

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.

It is rather hard work: there is no smooth road to the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen."

- D.H.Lawrence ("Lady Chatterley's Lover Quotes by D.H.Lawrence")

Sociology is a study about the nature of an individual in society and the events happening in society. It is a social science that critically understands that the relationship between literature and society is reciprocal. Literature holds up a mirror to society for it to look at its features, framework. It does not just portray the effects of social causes, but also analyses the cause of social effects.

A Sociological study of society is done through assembling ideas and factors through which each group or an individual acts to give an explanation for society to live well.

"The individual submits to society and this submission is the condition of his liberation. For man freedom consists in the deliverance from blind, unthinking physical forces; this he achieves by opposing against them the great and intelligent force which is society."

(Bilton et al 27).

In *Understanding Social Problems*, Mooney, Knox, and Schacht wrote about three Sociological perspectives that can help understand society which are Functionalist, Conflict, and Interactionist Perspectives. These are in turn studied through Macro and Micro Sociology. Macro Sociology looks at the bigger sects in society as it serves the larger part of society; social institutions, groups and wide populations are targeted for study of conflict and consensus. Micro Sociology is bound to serve the smaller sects of society like the individual and various smaller groups which are studied on the basis of their social interaction and effective behaviour toward each other.

Micro Sociology deals with an Interactionist perspective of society and is also known as Symbolic Interactionism. It focuses on the symbols that help people find meaning in their life when they interact with others, and changes their views of pursuing things through social interaction. Macro Sociology looks into the wider picture of society, learning about broader representation of social institutions, their roles in maintaining the social order and how social problems are tackled. The Functionalist perspective deals with the maintenance of social order and harmony, while Conflict perspective deals with social problems from their emergence to their respective causes and effects (Mooney, et al. 02).

Individuals have a specific role in uplifting society. The aim of this Chapter is to bring out the importance of the individual's role in society. The individual has to uphold the dignity of society. Both the individual and society have their roles intermingled with each other. Sociologists believe that individuals have a different interpretation of values, morals and meanings of society. Major theorists like Max Weber, George Herbert Mead, and Charles H. Cooley have formulated their theories based on individuals' interpreted meanings which has been collectively termed Symbolic Interactionism.

Max Weber was the first sociologist to throw light upon Symbolic Interactionism as a separate study of human beings that formulates a way of interpreting social behaviour and how others act according to it (Yakkaldevi 07).

As per the theory of Symbolic Interactionism by Max Weber, "individuals act according to their interpretation of meaning" (Max Weber's Theory of Social Action). Society shapes individuals by giving them social responsibilities which they learn from interacting with others in society. The social theory of Symbolic Interaction draws

attention to smalls group of society or an individual's role in society, where meanings and definitions influence the individual. The individual seems to negotiate the orders or rules followed or provided by society. In the twentieth century, interactionists such as George Herbert Mead, Charles Cooley and Erving Goffman gave a structure to Symbolic Interactionism which focuses on the individual creation of meaning of self and the resulting behavioural change which takes place only when there is interaction with society.

Symbolic Interactionism is a micro- level framework which looks at the interactions made by an individual; these interactions can lead to creation of meanings in order to maintain the functioning of society. Apart from Mead's idea, Blumer was the first to use the term 'Symbolic Interactionism'. Through time and research, the theory developed into three divisions and came to be named after the universities in which they were studied- the Chicago School, the Iowa School, the Indiana School under the theorists Herbert Blumer, Manfold Kuhn and Sheldon Stryer, respectively.

The introduction of the Interactionist theory emerged to fill the void of analyzing society from an anti-hierarchical point of view, where the theorists studied the social structures along with an individual's views and purposes and his/her stance was given attention instead of viewing only at the larger level of society. The Individual came to be viewed as an integral unit that defined his/her own social world with his/her interpretation of language and meanings/symbols in communication with others of society.

The key features of Symbolic Interactionism are based on interaction and meaning of an individual. Human behaviour is understood by examining the subjective perspectives of

people as humans are interpretive beings. They act out after interpreting society's meaning. Humans have the unfailing sense to create meaning based on their usual day-to-day life interaction with public (society) which is in turn needed for growth. The meaning or purpose of an individual in a society occurs when there is an interaction between people and the individual. This interaction may lead to change in the individual. The individual gets to know his/her role in the society and has to cope with whatever attributes are held by them.

Herbert Blumer challenges the norms of society and shows the means by which the individual rises in action. According to him, meanings can be re-interpreted any number of times by the individual and behaviour is an outcome of the particular situation.

Behaviour is not a preconceived expression given by the individual for any unpredictable situation, which means that for any situation the individual's reaction is unique.

Therefore, when it comes to an individual's social behaviour, there is an unpredictable changing pattern with reference to every social event, be it welfare or warfare.

Through these features of social interaction there is a finding of salience and identity within the individual. Each person has a different identity which sometimes does not match with that of society, leading to conflict either within a small group or the entire society as well.

Studying Mo Yan's interpretation of social situations as pictured in his works, it is quite clear that he depicts the ground –zero level of Chinese society of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The events from the novels taken for study are mostly the historical events of China, such as the Japanese Aggression, Peasants Revolt, Boxer Revolution,

Land Reform Movement, and One - Child Policy. Mo Yan is not a self confessed communist or a dissident kind of writer. When it comes to writing, he silently creates a merging of society's history and his imagination.

In his acceptance speech of the Nobel Prize of 2012, he mentioned his stance of an author's role being different when in society and when he is writing. Mo Yan feels that during the process of writing, the writer must have a humanistic stand so that he is able to view every person as equally important and portrays them on the same grounds.

Veronika Slováčková in her master thesis says, "Granting his characters individual will and responsibility for their actions and moral dilemmas can possibly be seen as sinking into the gray zone... allowing Mo Yan to challenge the political status quo" (Slováčková 35).

