Thus Lila acts as an alternative in regard to serving the sick and helpless mother. Here Lila’s contribution in the family affair is very much noteworthy. The textual evidence will be as a good support to talk about Lila’s heroic performance:

It was all very frightening and difficult but she was here, her sisters and her mother were in her care, and somehow she would have to manage. Without saying a word, she got up and went into the house. If Hari was not here, she would go herself to Alibagh to see a doctor and fetch medicine for her mother.(129-30)

Desai intentionally satirizes the administration that survives on the sweat and blood of its citizens. In fact the government exploits the ruled in many ways. First it collects taxes and sells counterfeit words of advance and progress. Secondly, it uses lands of its citizens forcefully. Here the proposition given to Hari by coconut seller enforces the class awareness. It can evidently be observed in the following terms:

Hari tried to explain what their demands were but the coconut seller did not seem to be very interested. [...] Do you think the government has ears and can hear? Do you think the government has eyes and can see? I tell you, the government has only a mouth with which it eats-eats our taxes , eats our land, eats the poor. Take my advice and keep clear of the government. Don't ask it for anything, don't depend on it for anything. [...] Don't say please and don't say thank you – take what you want. Be a man, be independent.'(132-33)

Hari as a victim in the capitalistic structure undergoes different ups and down in his life. While he is in Bombay, primarily he is unemployed and is looking a job. In course of time he suffers a lot. When he introduces him as a boy from Thul at home of de Silvas, the man mocks at him in insulting way. Hari is badly behaved there since he is a boy from the rural area and furthermore he is inexpensively poor. It is his poverty of money that makes him get conquered everywhere. As the matter of fact the poor do not have any right even to sell their labor in the prominent way in the capitalistic system of society. The rich are highly appreciated and praised a lot by their servants. It is not because they are better than the poor but because they have money and can sell generosity in order to dominate the poor. The poor are treated worse than dogs. The dogs of the rich live better lives than the poor. The rich love dogs but they hesitate to commiserate with the poor. Hence the way of treating with Hari by the man can be seen in Bombay:

The Sahib is not here. He has gone to Thul, where you come from – he left this morning. They have all gone – for their summer vacation. When they come back, the Sahib will go abroad. He is a big businessman, don't you know? He has business in England, in

America. He will not come back for month.’ He studied Hari closely.

‘So you come from Thul, do you? The cook and ayah have told me about it- a jungly place, they say. What are you doing here?’(140)

A very understanding situation of Hari is when he arrives at The Sri Krishna Eating House. He does not have money any more and is very hungry. He frankly states that he has no money but labor that he can sell it. In fact every one is not of the same temperament. There are some people who really understand the feeling of others as well. Hence Jagu is a very good character who really feels Hari’s distressing situation and gets really generous to him. Despite having boys to work in hotel, he keeps Hari to help other boys. Hence Hari gets the job of working over there. Jagu is ready to pay him a rupee every day shows he is a wage day laborer. He can not stay alive if he does not sell his toil.

This case is of every working person. The poor are bound not to good deal since there are a very few choices before them. Though the job Hari gets at The Sri Krishna Eating House is not too much allocated, he becomes very happy. In fact it promotes his hope for bright future. Hari’s job can closely be observed in the following extract:

I have no money to pay for all this food you are giving me. Will you let me work in your kitchen instead?’ the man considered for only a moment, frowning as he thought. Then he said, ‘Yes, I can do with another boy in the kitchen. Start by washing these pots. Then you can knead the dough and help roll out the *chapattis*. If you like, you can stay here and work for your meals and – uh- one rupee a day, like the other boys.(147)

The above extract exposes the realistic situation of the working class people. Hari is a delegate of all the working children under compulsion and boundary. To such

children education is the matter of dream. They derive pleasure out of just simple survival.

Hari makes constant efforts to recover his family's economic condition. To do so he never feels tired and desperate. He goes on fighting against all sorts of difficulties. Thus he is also in the process of becoming. The more he experiences the bolder he becomes. The place he works at always remains open. Hari, however, does not get fed up with the job since he is there to earn money and is paid seven rupees a week which is good amount of money to earn. His fundamental motive is to save money for his family members. He does not bother with the nature of job he is doing. He is worried to money. This case is applicable to every working class people.

