

Chapter I

Introduction

Literature is a written art work which anticipates life. It holds a mirror to society, reflecting actions performed by men and women of various races, communities, and different social backgrounds. As society changed, it called for a change in writing too; in early times, reading literature was just various genres according to its length, style, and techniques. Literature is an art form of intellectual value which is a simultaneous combination of conception and expression. It contains various acknowledged masterpieces of factual writings in parts or as a whole text. All writings are embodiments of human minds in action. Writers experience the essence of life through their various senses.

Literature of any kind helps to understand society's intricacies dealing with the meaning and understanding of humankind and their behaviour at large. A literary writer is one among the crowd, who has to deliver life's message through his works. He/ She has to satisfy the readers with his various styles, spin of creative stories and use of verbal panorama.

Literature shapes creation and defines it as more than just a mere disjunction between fiction and fact. It is also distinguished by the employment of verbal techniques. An excellent writing contains the writer's conception and language in an effective word pattern. Even an emotional or aesthetic truth might become a fictional creation. The development of literature started gradually, making an impact through Old English Period,

Medieval Period, and over to emergence of Post Modern Literature in recent years.

Various genres like poetry, drama, prose, fiction, and non-fiction have emerged in every literature. Fiction pleases the readers with imaginary elements, and non-fiction helps with facts and information. Poetry appeals to persons who enjoy aesthetic pleasure, consisting of rhythmic and metrical qualities of verses. Prose is direct and representative of speech.

Fiction is mostly read among the genres of all kinds of literature. It can be considered as a representation of society, observing, understanding, and criticizing it. As time changes, the writers change their view towards the world; writing about life in which ordinary people live in, their problems, thoughts, experiences that even writers can relate to. A novel's function apart from a social concern is to narrate a story either continuously or alternatively. The story can also be in relation to the social background of that particular age, a certain historical event, or about a social matter.

The advent of World Literature saw its rise before the concept of globalization. A necessity of understanding other languages required translators who helped in bringing national treasures into other languages. Basically, World Literature is defined as translation of native literary texts to other languages from countries of origin to cater to the interests of the readers of the world. A pioneer in addressing the concept of World Literature, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) wrote in his German journal, *Kunst und Altertum* (Art and Antiquity), “Left to itself every literature will exhaust its vitality, if it is not refreshed by the interest and contributions of a foreign one” (Yadav).

After the nineteenth century, there was an emergence of World Literature; it had an impact when the readers acknowledged its value helping it expand beyond its original

language and cultural area. This phenomenon of World Literature brings to light an idea of globalization. The works try to portray the local culture and traditions which go on to become a part of the global dimension, moving away from small regional communities. Literature of different countries brings new genres, mentions of local languages, and most importantly myriad cultures to the world.

The beginning of World Literature in the early twentieth century came from the account of Goethe, the pioneer in using the term *Weltliteratur* in 1827. He wanted to bring in the practice of foreign participation of countries, not only in literary terms but also in economic, social and other categories. The interconnectedness between nations was also reflected in the works of Karl Marx, Fredrich Engels. As communication lines were laid around the world, major literary works were translated into various languages and were circulated to other parts of the world. David Damrosch points out the necessity to translate, as most of the literary work run only because of the translated editions and by which the third-world reader gets to know about the culture or way of living of the setting that the author writes about.

Globalization had been evident from time to time, when a nation connected with the new found land for its resources and continents connected making the distance shorter.

During 20th century, globalization was seen when the war years which brought the third world countries to the forefront. As new social trends came into existence, the era of defining things in modern and post-modern terms began. Its effect is seen as literature changed the total outlook and provided ease of access across the gulf dividing writers.

This change of modern and post-modern world was observed effectively through the war years roughly from 1940s to 1990s. During this time, emerged many literary trends,

outstanding writers with spectacular oeuvre depicting these cultural and sociological changes.

The third world countries rich in culture and heritage found voice globally after the Colonial and Post-Colonial Era. When the Western world was busy making itself a greater and powerful nation through progress and exploitation of non-English speaking countries, the Orient countries channelized their oppressed voice and began to publish works engaged with literary finesse that depicted culture of their own nations. After the advent of English language in these countries, the native writing got a new facelift and was translated to be read by a wider audience. Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* (1910), *The Tales of Genji* (11th century), *Thousand and One Arabian Nights* (1775), *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1983) were some of the native texts that were read by the Western readers.