This Chapter analyzes the characters' roles and their social conception of meaning using the Symbolic Interactionist Theory in order to study the characters' contribution to society; Mo Yan draws distinct characters with ease, each pursuing their own nature of life to be lived. Five novels are analyzed to understand the role of an individual in society. Each novel has a socialistic stand and the characters struggle hard to find their desired role in society. The author talks about the characters from a ground zero level and does not hold back from being truthful in his approach of depicting the higher ups in Chinese society.

Red Sorghum, first published in 1987, is a novel set in the rural background of China's North East Gaomi Township; Mo Yan chooses to use the imaginary setup technique used by Gabriel Garcia Marquez and William Faulkner in their works as Mo Yan was

influenced by the writings of Western Literature and he has used it into his own writing style. *Red Sorghum* is a historical saga of well reputed, three generational families of peasants who live against the backdrop of war in the countryside of Northeast Gaomi Township, Shandong Province. They are forced to fight against Japanese soldiers to safeguard their native land.

The plot narration moves between past and present and is provided by the omniscient narrator cum grandson of the family. The novel is divided into chapter like five booklets with individual titles- *Red Sorghum*, *Sorghum Wine*, *Dog Ways*, *Sorghum Funeral*, and *Strange Death* covering the events happening in Shandong Province in each. The narrator listens to the epic chronicle of his ancestors when he visits the place. The book begins with a summoning of the aggrieved souls of the narrator's (author's) township, honoring them with the memorial food and with a depth of remembrance, giving honor for their courageous sacrifice. Quoting from the novel,

“ WITH THIS BOOK I respectfully invoke the heroic, aggrieved souls wandering in the boundless bright-red sorghum fields of my hometown. As your unfilial son, I am prepared to carve out my heart, marinate it in soy sauce, have it minced and placed in three bowls, and lay it out as an offering in a field of sorghum. Partake of it in good health!”. (Yan RS 01)

The prologue of the novel is in itself the model of an individual's role, where the author repays his respect and homage to the wandering souls who have lost their life fighting for their land. He shows his grievance towards the people who suffered under the Japanese

oppression and shows his individual role in thanking them and dedicating the novel in gratitude.

Mo Yan wrote this novel using the backdrop of the Sino-Japanese war between 1937 and 1945. The characters are similar to that of real soldiers and villagers who fought single-handedly against the Japanese Resistance fighters and the Chinese puppet soldiers. He blends historical facts with realism so that the reader relives history, imagining the war trauma. The Japanese soldiers invaded the cities, exploited the villagers, tortured women and children, until the villagers stood up to fight against them.

In the novel *Red Sorghum*, the people of Northeast Gaomi Township understood that they were under threat of the Japanese attack and that is when they decided to act together.

The omnipresent narrator takes the readers back to the lives of his grandparents, where he speaks of a utopian society before the attack of the Japanese soldiers during 1930s. The commander of the village forces Yu Zhan'ao who becomes the first in taking up charge against the intrusion of Japanese soldiers into Northeast Gaomi Township. As a challenge to eradicate them, he declares a mutiny along with the villagers who were oppressed by the Japanese soldiers.

When the Japanese soldiers forcefully enter Northeast Gaomi Township, they demand the villagers' man power and cattle to build the Jiao-Ping Highway and the villagers are forced to sign up to work on the construction. "When the highway was extended this far...Japs conscripted all able-bodied workers...Working for the Japs, slacked off, sabotage" (Yan RS 13). The narrator gets to know about the resistance from the old woman who spoke of the past experiences and explained how the Japanese tortured the

villagers to supply them with cattle to build the highway. When the villagers refused to help Japanese soldiers, they tortured villagers till death. The intensity of cruelty can be seen through the episode of Uncle Arhat being skinned alive.

The villagers of NGT (Northeast Gaomi Township) were basically farmers of Sorghum who knew no other occupation other than agriculture. When the Japanese soldiers arrived the crop of Sorghum was only waist high. The Jiao-Ping Highway took shape and reached the interior of the township, which helped the Japanese soldiers to start a ceasefire on villagers. Records show that around 400,000 working days were spent by the conscript workers from the neighboring counties of Gaomi, Pingdu, and Jiao. This engineering advancement of Jiao- Ping Highway took an adverse effect on the agricultural fields, as many villagers worked for Japanese construction; they hardly had time to tend to the growth of crops which ended in a heavy loss. The villagers of NGT were thus heavily exploited of labor, their cattle and sorghum crops that were poorly maintained.

In a society of oppressed people, there is always a rebel who voices out his/her stance, taking a stand on something right. Here in the novel, there was a rebel amongst the exploited villagers, who tried to escape from the Japanese soldiers. Arhat Liu was the foreman of the narrator's household, his presence was both important and necessary in the history of NGT. He lay down his life in order to save the household from trouble. "Arhat Liu played a significant role in my family's history...he was a faithful old hand who embellished the history of our family and brought it greater glory than it would have had otherwise." (Yan RS 14).

The Japanese soldiers entered each house in Gaomi Township finding workers and cattle, they entered Grandma's (Dai Fenglian) place panicking her. Uncle Arhat was the one to resist their entrance and objected to their demands. The soldiers then raised bayoneted rifles to make them submit to their demands. In this crossfire, Uncle Arhat was taken captive leaving Grandma disturbed. Hundreds and thousands of villagers who were taken for construction were tortured by the whiplashing soldiers for pleasure and forced to work on the highway leaving their sorghum crop unattended, unwillingly trampling the fresh green stalks of sorghum crop to lay the pavement.

The villagers witnessed the horrifying execution of Arhat Liu, as he planned his escape from Japanese atrocities. He eventually gets caught while freeing the mules. He is then ordered to be skinned alive. Though his rebelling nature is short lived, he dared to voice out and tried to free himself from the forthcoming oppression. This marked the declaration of resistance against the Japanese troops.