Evidence from the text could help us vision Hari's actual condition:

The eating house never quite shut and customers had to be served with tea and bread or bread and lentils whenever they demanded it, day or night. Jagu kept his promise of paying Hari a rupee a day which came to seven rupees a week, good wages for a young boy new to the work, and Hari was grateful for it. Since he also got his meals free, he could save all that money to take home to his family, he was proud of the amount he was collecting for them.(165)

Similarly the most disturbing situation of Hari's family can be assimilated through the illness of his mother that she is suffering from anemia which is due to scarcity of good food. When Hari's mother is ruthlessly ill and is hospitalized, the doctor produces the report about her health that she has the touch of TB. It exposes the bitter reality that the poor fall sick due to not having sufficient good food. It is pretty clear in the extract given below:

She is suffering from anemia. A very bad case of it, the doctor says. It is lucky we brought her here in time. They have many tests- X-rays and blood tests and so on- and they found that she has a touch of TB too, just a slight one that they can cure with medicines. They are giving her injections and good food, and she will get well. Of course it will take time-they say you must leave her with them for some time.

Your father has said he will look her. Is that all right?(163)

The social actuality can not be ignored at any cost, for it tells us about the authority of one class over the other. The children of the rich enjoy and derive pleasure out of the children who are of the poor. Lila makes a number of efforts on her own part in order to earn money in the absence of Hari. When Hari is not at home, Lila deals with the family affair. She serves a family from which is on the holiday in Thul. She seems quite busy in collecting flowers and helping the cook. Whatever she does is oriented towards solving her family's monetary crisis. Her equal dedication and frequent attempts to kick out poverty can not be underestimated. Rather she should be given credit of prosperous her family's condition through economic prosperity. Lila as the second important character copes with all sorts of difficulties that are extant in her family. Her energetic and passionate efforts can be observed in the following: "Lila was busy helping the cook clear the kitchen and pack their belongings. Her sisters went to collect flowers for the memsahib before she left- allamanda and hibiscus and frangipani blossom, and garlands of jasmine for the children"(175). To the poor a little amount of money is of the great value and significance. They are lost in the world of thoughts and happiness. Lila as a poor girl has been able to earn money by serving the family from Bombay. When she is paid salary at the end of the month she starts jumping with joy and manages her home by stocking the kitchen with rice and

tea and sugar. She does help her mother providing her milk through her father. All these activities of Lila validate the fact that her role in changing the family's despondent situation is very much indebted and remarkable. The extract below overviews the pleasant situation of Lila:

He looked just as embarrassed when he paid Lila her salary at the end of the month and she whisked out of sight as quickly as possible, then ran round the house and across the creek to their hut, laughing with joy. It was wonderful to earn money. There was enough now to stock their kitchen with rice and tea and sugar, and Lila went every week to the hospital in Alibagh by bus to take some to their father who bought extra milk and fruits for their mother with it. The money made everything possible and Lila hoped the gentleman would stay on and on so that she could continue to earn money. (179-80)

Desai truly presents the life style of many city dwellers that are a step below the mucky rich and a step above the poor like Hari. Jagu is a delegate of that class who has got a house in the slum that is to say *zopadpatti*. They do undergo a lot of difficulties due to having houses in the slum where is not facilities of so many things. Such people are always in between that is neither poor nor are they rich. Hari is stunned with the fact that Jagu being an owner of a busy restaurant has the house in the slum. But one thing does not understand that Hari is a selfmade person and still he is in the process of making his position better. However, Hari gets a sort of knowledge that life is a challenge to everyone and one should be very much bold to face it. Hence a scenario of Jagu's house could be seen in this way: "Jagu was the proprietor of a restaurant', the owner of an eating house on a busy street and had abundance of customers, yet his house was in a slum, one of those colonies of slacks

made out of rags and flattened tin-cans that are called *zopadpattis* in Bombay”(186). As the matter of fact Hari is very much concerned to family and their happiness. He wants to leave Bombay as soon as possible since he has collected adequate money that can simply accomplish the demand of the family. Hence it gets pretty clear that Hari is a mounting character who is self-motivated in action. He does not want to remain slave to someone throughout his life. Rather he is in the search of change and endorsement. This is why Hari wants to go back home with the amount of money he has earned. But Panwallah his well-wisher suggests him to wait till the rains are over. His relationship with others is very cordial and sound which clarifies the fact that the poor have heart to feel others’ pain and misery that is manifested in their way of treating others. The extract below shows the fatherly treatment of the Panwallah:

Wait till the rains are over, boy. The ferry doesn’t travel to Rewas in the rainy season. When the rains are over, you can take the ferry and go back. You’ll have more money saved up by then, won’t you? And I’m getting stronger, I’ll soon be back at the shop to teach you more about watch mending. once you start mending watches on your own, you can collect the payment, it will be yours, not mine. Does that sound good? Eh? Then you can go back and set up as the village watch mender. (205)