Chinese Literature is by far one of the oldest as its civilization and the philosophical learning and religious writings of Confucius dates back from 519 BC and Lao-tzu (dates back to 4th century BC). The literary texts have preserved the ancient traditions and ways of lives by transferring them either from word of mouth from generation to generation or through wood block printing and much later writing in a paper form.

The three literary forms in Chinese Literature- Tang Poetry, Song Ci, and Yuan Qu were considered as golden forms. The earliest genre which was prevalent during the dynasty rules was poetry, beginning with the simple complaints and longings expressed in rhymed couplets of folk songs, this form gradually became more and more complex, or "regulated," until it took years of study to master its formal rules of composition.

Classical Chinese Poetry had rhythm and was short but with a deep meaning. *Shih Ching*, Book of Poetry is believed to be an important work composed during the Classical Period. Few notable poets of Tang Dynasty, which was considered as the golden age of Chinese Poetry, were Li Bai (701-762), Du Fu (712-770). Their poems were compiled in the form of an anthology. Song Ci was a type of lyrical poetry with meters and rhythms.

Next came Yuan Qu, which was the earliest form of drama. Guan Hanqing became a popular dramatist of Yuan Dynasty, whose *Snow in Midsummer* was famous among others. The genre of Drama came from the Mongol invaders but was not famous among the locals, even after much change in the presentation style it could attract only less audience. From drama, came a branch of Peking Opera, having a history of more than 200 years. The genre of short-story was based on historical and imaginative trends with a hint of supernatural elements.

The four great classic novels were - *Journey to the West* written in 16th century by Wu Cheng'en is based on a myth of a monk and the adventures of a monkey king. *The Dream of the Red Chamber* or *The Story of the Stone* written in 18th century by Cao Xueqin had imaginative and historical elements in it. It was an autobiographical model of author's family, Qing Dynasty. *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Luo Guanzhong written in 14th century was about the historic battles, showcase of power of Han Dynasty. *Water Margins* written in 14th century by Shi Nai'an was about the war with foreign invaders by 108 soldiers.

After the advent of dynastic literature, Chinese Literary development staged four periods – the early modern literature from 1910-1942 saw the new cultural movement and the

ideology for writing literature was presented by Mao Zedong in his *Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art*. The middle modern period lasting from 1930s to 1977 till the end of Cultural Revolution saw Japanese invasion, the beginning of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) charted by Mao Zedong.

The Late Modern Literature (1970-1990) had many socialists writing on reforms, it was when China finally opened its door to Western world. There were translations of modern literature with 20th century techniques as Imagism, Absurdism, and Surrealism. The fourth phase of Post-Modern Literature came with expected globalization, the necessity to connect to the world along with to match with the fast changing world of literature. Here, the writers got freedom to invest in western trends and involve it in their native tradition; one of its branches is Root-Seeking Literature (Dong Gu 09).

After the westernization of China, the literary culture saw wide change in its genres. The slow advent of literary styles and imitation of genres made the original conservative style to be read less. Though classical Chinese Literature was valued for its craft and erudition, the influence of Western culture got the literature moving. Post 1919, Chinese literature had been evaluated largely in terms of its social and political relevance. Chinese literature of the 1920s and 1930s both exposed national social problems and also expressed writers' doubts about finding viable solutions to these problems.

Later came, the advent of Socialist Literature in China, the period between 1940s to 1970s saw socio- political scenarios changing the map of China. Its effect was also seen in Literature, dividing the literary period as socialist literature, and Post Mao Literature. In his lecture, Mao Zedong speaks on the necessity of literature influencing society,

hence the counter- revolutionaries were ordered to write literature which helped people stay connected to socialist ideologies and focus should on the common folks and not on elite members of society (Zedong).

After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, the Cultural Revolution also came to an end. The country was left leaderless with no futuristic idea of self or nation. The Literature of that age was called- “literature of the wounded” where the people remembered the past troubles and difficulties they faced during Cultural Revolution. The literature of Social Criticism came during 1960s, which was written to find fault with the government and its measures to run the country.