The author's style of carving his characters is intensely complicated. He pictures those who live their lives with richness, but at the same time they are flawed, which troubles them. Yu Zhan'ao and Dai Fenglian were considered heroes as they were the pioneers to command an attack of resistance on Japanese Soldiers. The narrator listens to an old woman who has agreed to tell the saga of his grandparents. She introduces both of them as very important persons in the village, "Commander Yu Zhan'ao, a man destined to become a legendary hero, to ambush a Japanese convoy on the Jiao-Ping highway."(RS 03) Grandma is introduced as: "No wonder my grandma is feted as a trailblazer of the anti-Japanese resistance and a national hero." (Yan RS 13).

The individual's social identity begins to take shape when he/she qualifies to interpret the needs of society, and what he does to keep the identity intact. Analyzing the characters of *Red Sorghum* under this aspect, Commander Yu Zhan'ao's role to be a perfect individual is shown when he is associated with people of NGT. His identity changes from a bandit to a commander of Iron society troop which pioneers in fighting out with the Japanese army. Commander Yu Zhan'ao is also called as Granddad throughout the novel, the narrator learns about him first as a bandit who killed his mother's lover.

The character enhancement of Yu Zhan'ao (Grandpa) grows along with the plot when the narrator brings in Yu Zhan'ao's history from childhood to him becoming the master of Sorghum wine distillery along with Dai Fenglian (Grandma). He takes part in the resistance fight against the Japanese troops, changes his path thereafter to live a worthy life. Yu Zhan'ao struggles at every chance that life gives him, starting from his younger days; where he kills the monk who often visits his widowed mother.

Suspecting an illicit affair between his mother and the monk, he sees the monk as a danger and fears that society will figure out about the affair. He is a teenager who has just begun to know how society works. Every time the monk visits, he brings over some rice and noodles and the mother sends Yu Zhan'ao out. Bearing the shame of this illicit affair, one day he kills the monk and since then he wanders from place to place, gambling and doing odd jobs for some copper coins. Sometime later, he hears that his mother had hanged herself after the monk's murder. He visits his house for the last time and never looks back.

Yu Zhan'ao spends some time in banditry and thereafter finds himself in service of a company as a sedan bearer; where he meets Grandma for the first time when he and other sedan bearers carry the bridal chariot of Dai Fenglian to the house of Shan Bianliang (husband). He helps her when the bandits try to plunder the bridal chariot, after seeing which, the other sedan bearers pounce upon the bandits. He even plots the murder of Dai Fenglian's leper husband (Shan Bianliang), burning the house on purpose in order to kill him. After few days of loitering around the house, he enters seeking a job from Dai Fenglian, now the mistress of the house and owner of the red sorghum wine distillery, hires him for work.

Yu Zhan'ao works his way up to be with Dai Fenglian. She is then kidnapped by a famous bandit named Spotted Neck (the author brings in a different story every time there is a new character based on their name, appearance or purpose) who wears a band around his neck. Though the ransom amount is paid, Yu Zhan'ao takes revenge on him for assaulting Grandma. Spotted Neck is then hunted down by the county authorities for previous records of banditry, the incident makes Granddad and Grandma as icons of righteousness. Granddad's transformation from an aspiring bandit to leading a troop (Iron Society troop) to fight against the Japs is notable only after his understanding of events which happens around his surroundings. Peter Li in his *War and Modernity in Chinese Military Fiction* comments "To be a Hero is to fight the Japanese" (Li 77).

Mo Yan gives a strong distinctive shape to his woman characters. Grandma alias Dai Fenglian has high hopes in life, but she is married off to a leper by her father in exchange for a mule. She decides to call off the marriage which she feels will end nowhere and commits adultery with Yu Zhan'ao. Since her marriage turns faulty, followed by death of

her leper husband, she is newly appointed head of the house and runs the wine distillery along with Yu Zhan'ao and Arhat Liu. Until the invasion of Japanese troops, peace remains in NGT.

Theorists of Symbolic Interactionism believe that, "Because human communication involves interpretation and the assignment of meaning, it is only possible when there is consensus in meaning. Meanings for symbols must be shared. Shared meaning necessarily takes place through role-taking; in order to complete an act, the actor must put himself in the position of the other person." (Yakkaldevi 288). As the individuals find their valued meaning through sharing their views, they act their desired roles accordingly only when there is a need for it, or when society calls for it.

The roles of Grandma and Granddad take various forms in due course of the novel, like how Yu Zhan'ao – the worker of the distillery becomes Commander Yu Zhan'ao for the people of NGT when he forms an Iron Society troop to fight the resistance war with Japanese. The narrator defines Dai Fenglian as someone "I believe she could have done anything for she was a hero of the resistance, a trailblazer for sexual liberation, a model of women's independence." (Yan RS 14). Dai Fenglian helps Granddad to set up the resistance fighting troop. She is more fearless as she ages. Her transition makes her a courageous woman who commanded the villagers to take charge against Japanese.

" " Northeast Gaomi Township, so many men, at Black Water River the battle began, Commander Yu raised his hand, cannon fire to heaven, Jap souls scattered across plains, ne'er to rise again, the beautiful champion of women, Dai Fenglian, ordered rakes for a barrier, the Jap attack broken...." The Dai Fenglian in her clapper song was my

grandma.... No wonder my Grandma is feted as a trailblazer of the anti-Japanese resistance and a national hero". (Yan RS 13)

In the start of the novel, Douguan joins his father's troop to ambush the Japs who were constructing Jiao Ping Highway. Shelley Chan in her work- *A Subversive Voice of China* talks about the character of Grandma as "an unconventional woman who defies traditional moral values", as she is killed in the ambush "her interior monologue- or her self-justification- in her final moments is the best summary of her short life"(Chan 33).

Sharing a similar thought, Dai Fenglian is seen as an embodiment of the Red Sorghum. She is similar to the strong natural force and to initiate the fighting, she sends her son Douguan to join forces alongside his father (Commander Yu Zhan'ao). She orders the villagers to make fish cakes and delivers them where the war is taking place. She is hit by a Japanese bullet and lays in the sorghum field contemplating the life decisions she made.