Thus the Panwallah convinces Hari for his benefits selflessly. The Panwallah is a good character who has kind heart to incorporate others’ difficulties. Hari respects the Panwallah as he loves Hari and guides him to follow the right path which could help him get inexpensively stronger. Hari is very much open to the Panwallah. Indeed he gives every detail of his family saying his father sold all properties and has become poor. A small plot of land is left behind where he can grow vegetables. After

experiencing a lot Hari gets too much conscious to differentiate what is right and what is wrong. Now onwards he does not want to live the life of a servant. Rather he wants to be autonomous and live on his own. He now looks forward to spending the life with prestige and human dignity. It gets pretty clear that he is now in the world of knowledge. The actual saying of Hari makes his vision obvious here:

Hari did not, after all, go up the hill to the tall block of flats where the de Silvas lived. He felt he could not bear the shame and humiliation of finding his way into it and asking for work. He was no longer the frightened, confused boy who crawled into any hole where he could find shelter and protection. He knew he could make choices and decisions now. He did not really wish to live in a rich man's house as a servant.[...] He was not a city boy and he did not want to become one.(212)

Hari expresses his feelings from his heart. His understanding of a servant for the de Silvas family is too much bitter. At the moment he does not want to work for that family as he takes the rich as the exploiters. The rich can not be good to the poor. Hari is now capable of making decisions and choices on his own. He is emotionally and physically grown. So he feels sovereign and starts something on his own. His longing for approaching back to Thul and leaving Bombay further conveys a message that Hari is not willing to stay in the city since he is sure that he will be enslaved there. Hence his effort to release him from the world of slavery where money matters not humanity displays his courage and psychological maturity.

In fact there has been a great involvement of the Panwallah in building up the personality of Hari. Even he helps Hari purchase some presents for his family members. Hari is too much grateful to the Panwallah. At the same time Jagu the

administrator of the eating house is kind to Hari as well. He warns Hari to be aware of the money he is carrying with him. It shows that Hari has won the hearts of many while being in Bombay. Speaking truly the poor get delighted enough when they possess even a little quantity of money since it heightens the degree of hope and victory over poverty. As a loving son and brother buys presents for parents and sisters. His motive is to establish peace, concord, and happiness through economic prosperity. Buying presents throws a sparkle of success and triumph over poverty of his family. It can be seen in the following words:

Then Hari brought out presents for them- the presents Mr Panwallah had helped him purchase in Bombay with his watch repair money- bangles for the younger girls, metal ones with a gold and silver wash that made them shine, and a sari for Lila: not one of those thick homespun ones one could buy in the village, but a mill-made one of filmy, silky cloth, striped pink and white like some freshly bloomed morning flower. The three girls were wonder-struck when he unfolded it for them to see- nothing so pretty, so expensive or so fashionable had ever come into their house before. (225-26)

People who are really economically poor can not easily get rich so soon since their labor earns money not the capital like wealthy people's speculation in industries and companies. The dependent on just labor do not enjoy a lot and permanently as their certain limit of their capability to spend money. Hari the village boy who has just returned from the city, Bombay has some money that recognizes him as a rich person in his village. But he is not sure about this fake word because he is aware and understands the actual condition of his family. The very fact can evidently be expressed in the extract below: "Oh, you have come back from the city, have you?"

the girls teased, laughing and pleased. Rich for a few days, at least,' said Hari. 'Come, choose, Lila. Buy a pompret, or a *surmai*, or some crabs''(232)

The politicians' corrupt nature and behavior are so clearly reflected in the text since they do support the status quo of the society. The poor are exploited due the fact that politicians constitute such policies which strengthen the position of the capitalists and they begin endangering the life of the poor who indeed live on their labor. Hence the agrarian life of people of Thul exposes the bitter reality that politicians tend to make huge amount of money Justin turning land of the poor into the manufacturing area. It shows the oppression done on the villagers who are unskilled and uneducated and have been living simple and tension free life just by fishing and cultivating their land. The following extract can work as evidence:

The politicians won- so they can make plenty of money from the sale of land and licenses in the name of progress. Thul is lost,' he sighed, straightening the spectacles on his nose. Everything is doomed. The fish in the sea will die from the effluents that will be pumped into water. (254-55)

Despite the fact that the people have decided to turn the agrarian life in to the urban one, Hari is still committed to changing his family economic condition by engaging him in the poultry which could help him to be successful in fortitude. After all Hari is much optimistic that he can fight against all sorts of hazards whatever vista they have got. His high passion and positive thinking process energizes him to move ahead in the initiation and conduction of the innovative profession. The eventual gain of his whole family is acceptable and assimilative as it enlightens the life of all family members and inspires them to move on the right path. Thus Hari proves him a milestone with the constant support of his loving sister, Lila.