Root Seeking Literature, prevalent during 1970s to 80s was about revisiting or return to traditional roots in traditions and also as a means to return to classic style of Chinese Literature. This movement started with the developmental writings of Han Shaogong. His article- *The Roots of Literature* gave the name “Root Seeking”, the writers of this school followed a bridge between individual life and the whole of humanity associating with culture. Few writers who use the ideologies of Confucianism and Daoism are Ah Cheng, and Zhang Chengzhi. The two majorly read writers of this school were Lu Xun and Mo Yan.

Few of the famous writers in Chinese Literature were Lu Xun (1881-1936), Guo Moruo (1892-1978), Mao Dun (1896- 1981), Shen Congwen (1902-1988), Cao Yu (1910-1996), Ba Jin (1904-2005), and many more. The ten years of Cultural Revolution did leave an impact on everybody, Root -Seeking literary writers came into contact with Western trends and hence started questioning their own roots- culturally and socially. Mao Dun,

being a realist wrote about both urban and rural society, his best known work- *Ziye (Midnight)* was published in 1933.

Zhou Shuren, who wrote under the pen name of Lu Xun, was an important figure of Modern Chinese Literature. He was a short story writer, editor, translator, critic, essayist, and a poet. His works include *A Madman's Diary* (1918), *The True Story of Ah Q* (1921), and *New Year Sacrifice* (1924). Ba Jin was noted to be one of the most respected writers of 20th century; he published various short story collections, novels like *The Torrents Trilogy*.

The contemporaries of Mo Yan were socialist writers who preached about social order during Cultural Revolution. The Chinese writers who were translated in English were- Jia Pingwa, published his first work *Notes from the Highlands* (1982) on his home province- Shaanxi, his first novel- *Shangzhou* (1986) describes the rural country life. His style was to work with the local story –telling and developing modernity. Zhang Chengzhi is known widely for his role as a representative for root-seeking literature, and his identity as the Muslim writer in China. His *History of the Soul* (1991) was the most popular book of 1990s.

The Chinese writers making it to the international standards apart from the Nobel laureates were Yu Hua (1960- present), Wang Shuo (1958- present). Yu Hua is named as a trend setter avant-garde writer, also known for his post-modernist writing. His novels- *Cries in the Drizzle* (1992), *To Live* (1993), *Brothers* (2005) are some of his famous works. His worldly acclaimed honors include- James Joyce Award in 2002, and Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from France received in 2004. Wang Shuo is an author, director,

and an actor. He has published more than 20 novels, television series, movies and is a celebrated icon of 90s China. His works include *Stewardess* (1984), *Playing for Thrills* (1989), *A Conversation with Our Daughter* (2008). He has done screenplays for *The Troubleshooters* (1988), *Samsara* (1988), *Personal Tailor* (2013).

Mo Yan (1955- present) was born in Shandong district of China in a farmer's family. He spent most of his childhood working in fields and in cotton factory due to China's political situation from Cultural Revolution to Great Leap Forward. His desire to be educated was fulfilled when he enrolled in Army and finished his graduation from Beijing University. Mo Yan started writing while still a soldier in People's Liberation Army. His first novella, *Transparent Radish* (1984) was based on a dream of a young girl running in the field with a big radish which is gleaming in the sunlight.

In an interview after the declaration of Nobel Prize for Literature, Mo Yan reveals his interest towards reading came when he got old books of his brother (Mo Yan). In the army his works were published locally in the magazines until he came across Western Literature. Being influenced by the social realists of his country- Mao Zedong, Lu Xun- and reading the works of Magical realists-G.G. Marquez, William Faulkner- he incorporated their style and ideology into his writing. With his style and approach towards Chinese Literature, he went on to win Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012 for "hallucinatory realism merging with folk tales, history and the contemporary" (Wästberg).