"What is the correct path? What is goodness? What is evil? You never told, so I had to decide on my own. I loved happiness, I loved strength, I loved beauty, it was my body, and I used it as I thought fitting. Sin doesn't frighten me, nor does punishment, I'm not afraid of your eighteen levels of hell. I did what I had to do, I managed as I thought proper. I fear nothing." (Yan RS 55).

Xiangtu exclaims that the key characters in Red Sorghum "do not consider themselves to be a part of any organized fighting force, nor do they consider themselves to be fighting on the side of righteousness...In fact, even their very survival from day to day is in

question. They fight to survive; they fight for their land, their native soil.” (Kinkley 428-429).

The second famous novel published in 1988, but was banned due to the after effects of events at Tiananmen Square, *The Garlic Ballads* has an alternative style. Each chapter's summary is sung in the form of a ballad by Zhang Kou (the blind minstrel of Paradise County) in the beginning of every chapter. The plot of the novel is: the officials of Paradise County ask the peasants to plant garlic crop as the days pass the garlic is ready to be harvested. Due to an excess of the garlic crop, the officials refuse to buy anymore leaving most of the peasants destitute with their garlic rotting away. The officials try to control the mushrooming protests by putting the rioters in jail. The main characters are put in trauma; they at first show resistance against the oppressing officials, and slowly start building their resilience around them.

Mo Yan begins the novel with a prologue to the people of NGT, as he was born and raised in Shandong Province saying that though there was an abundance of misery, he dedicates these mournful ballads to them. Mo Yan uses preview narrative style in the novel *The Garlic Ballads* (GB) which means he informs the reader beforehand what is to happen in the chapter with the help of a couplet sung by Zhang Kou , the blind minstrel of Paradise County-. Though the prologue speaks of mournful ballads presented to the people, Mo Yan artistically weaves a tale of love, loyalty and revenge.

The plot of the novel is about the people of Paradise County who are asked to grow the crop of Garlic by the government officials, the farmers agree excitedly wishing for an abundant crop and a surplus return. The farmers plant garlic, grow the crop and wait for

their produce to be sold in the market. The government promises them a wealthy return, in turn the whole situation plummets when the officials refuse to take in anymore of their garlic produce, as the warehouses are filled with sufficient produce. Not getting a proper response from the officials, the farmers vandalize the government office and a riot breaks out. The farmers are shocked so see their produce wilt and the whole place reeks of garlic.

Mo Yan talks about three plots in the novel which connect to each other, in the backdrop of Paradise County/Shandong Province. The peasants live lives of moderate comfort and plant the crop of garlic and wait for the reaping season. Parallel to the social issue, the stories of Gao Ma and Fang Jinju, of Gao Yang and of the Fourth Uncle (Jinju's Father) develop.

Applying the theory of Symbolic Interactionism in the novel, the characters of Gao Yang and Gao Ma can be analyzed; both being farmers who plant garlic in their fields and expect a good reward. They are later found guilty of vandalizing the government offices and raising slogans against the officer in-charge, arrested to be brought before the law.

Each chapter in the novel begins in a non-linear narrative form having alternate incidents quoted from past and present. Zhang Kou, the blind minstrel sings couplets from a ballad that states the happenings in Paradise County. The beginning couplet describes the instruction by the government to the peasants to plant the crop of garlic for lump sum returns. The villagers give everything in them to harvest a good crop of garlic and wait for government to accept the harvest. Riots and unrest break out among the villagers as the government denies the intake of the harvest and turns a blind eye to the

problem of the villagers. The coming together of the villagers at the time of distress shows their unity and concern over their betterment. Quoting from the novel:

“The townsfolk planted garlic for family fortune,

Angering the covetous tyrants of hate,

Who sent out hordes of tax collectors

To oppress the masses, bewailing their fate....

-from a ballad sung in May 1987 by Zhang Kou, the blind minstrel, on Blackstone Avenue in the country seat” (Yan GB 35).

The characters also suffer alongside with the peasants, as the intake of harvest has stopped which ruins their further plans to make things right in their life. The plot of love associated with Gao Ma and Fang Jinju would have ended up in marriage if the crops were bought by the government. Because of the prevailing social situation, their story turns tragic. Originally Gao Ma is supposed to earn some decent money to win Fang Jinju’s hand in marriage, but as his part of the crop was remains unsold he suffers a huge loss, separating them forever.

According to Ashok. S. Yakkaldevi, “The interaction theorists sees humans as active, creative participants who construct their social world, not as passive, conforming objects of socialization (295). The characters of both Gao Ma and Gao Yang are drawn from being individuals and growing into people who think for the betterment of society. Their appearance in the plot is as important as the garlic crop is to the peasants. The beginning of the novel talks about the description of a garlic field with Gao Yang cooking in his

shack for his blind daughter (Xiangua) when the policemen come to arrest him for creating a ruckus in the government office. He is shocked and protests against the arrest. Accepting his fault, he aides Gao Ma to escape from the arrest.

Most of Mo Yan's narratives are flashback oriented, so the reader finds the reason only at the end of the novel to certain problems created or avoided by the characters. In the case of Gao Ma, the love affair with Fang Jinju turns nasty as her family wants her to marry someone double her age so that her crippled brother can get a wife. Acknowledging their love for each other, they confront their fate that lies in hands of Jinju's family. Gao Ma decides to take up the responsibility of Jinju.

A sociologist from University of Indiana, Sheldon Stryker, belonging to the "Indiana School" of Symbolic Interactionist believes that the individual's role in society changes depending upon the situations or meanings that he/she perceives, which is within social and cultural boundaries (Carter and Fuller 04). According to a specific situation, the individual sets the social norms hierarchically based on his/her order of preference. The role-taking by the individual in a society sometimes helps in developing their own character. Gao Ma was an active participant in the army; he leaves the army and then begins agricultural practice.