IV. Conclusion

The Village by The Sea is Marxist-based novel that carries up the intact scenario of the class struggle existing in the Indian society. The novel centers on a family's critical circumstance that is too pitiable and tormenting. A picture of Hari's house in the village Thul reflects paucity and poverty of the worst types. The family's land is sold to pay debts; they have a tiny patch of land to grow vegetables; animals are sold. Father is a workless drunkard, mother sick and bed-ridden, and children ill-fed and ill-dressed. The hero Hari's food consists of dry *chapatis*, a smidgen of salt and chilies. This is a faithful depiction of life in the villages. Hari and Lila's education has been stopped for lack of funds; there is no stipulation for the purchase of books for next year for Bela and Kamala. They hardly eat any thing but "dry bread, or dry rice, every day". Their only income is from the occasional sale of bunches of coconuts from their palms to the Malabaris. Hari's house represents other houses in the village with the added shortcoming of lack of a boat, a cow, a job and a fit-for-nothing drunkard of a father, a sick and unacceptable mother, sisters to be married of and no dowries.

As a matter of fact old women and girls usually go hungry in the village; wear saris of coarse cloth, as does Lila always. Hari's young mind is troubled by the problem of his sisters' marriages and dowry. He wants to get some regular job and earn money so that he can pay off the debts to be raised from the village moneylender all through his life, if need be. The villagers of Thul have no hospitals or doctors to take their sick to, and no money to buy medicines. Lila is troubled as to how to cure her mother's chronic illness without the means to take her to Alibagh or buy medicines for her. So the villagers have to depend on quacks like the village medicine man that exploit their superstitions, religious sentiments, and ignorance. Lila finds his

medicine useless and saves her mother's life and cures her permanently by taking her to the hospital at Alibagh, thanks to the kind turn of Mr. de Silva.

Stating truly cross lights are thrown on the theme of poverty and economic hardship from different angles. Ever increasing Indian population is worsening the situation. The cart driver's words to Hari highlight the problem: "nothing is enough. We are too many on earth now. Not enough fuel for all, not enough food, not enough jobs- or schools, or hospitals, or trains, buses or houses. Too many people, not enough to go around."

The theme of overall poverty of the lower classes and the general masses of India is further supplemented by the description of the Sri Krishna Eating House of Gowalia Tank, Bombay, the meanest and the shabbiest restaurant, frequented by beggars and coolies. It is black and grimy and stuffy from smoke. Jagu, the owner of the restaurant pays a rupee a day to his workers as wage. Even such a scanty wage is a blessing to the poor boys like Hari. Hari shares the lot of two Tamil-speaking orphans working in the eating-house. This poor restaurant caters to the poorest classes. Jagu lives in a shack in one of the slums called *zopadpattis* in Bombay. During the monsoon these *zopadpattis* become squalid because of leaky roofs, shaky walls and shabby and damp floors. People there live a precarious existence. Young ones are huddled under rags to keep the leaking water away. Even visitors and guests will be a burden on the inmates for want of space and food. On account of nagging poverty, the poor of Bombay tend to become criminals. The beggar at the Black Horse tells Hari that people can not make their way in Bombay by begging or selling coconuts. During the day they beg and during the night they *The Village by The Sea* indulge in criminal activities. Extreme poverty demoralizes them and makes them resort to crimes and become anti-social elements. But the case is entirely different in the novel *The Village*

by *The Sea* since the fore grounded characters here do not involve them in any kind of unsocial acts which can demoralize their social status. Rather they do their level best to reform the family's economic critical situation by involving themselves in all levels of the manual jobs easily accepted in the society. In fact they fight against all sorts of challenges to bring about innovative and drastic alterations in the entire life of the family members. It is the matter of great adventure that children Hari and Lila committed to sacrificing their personal pleasure seeking desires in order to do much for the sake of other relatives such as bed-ridden mother, the drunkard and irresponsible father and other two sisters Bela and Kamala studying at the school. After all the children's constant effortless attempts bring out the family from the economic crisis to the state of happiness and relief which is too much admirable and praiseworthy. Furthermore it conveys a very commendable message to all of us that the poor have hope, labor and confidence as their properties that help them to overcome all types of hazards.

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