Mo Yan started writing as a way to pass time. He wrote his first novel *Falling Rain on a Spring Night* (1981) which was not very well received, after which he criticized his own works often. His famous novels include: *Transparent Radish* (1984),

Red Sorghum (1987) which is about a plot of narrator from Three Generational family of Northeast Gaomi Township reviewing his family history, *The Garlic Ballads* (1988) about the peasants revolt, *Thirteen Steps* (1988), *The Republic of Wine*(1992) about a young officer appointed in a village to check on human meat consumption, later on himself becoming addict of eating children's flesh, *The Herbivorous Family* (1993), *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (1995), *Red Forest* (1999), *Pow!* (2003) about a story of a young boy who is retelling his family history, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* (2006), *Frog* (2009), *Sandalwood Death* (2013) based on Boxer Rebellion.

Though his output of fiction is limited to bringing satire and humor, his other works are related to open satire towards the country's political situations. His other works are Collection of 80 short stories- *White Dog and the Swing* (1981–1989), *Meeting the Masters* (1990–2005), Collection of 25 novellas - *Explosions and Other Stories*(1991), *Shifu: You'll Do Anything for a Laugh*(2000), *The Woman with Flowers* (2017) , *The Wall Can Sing* is a collection of 60 essays written during 1981-2011, *Broken Philosophy* – set of interviews, and *Ears to Read* – a series of speeches. All of these were published in Chinese. To his credit, the books or short stories have been adapted into movies, Zhang Yimou had directed *Red Sorghum* (1987), *Happy Times* (2000) is the adaptation of *Shifu: You'll Do Anything for a laugh*.

Mo Yan's awards and recognitions appeared when he was published globally and became a widely read author among Western readers. He was the awarded candidate for 'Neustadt International Prize for Literature' in 1998. Then he was awarded - 'Kiryama Prize' for notable books for Mo Yan's *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* in 2005. The same year from the Open University of Hong Kong, he was conferred 'Doctor of Letters'

degree. In the year 2006, he won the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize XVII. He also won 'Newman Prize for Chinese Literature' in 2009 for his book '*Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*'. An Honorary Fellowship by Modern Language Association in 2010 was also awarded to him. His translated book *Frog* brought him 'Mao Dun Literature Prize' in 2011. He received the highest honor in literature – 'The Nobel Prize in Literature' in 2012. After which Mo Yan received honorary doctorate from six universities of United States, Bulgaria, China and Taiwan. He was also awarded the Honorary Fellowship by Regent's Park College, University of Oxford recently in June 2019 in London.

After Gao Xingjian's Nobel prize for Literature announcement in 2000, the Chinese audience were half-hearted as Gao Xingjian became a French citizen. The whole of China celebrated when Mo Yan won it in 2012, but along with wishes and praises came criticisms. Many critics termed him to be a puppet under the CCP government, or found fault with his 'blatant' writing style. He was satirized for his political opinions and many other accusations were made against him. But in his Nobel Lecture, Mo Yan commented, "for a writer, the best way to speak is by writing. You will find everything I need to say in my works. Speech is carried off by the wind; the written word can never be obliterated" (Nobel Lecture).

The novels selected for this study are as follows: *Red Sorghum*, his first famous novel which was written in 1980s and later released as a motion picture, is about a story of banditry, village administration and fight for freedom from the Resistance against Japanese Aggression of 1930s. The three generations of a family who survive the horrors of 20th century rural China. It is a story enclosing traumas of the past and a hopeful outlook of future at the end. The plot is about the Japanese resistance fighters who fought

to safeguard their land against Japanese, puppet soldiers and banditry; amidst the shimmering red sorghum fields, tracing history, war and the aftermath of the event. *Red Sorghum* is written in five short novella styled chapters titled – *Red Sorghum, Sorghum Wine, Dog Ways, Sorghum Funeral, and Strange Death*.

The novel starts with a non-linear narration of the narrator (grandson of Commander Yu Zhan 'ao and Dai Fenglian). The narrator visits the grave of his Second Grandma and starts reminiscing about their lives. The first two chapters are about introducing Dai Fenglian and Commander Yu Zhan 'ao and their life. The setting of Northeast Gaomi Township is shown vividly with the description of village life. The growth of characters from their childhood to adulthood as leaders is shown. Dai Fenglian marries into a wine distillery owning family but is dissatisfied with the decision of being married to a leper. She comes out of marriage with the help of an acquaintance (Yu Zhan'ao) whom she met as a sedan bearer, who later becomes her husband.