A description of Gao Ma is given as a lover in the beginning of the novel. As Zhang Kou sings his ballad before the village, Gao Ma is seen attempting to confess his love to Jinju. He asks her to meet him in the garlic field, to talk about their relationship to which both agree. Gao Ma's aim is only to marry Jinju and live a peaceful life but due to the situations he has to take up different roles- from that of a farmer to a fugitive who runs

away from the police. Quoting from the novel, “I want to make you my wife...I want to rescue you from your living hell... She’s unhappy with the marriage they’ve arranged for her. It was the day her older brother called out to her....her parents signed an agreement with Liu Shengli’s grandfather and Cao Wen’s parents” (Yan GB 19-20).

After much of pleading and dramatic episodes, Jinju’s family agrees on a condition, that Gao Ma has to earn a certain amount to be given as dowry to her parents. Only then can Gao Ma and Jinju get married. Gao Ma’s only revenue is from the plantation of garlic which turns faulty because the officials refuse to buy the crops. Just like many other peasants, Gao Ma is hit big and his plans to get married to Jinju fail. Here, because of the social interaction with Jinju’s parents Gao Ma decides on the further steps in his life which makes it possible for him to think about a future with Jinju.

Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee comments on the characters from *The Garlic Ballads* as people with their own shortcomings and prejudices, which is proven by Gao Ma and Gao Yang (Bhattacharjee). They react according to situations or sometimes the situation compels them to act rashly. The different roles played by Gao Ma show his intensity to do right to the people around him. First as a lover, he promises a better life to Jinju when they elope. Next when he agrees to pay off the dowry to Jinju’s parents by earning through garlic plantation. Gao Ma turns into a rebel when his produce is not accepted by the government. He is then accused with a charge of vandalizing the government offices during the riot break through. He later escapes with the help of Gao Yang. The outcome of these roles can be different but shows that the role of an individual changes according to the situation in society.

Quoting Carter and Fuller's view on Role Taking theory formulated by Stryker:

As with Symbolic Interactionism , Stryker's structural role theory views socialization as the process through which individuals learn normative expectations for actions as they relate to role relationships. By building up from the person to the situation within the larger social structure, Stryker showed the reciprocity of the individual and society." (05).

Mo Yan's characters are complex ones with flaws imbibed in them. Gao yang is shown as a duty bound farmer to the readers, who struggles to earn a decent living through working hard to cultivate the garlic crop which would end his family troubles. He is shown as a well balanced person, true to his inner conscience until when the business of crop is denied by officials. Gao Yang also loses his temper and joins in vandalizing the office property. As the investigation of the event begins, he is first to be arrested for which he is reluctant and fights, but within his self he knows that it was his fault to participate in the ruckus. He is tricked by the policemen and is forcefully taken to be investigated further, leaving behind his blind daughter (Xinghua) for whom he was preparing lunch. The scene contains a wonderfully crafted conversation between Gao Yang and the policemen, when they come to arrest him:

"What happened to the hero who demolished the county offices?"...

"Uncle, why are they arresting me? I haven't done anything wrong..."

"At noon on May twenty-eighth you were one of the leaders of a mob that demolished the county offices."

The lights went out as Gao Yang crumpled to the ground. When they picked him up again, he rolled his eyes and said timidly, “You call that a crime?”

“That’s right – now get moving!”

“But I wasn’t alone. Lots of people were involved.”

“And we’ll catch every last one of them.” (Yan GB 3-4)

Even though they are flawed, the characters of *The Garlic Ballads* try to correct those very flaws however big or small they may be. The characters find it difficult to uphold the pressure put on them by the government officials, as they cannot sell their harvested crop. They are able to maintain temporary stability which later leads to conflict.

“*Big Breasts and Wide Hips* is a sumptuous literary feast with a simple, straightforward title, which some supporters called- a “somber historical epic”- (Yan BBWH ix). The plot revolves around Shangguan Lu and her nine children. Built around her life in a slight bildungsroman style, she accounts the events that happen in her life and how the people surrounding her affect the lives of her children. Shangguan Lu is lovingly called ‘mother’ throughout the novel. In later parts of the novel, due to personal ego clashes of officials which turns into war, the people suffer the trauma of dislocation. The novel is a celebration of the twentieth century, as the events occur with Shangguan family suffering through it.

Mo Yan’s portrayal of women in his novels, he has shown them as head strong characters trying to depict the real matriarchal society in China. Here in this novel, women characters are given much of precedence in the plot and they overshadow men. The

characters, Shangguan Lu, and mother are the strongest of all. The daughters-in-law of the Shangguan clan prove much worthier than their partners, in case of decision making and making a living out of nothing when they are struck with calamities. For instance, during the birthing of Shangguan Jintong and Yunü, mother lays in pain and terror anticipating the Japanese troops as they barge into the village. The village is being evacuated that very day. In this situation, when there is no one available to help the Shangguan family; Shangguan Lü (mother-in-law) plays the role of a savior for mother to deliver her children.

Herbert Blumer's orientation of Symbolic Interactionism is divided into three premises: First, individuals perceive things on the basis of meanings that are construed by them. Second, those meanings are taken or understood by the individual when there is a social interaction with others from the society. Third, after understanding, the perceived meaning is modified through the interpretative process by the individuals relating to the events they encounter (Aksan ,et al.02).

Applying this part of the theory by Herbert Blumer, the character of Mother is analyzed. Mother (Shangguan Lu) has been a victim of the war since childhood as her parents are killed when she is only six months old. Having survived the Japanese conquest, the Civil War, the Great Leap Forward and also the Cultural Revolution, Mother emerges as an indestructible woman whose behaviour is unchanged towards her children and grand children.

After spending her childhood with her aunt and uncle, she is married off to Shangguan Shouxi of Shangguan family. As he is unable to procreate, she is forced to share her bed

with people who are able to give her children. With such wild encounters with different people she gives birth to seven girls. Each time, when a girl is born she is abused by her impotent husband and a wailing mother-in-law. A wish for “family savior, the heir to Shangguan clan” is much expected.

Finally, “the Golden Boy” is born along with a blind sister. Shangguan Jintong becomes the first hand narrator for the whole novel, being witness to his mother’s sufferings and also of the people associated with him. He is shown as an ambiguous character who is obsessed with mother’s milk till the age of seven. His character relates to many of Mo Yan’s gray characters, showing much of a flaw but also how they learn from the errors committed.

A research paper based on Symbolic Interactionism written by Carter and Fuller, talks about Turner’s role theory suggesting “how individuals have to define their roles also the roles are implanted well in the social structure.”(08). From the beginning, the men of Shangguan clan are not worthy enough for being the protectors; it is the women who make crucial decisions based on any adverse situations they are put into. Shangguan Lü is able to persuade her neighbor (Fan Three) to help her out in delivering two pregnant females (the mule and Shangguan Lu’s daughter-in-law.) Shangguan Lu’s role here to help with delivery during the Japanese invasion is crucial.

While the whole village is vacating their homes due to the impending clash of Japanese soldiers and the local troops headed by Sima Ku, the Shangguan clan remains in the village. Both the father and son (Shangguan Fulu and Shouxi) blame the circumstances in which they are put and even suggest to leave village as soon as possible. Shangguan Lü ,

as a powerful matriarch chides them at their selfish thought and asks them why should they leave their home or country or even hide from them . Quoting from the novel, “... Haven’t any of you considered the fact that Japanese have mothers and fathers, just like everybody else? There’s no bad blood between them and us common folk, so what are they going to do with us? Run off? Do you think you can outrun a bullet? Hide out? Until when?” (Yan BBWH 27).

Later the baton is passed on to the daughter-in-law (Shangguan Lu) who changes many roles in order to benefit her family and her brood of nine children. The main purpose is that an individual interacts to share his objective perspective with society for betterment. After the birth of her twins and death of her husband, Mother becomes the sole breadwinner of the family. She wants to keep her family safe and alive from the invaders also to feed them during the famine. The main concern is to keep the children away from the cold weather. One can find episodes of starvation many times in the novel; Mother strives hard to feed the children that she stores large amount of turnips in the cellar for future use and uses meagerly for each day.

Symbolic Interactionists explain that identifying an individual’s role towards society is necessary as he/she finds his/her true self and then contributes towards the needs of society. During the famine, Mother decides to take the children to a journey along with the villagers to the twelfth month gruel which is possibly an invitation to a death by starvation, but ensures a meal. The narrator, Jintong explains how people see mirages of food displayed before them while walking in the cold weather. In order to keep the villagers together and away from harsh cold weather, Third master Fan leads the troops

through the way, motivating them. The following lines are about Third master Fan's urging of the villagers to stay together and also sacrificing his luxury of a warm coat.

“ Fellow villagers – do not sit down, not under any circumstances. If you sit down, you will freeze to death- come, fellow villagers –keep moving forward- to keep moving is to live, to sit down is to die-”...We fell in behind Third Master Fan, who had used his own goatskin jacket as a torch to light our way. What carried us forward wasn't our feet, but our willpower, our desire to reach the county seat, to reach Northgate Cathedral, to accept a bowl of twelfth- month gruel.” (Yan BBWH 156)

There are dozens of corpses of people who have died of cold. With the morning sunrise, Third Mater Fan also dies. Mother takes charge of burying him; other villagers come to help who were thankful to him. As much as their half filled hungry stomachs allow them to look at the dead people, they make a lone exception to use their saved energies to bury their motivator, Third Master Fan. The villagers gather to pay respect to his sacrifice and bury him at the edge of the road. “That sort of kindness, the gift of life, can never be forgotten. So, with Mother taking the lead, the people dragged the old man's sticklike figure over to the side of the road and covered it with dirt.” (Yan BBWH 157).

Over the years, Symbolic Interactionists have developed and formulated the theory in Salience, Behavior, Self, and Identity. Much has been said on Individual self and their identity like defining their roles through which expectations arises in social structure. Ralph Turner's Role Theory, shows how the roles are emerged in individuals and how they relate to society. He divides the role taking into criterions, the way of identifying

each individual's salience before they could execute any role, and once they identify their role; they should start performing it (Turner 3-4).

The Mother's role is analysed according to the above mentioned theory, her role is important to keep - her family of her brood of nine children and ailing mother-in-law together. After the death of her husband and father-in-law, she manages to feed her family either through alms or going to the extreme of selling one of her children. She becomes strong after finding her role as a sole bread winner for the family. Going through such situations, Mother becomes the protector of her family, providing them with food and shelter also fights with the people who take over their house for a short period of time.

There are situations which make Mother control the household affairs arise after the birth of her ninth child; she gets up, cooks for her hungry children. After the Japanese invasion and death of her family members, she walks out of her room gazes at the dead corpses in her courtyard lets out a wail in which her children join. Then she breaks open her mother-in-law's trunk looking for food, throws in to the wok whatever she can find. Mother becomes aware of her role as to provide for her children at any cost. She is willing to do anything in order to keep her children alive and dignified.

After getting an injection to stop bleeding, Mother slowly came around... Numbly she looked out at the corpses in the yard... My older sisters walked into the yard, cutting a sorry figure. They ran to Mother and wept weakly before crumpling to the floor. White smoke billowed out of our chimney for the first time since the catastrophe... Finally,

Mother called all the girls in and sat them around a large platter. “All right children,” she said “eat” ” (Yan BBWH 77).