Dai Fenglian's kidnapping incident and death of Spotted Neck (famous bandit) by Yu Zhan'ao makes them famous throughout Northeast Gaomi Township. Their leadership is though tested when the Japanese invades the village. The narrator expresses dejection when there is a total destruction faced by the villagers in the resistance fight. The second generation children also take up their roles as to assist their parents and to encourage them. Douguan (son of Dai Fenglian and Yu Zhan'ao) and Beauty help to eradicate the growing dog menace due to the piled up dead bodies of soldiers. The chapter three and four in the novel shows conflict and grief as the villagers mourn to their fallen soldiers and prepare a stately funeral for them.

The second chosen novel, *The Garlic Ballads* is about the peasants revolting against government. Set in Paradise County of rural China, it tells the story of the peasants who are ordered by the government to plant just one crop - garlic. Colossal crop of garlic is ready for business but the officials who gave the order refuse to buy any more of their produce. There is riot where innocent people are put behind bars. The novel shows the resilience of characters against the injustice. *The Garlic Ballads* plot revolves around fate of members of three families linked to the riot.

The garlic crop becomes a personified character in the novel, just as the sorghum field becomes in the previous novel. The crop becomes the centre of Paradise County and their residents. Gao Yang strives hard to make a living with his family and curbs to take part in the riot. Due to the commotion caused they are jailed. The prison scenes show brutality by the officers and resilience within the characters who also repent for the vandalism committed and are ruled out in court to be given a shorter sentence to serve. The novel shows the characters' sternness, and that adversity teaches them the value of life.

The third novel *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* is based on Cultural Revolution, Great Leap Forward which traces the history of China from 1900 to 1950s. The plot revolves around Shangguan Lu and her 8 children. Due to personal ego clashes of officials which turns into war, the people suffer trauma of dislocation. The novel shows the persistence of Shangguan Lu who bears 90 years of this trauma and bears similarities as a Chinese Matriarch counterpart to Ursula Iguaran, the Buendia Matriarch from *One Hundred years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* is an epic accounting of six decade history of humanity in war fought in China in first half of the 20th century.

The novel incites historical, political and social aspects alongside the dramatic story Shangguan Lu (Mother) in a bildungsroman style of narration. Mo Yan wrote this novel with a purpose of glorifying womanhood and symbolizing it with nationality, also to pay tribute to mothers in China who took great efforts during the famine years. The character of Mother is accustomed to domestic torture from her impotent husband and in-laws for not giving them children. She then becomes mother of nine children, fathered by other men in the village.

Much like other characters of Mo Yan, Shangguan Jintong, the narrator, is named as Golden Boy but has flaws, making him vulnerable. The characters are given freedom to act according to their wishes and live life also bearing the consequences later. The last born and much pampered boy has oedipal tendencies and is fetishistic towards women's breasts and mother's milk. Shangguan Jintong becomes the family tale teller right from his birth of previous eight sisters; their marriage experiences turn their family face trauma of after war effects and dislocation. While Jintong's flaw makes him suffer; China's political stance is seen through the portrayal of Shangguan family's sons-in-law. The personal clashes with each other bring problems to the villagers due to difference in ideologies.

The fourth novel, *Life and Death are Wearing Me Out* is based on the Chinese Land Reform Movement and traces Chinese history of 50 years from 1951 to 2000. The novel was written in record forty-three days using traditional method of quill and paper. Mo Yan uses the Buddhist Ideology of transmigration of the soul making a journey attaining peace. The Protagonist -Ximen Nao, a peasant turned landlord, who is unfairly shot dead by the agitated villagers during the start of Land Reform Movement.

Ximen Nao's soul travels to hell where all get their punishments based on deeds done on Earth. After receiving the extreme torture of burning till crisp in hot oil, he pleads to have an audience with Lord Yama and defends his stand as not guilty. Wanting his injustice to be avenged, Lord Yama gives him another chance. Ximen Nao comes back as six reincarnations of domestic animals and at last as a human baby, who is born with exceptionally large head with an amazing memory of all the previous births.