Description of one other destitute situation of Mother’s is given, when her sons-in-law fight in order to rule Northeast Gaomi Township. Between their ego and power clashes, Mother and her children suffer and are left crying for food, shelter and even to lead a proper life. During their hardship, war, and famine, there comes a situation when her ‘married’ daughters leave their children under the care of Mother in order to save themselves from getting killed in war. The time when both the brothers- Sima Ku and Sima Ting are ruling from Felicity Manor in Northeast Gaomi Township, there are frequent breakouts of war with Japanese troops, because of which whole of village struggles with their day to day life.

During the war, when villagers are fleeing to save their lives, the Shangguan family has to hide themselves in a cellar filled with turnips for their survival. Here is where the second daughter, Zhaodi (married to Sima Ku) leaves the only living heir of Sima clan under the care of Mother. Zhaodi appears with a terrified look and mud all over her clothes and a bundle carrying Sima Ku’s child. She almost begs Mother to take him in and save his life as “his family has just been wiped out” (BBWH 139). Before Mother can answer, Zhaodi leaves the child with Third sister, kowtows to Mother and leaves to save her husband who has injured his leg. Next morning the villagers wake up to a horrific sight where nineteen heads of the Sima clan are hung on the rope right in front of their home- Felicity Manor.

Mother succeeds in taking responsibility of her daughters' children along with her children. Both her daughters- Laidi and Zhaodi entrust their children onto Mother to look after, but before she can take the responsibility, she finds herself at crossroad thinking over what has become of her life. She says, “ “Some are dead and others have run off, leaving me all alone. How am I supposed to survive with a brood of hungry chicks needing to be fed...Dear Lord, Old Man Heaven, why don't you say something? How am I supposed to survive?” ” (Yan BBWH 158).

Another situation where Mother's role is enhanced is when she is put in the quagmire of letting her children die of hunger or to decide to sell one of her children in order to let others survive. When the narrator (Shangguan Jintong) describes this episode of Mother's state to go to an extent of selling her child, he makes the reader feel pity alongside showing the author's portrayal of Mother's strong character. Showing feminine strength and beauty, courage to fight against all odds, going to the extreme for the needs of her children, these can be the qualities of women of Shangguan Clan, to which the author has rightly given the title as *Big Breasts and Wide Hips*.

A situation where Mother and her children fall into desperate situation every time as ominous events happen in the novel, they are left out of their shelter and become helpless when it comes to finding food for the children. Mother comes to the crossroad in dealing with this distressing situation as if life depends on it. She decides to sell one of her daughters in order to make a living. The Shangguan Clan comes to the Human Trade section in the marketplace only to find the place already brimming with children whose parents would do anything to sell their wards off. A Russian lady named Countess Rostov chooses the seventh sister of Shangguan clan- Qiudi. Sending off her daughter with the

lady, Mother says "...it's as if my daughter has fallen into the lap of fortune. I don't want any money... just hope you'll take good care of her." (Yan BBWH 163).

Due to social interaction, individuals find a changed outlook in life. As there is a continuous shift in society (war after war) the Shangguan family finds it difficult to survive under the adverse conditions in which they are put through with no fault of theirs. They are led to one after the other, increasing the conflict within.

Jonathan Spence in his review of the novel declares, "Mo Yan's powerful new novel, "Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out," contains many such vivid set pieces. His canvas covers almost the entire span of his country's revolutionary experience — from 1950 until 2000, in the so-called "reform era" of post-Deng Xiaoping China. At one level, therefore, "Life and Death" is a kind of documentary, carrying the reader across time from the land reform at the end of the Chinese Civil War" (Spence).

Life and Death are Wearing Me Out has a separate plot based on transmigration. The author starts with these words, "The Buddha said: Transmigration wearies owing to mundane desires Few desires and inaction bring peace to the mind" (Yan LDWMO v). The author gives the reader a taste of fantasy through transmigration of soul belonging to the protagonist, Ximen Nao, whose soul is reincarnated six times and each time he comes to earth as a domestic animal born in the same household of Ximen Nao's.

As Mo Yan is considered the best storyteller, his story telling skills can be seen when he brings Chinese folktales inside the plot and also sets up a character with same name and profession as he is, which helps the reader to set along with the author's mind voice also.

The characters of Zhang Kou from *The Garlic Ballads* and Mo Yan from *Life and Death are Wearing Me Out* can be termed as author's mouthpiece from the real world.

Along with *The Garlic Ballads*, *Life and Death are Wearing Me Out* is also a chapter based novel. In the beginning of each chapter, there is a couplet introduced to reveal the content present in the chapter. Jonathan Spence calls such type of novels as similar to or derived from traditional Chinese novels.

Ximen Nao, an independent farmer of Shandong Province lives happily, works hard in the field, is an ideal man who is charitable to the poor and also a righteous man who contributes to the welfare of the society. He is wrongly shot by a jealous peasant, Hong Taiyue who usurps his land and home under the pretext of the new rule of new China called Land Reform Movement formulated by Chairman Mao Zedong during the 1950s.

The land owners in China were arrested or shot dead for having land all to themselves and not dividing it to the peasants who worked all day in their fields, their rule was overturned by the peasants. The novel also runs through a similar stream of plot, where a 30 year old charitable man with a happy life and family is shot dead by the peasants. He is resurrected from death in order to seek revenge on his untimely death and to know the reason of his death.

“The local gem of a man's real identity” (Yan LDWMO 23) is revealed to be a communist member during people's commune and upon that he is a rich landlord. Under such false accusations and supposed exploitations, the evil oppressor of people, Ximen Nao is untimely shot at point blank range at a stone bridge on the outskirts of the village

in the cold of December. All his properties are seized, his farms divided along with his house and family. His two concubines, Yingchun and Wu Quixiang, are forced to marry Lan Lian (Nao's farmhand) and Huang Tong in order to save their lives. Lan Lian follows his master's steps to be an independent farmer but Huang Tong seizes half of the house and makes the other half of the house as an office for People's Commune. Ximen Nao's wife, Ximen Bai, is also one to suffer as she does not marry after Nao's death.