The novel starts and ends with the same phrase "My story begins on Jan 1, 1950..." (LDWMO 01, 540). Ximen Nao leaves his family well attended but after the Land Reform Movement, they are left destitute as his property is usurped, concubines are married, his real wife- Ximen Bai is left on streets to live as beggar. Ximen Nao's soul descends on Earth as animal incarnates being born in the same family, Lan Lian- initial helper of the farm, later inherits a part of land along with marrying one of the concubines who is pregnant with Ximen Nao's children.

Ximen Nao's first two incarnations, Donkey and Ox become close to Lan Lian, as he practices independent farming as Nao previously did. Lan Lian shows resilience and is stern to practice farming independently, going against the commune. Due to societal pressure, his family is forced to join Commune while he refuses. As time passes, the incarnations take other form to see the changes happening in the human world. The anger subsides and the reason to avenge his death is also lost. He is finally born as a large headed boy, Lan Qiansui, an uncanny boy with amazing memory of his previous lives. Here in the novel, animals are seen narrating the sorry state of people and land.

Frog, a crackling novel based on controversial issue of country's One Child Policy was published in 2009. It does not follow plight of a single family affair but derives a ground level situation of the Chinese community. The restriction of population at its base was the idea to tackle the growing numbers, the issue was intense and horrific whose after effects are still faced by the people. The curbing of pregnancy of a woman with a limit of only one child was the motto at the beginning, later the Chinese Communist government brought in IUD, vasectomy, and other measures to follow One Child Policy.

The novel is about the introduction of Commune's policy of keeping population in check and the plot revolves around the life of Gugu (Wan Xin), a middle aged medical practitioner cum village obstetrician who first uses modern method to deliver babies and later she is changed to become a child aborting obstetrician. This rule of PRC government changes the lives of many from the high ranking official to a normal peasant.

Due to the rule and call of duty as a real Commune member, Gugu is made as the chief medical assistant in Gaomi Township. She terminates three pregnancies which take a personal toll on her and the affected; she pays the price of the crime committed and repents by making baby faced clay dolls with her potter husband. Set in Bildungsroman style, Gugu's life is discussed by the narrator in form of five letters and ends with a play. How she changes herself with society that she lives in is the story's thrust.

The objectives of the research are to analyze the characters and the social set up provided in the five selected novels of Mo Yan and to give an overall view on the author's stylistic methodology and to outline the effect of social causes to change. The study aims to inspect the concept of conflict in society through the selected novels. In order to see if the

protagonists are still able to find balance in the terrible turn of events leading to their resilience and social change, the researcher aims:

- i. To bring out the importance of an individual's role in Society.
- ii. To know about the understanding of human experiences in the social world.
- iii. To focus on social events that affect individuals.
- iv. To evaluate the level of change in each individual and corresponding society.
- v. To focus on the human resilience leading to change in society.
- vi. To evaluate the importance of change in society for its further development.
- vii. To understand how the paradigms of history, culture, people and politics work with society.

The Hypothesis of the dissertation is to find out if the characters in the author's novels can strike a balance in their life even after disastrous events happen in the society. Also, to check if they can live through any given challenge put forward in time by studying the level of human resilience which tackles social evil from persistence to adaptability to transformability. Showing how change is essential in a society and how each one takes it. Seeing the characters' portrayal, society learns to survive with optimism, and brings Change. The thesis also interprets the Social Milieu of China through History, Culture, People and Politics.

The methodology used by the researcher to find literary reviews referred in the thesis include dissertations, compilations of critical reviews of Chinese Literature, reviews and

academic research papers from Academia.edu, JSTOR, ProQuest, and World Literature Today which were very helpful. The secondary sources which are referred to include *Routledge Handbook of Modern Chinese Literature* edited by Ming Dong Gu which provides a comprehensive outlook on early Chinese Literature from 1910s to postmodern world of 1980s till the mention of avant-garde literature writers. The book contributes to a deep understanding of Chinese literary genres of poetry, drama, fiction, and media of modernization of China during 20th century.

Another book on Chinese introduction is by Sabina Knight. Her *Chinese Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (2012), in its preface it “tells the story of Chinese Literature, from antiquity to the present” (Knight, C 33). The book also has Chinese poems embedded with its English translations. The book mentions about the pioneers of genre writing and the foundations of its literature- classic, vernacular, and modern forms.

To move forward with the research on the author, the dissertation of Shelley W. Chan’s *A Subversive Voice in China-the fictional world of Mo Yan*, gives a thematic study of Mo Yan’s fiction and also about the placement of the author in Post-Mao China, and helps in defining his versatility. The next secondary source is *Mo Yan in Context: Nobel Laureate and Global Storyteller*, edited by Angelica Duran and Yuhua Huang which is a collection of critical study featuring Mo Yan’s fiction and the literature in China.

Various other dissertations and theses based on Mo Yan are referred; apart from the sources based on the novelist, the theory based sources are also keenly referred, like Dr. Ashok Yakkaldevi’s book on *Sociological Theory* gave important insights to structure the study. The researcher has tried to contact the author through Shelley W. Chan and is still

waiting for his reply. In the meantime, his speeches, his appearance through social media were quite useful. *MLA Handbook of Research Ideology- 8th Edition* has been followed duly.

To show the literature gap and uniqueness of the thesis, it has been written for various reasons so as to be able to find endurance during the hard times and to prove that an individual's actions can lead to societal change. This facet has been duly justified through the previous chapters. The thesis also addressed a chapter based on the presentation speech of Per Wätsberg for the Nobel Prize of Literature in 2012 awarded to Mo Yan for “hallucinatory realism merging with folk tales, history and the contemporary” (Wätsberg) which consists of stylistic analysis of Mo Yan's selected works and the contribution made by the translator, Howard Goldblatt.

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is the “Introduction”, which gives details about emergence of Chinese Literature from ancient to Contemporary till the selected author, Mo Yan. A little insight into his life and about the novels is provided. Along with the chapter introduction, the aims and objectives of the study, the review of literature, the hypothesis, the methodology, and the scope of the thesis are also mentioned.

The second chapter, titled “Identifying Self in Society”, focuses on the characters in the novels, studying them as individuals in society. Both individuals and society have their roles intermingled and have different interpretation of values, morals, and meanings of society. Using Sociological Approach in core chapters and analyzing the characters under a branch of Sociology called Symbolic Interactionism, the researcher tries to find the

factors relating to the theory chosen and the characteristics of the protagonists in the novel.

Based on the ideas of Max Weber, George Herbert Mead and C. H. Cooley, this chapter brings out the connection of an individual self to social responsibilities. The individuals ought to know their social conscientiousness to contribute towards a well maintained society, through which they are alerted of social wellness and evil. When there is social tension, individuals acknowledge their social importance and prepare themselves to tackle the forthcoming conflict.

The third chapter, “Human Resilience in a Conflicting Society”, is about the conflict entering the societal frame. The chapter deals with perspectives taken from Karl Marx’s ideology of Social Conflict, starting from its cause and effects to understand the author’s use of China’s social background and its history. The problematic situations in the novel become the centre stage to know the level of conflict and how the characters are able to come out of it. The characters are analyzed through the process of Human Resilience, basically a theory formulated by Marcus Keck and Patrick Sakdapolrak, which helps them to understand the conflict problem and sort it out through coping, adapting, and transforming. As the novel proceeds to the ending, the conflict knit loosen to solve the issues mentioned prior, leading to a societal change.

The fourth chapter, “Societal Change”, deals with the characters’ ability to transform themselves according to the situation, in the due course of the novel which leads to change for their betterment and also for the society’s development. Using Lewis Coser’s view on Social Change, this chapter brings in the idea of a developed society is only

through maintenance of equilibrium between conflict and change, as both go hand in hand.

The fifth chapter titled “Stylistics” focuses on the author’s and translator’s contribution to the Modern Chinese Literature. It elaborates the defining phrase given to Mo Yan for the award of Nobel Prize in Literature in 2012 with illustrations from selected novels and the contribution of Howard Goldblatt in rendering the ‘Chineseness’ to the Western world.

The last chapter, “Summation”, concludes the research idea and assimilates the key points which help towards proving the hypothesis through the selected works of Mo Yan and also provides details of societal change through resilience with a case study of a social activist.. The study concludes with a write up on the scope for further studies and corresponding bibliography.

The following chapter titled- “Identifying Self in Society” deals with the role of an individual in finding his/her social responsibilities.

Chapter II

Identifying Self in Society

“Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up little habitats, to have little hopes.