After a frightful and hideous episode of burning in hell and frying to the crisp in fuming oil (ultimate torture in hell) and a debatable session of two years in hell, Ximen Nao defends his innocence against the accusations done by people of village. Lord Yama hears his pitiable claims and agrees to send him over to earth. Ximen Nao is relieved to go back to his village and seek revenge and also to prove his innocence, but to his surprise he is born as a domestic animal in the same household. First he is born as a Donkey then as an Ox, Pig, Dog, Monkey and at last as a human child, Lan Qiansui, born with unusual memory of his previous births. He comes into the world full of anger and is disgusted with this unjust treatment of Lord Yama (because Ximen Nao wanted to be born as human again).

There are two Buddhist ideologies which can be understood in the view of this novel- one is that life goes in cycle, be it birth or death life does not stop. Life begins where it ends. Also in the case of Ximen Nao, his soul transmigrates from one body form to the other which also leads to a reduction of his hatred towards the world and its people. As he was treated unjustly and was killed ruthlessly, he wanted to seek revenge even after his death.

The prologue lines would be the best to answer his situation that transmigration has to go on until peace is achieved. This transmigration of a soul from a human to five animal forms is really an amusing read, what more excites the reader is that the animals are called – Ximen Donkey, Ximen Ox and so on as they are the incarnations of Ximen Nao. Also, these animals can talk, think and express their feelings to humans; the best of which is seen with Lan Lian and Ximen Ox.

The second Buddhist ideology in the novel is found in the first line of the novel, “My story begins on January 1, 1950.”(Yan LDWMO 03) which is also the last line of the novel. The narration is done by all the six incarnations of Ximen Nao, they tell their stories of what happened with them. An amusing fact that the author brings in is that the narrator knows every detail of each life Ximen Nao has lived as an animal, because the last incarnation is a large-headed boy(Lan Qiansui) born into Lan Lian’s family who has an uncanny memory of all the incarnations along with great gift of language to express it.

Hence all put together the beginning line of the novel talks about Ximen Nao’s story which begins in 1950 covering all the happenings around his family and at last ending with the birth of Lan Qiansui (born in millennial year) who in turn narrates Ximen Nao’s story. Living half a century, experiencing enmity, misconduct, pain, loyalty, and content; he narrates what has happened in his animal lives. This leads him to say “the beginning as the end and the end as the beginning”.

Using the factors of Symbolic Interactionism, human behavior and role taking, the character of Ximen Nao and Lan Lian is studied to show how they make a difference being an Individual and an independent farmer across whole of China. In the novel, the

soul of Ximen Nao travels into various body forms to witness the life events of his family- his wife, concubines, and children. Until Nao was alive, he refused to bend before the people's commune.

Ximen Nao denied sharing his hard earned granaries, fields, and even house to peasants as per the Land Reform Law of 1950, which was later confiscated after his death. Ximen Nao's perspective was why should he share his possession with others? His meaning of life was to work hard and live, which he did though for a short period of time. Nao had everything he desired- family, children, concubines, fields and granaries full up to its brim.

Ximen Nao was tenacious with his ownership of land and was upright in his life; yet killed due to the circumstances for which he incarnates to seek revenge, Lan Lian is silent, resilient against the wrong on goings with the people's commune, he continues to cultivate the strip of land following his master's (Ximen Nao) steps. Lan Lian is also called as blue face because of the mark on his face and becomes Ximen's foreman at work. He is found on the footsteps of a temple when young Ximen Nao adopts him. He is also another important personality in the novel. After Nao's death, Lan Lian inherits part of land given by People's commune from Ximen Nao's property. The once jealous and poor peasant, Hong Taiyue claims the land through People's Commune, stating peasants should have an equal ownership just as the landlord.

After the land is divided, Lan Lian marries Nao's first concubine, Yingchun, who is pregnant with Nao's children (Ximen Jinlong and Ximen Baofeng) . Later in life, both Ximen Nao's children join People's Commune after resisting hard on their side. Lan

Lian being the head of family does not oppose the children joining the commune believing everyone has their own choices to lead a life. Lan Lian and his son (with Yingchun) Lan Jiefang remain the longest as independent farmers being called as “A little black spot in the entire red China” referring to People’s Commune spreading in whole of China.

Many Symbolic Interactionists believe that when an individual creates meaning for something in the society, he understands the need of it and when others try to interpret, they have an added value or symbol to it differing from the original. Though Lan Lian is just following the path of his master, people in the commune think otherwise. There are times when Hong Taiyue still persuades Lan Lian to join Commune to which Lan Lian calmly replies “ “The People’s Commune and I are like well water and river water- they don’t mix”... “This street was here before the People’s Commune was created, and so were the air and the sun. They were given to all people and animals by the powers of heaven, and you and your People’s Commune have no right to monopolize them!” ” (Yan LDWMO 104).

The novel portrays an unusual and an out of ordinary bond of friendship between Ximen Nao’s animal incarnations with Lan Lian and his son, grandson. There are scenes with telepathic convocations happening among them. When Ximen Ox is beaten to death, both Lan Lian and Lan Jiefang feel the pain. One of the sufferings is expressed, when Ximen Jinlong after joining People’s Commune, dedicates much of his time in working for the people and the commune.

Along with Huang Tong, he tries to remove the black spot from whole of red- as his father (Lan Lian) is the only independent farmer compared the Commune farmers. First he oppresses Lan Jiefang to join, and then takes away Ximen Ox from Lan Lian his only companion left. Jinlong forces Ximen Ox to till his part of the field, but the animal is not able to move forward as he was also an independent farmer once.

The episode of Jinlong brutally harming Ximen Ox is silently witnessed by the villagers and is not borne by Lan Lian. “Oh, no, Ximen Ox, oh, no, Ximen Ox, who would rather die than stand up and pull a plough for the People’s Commune. I saw my dad throw down his hoe and sprawl on the ground, facedown, as he dug his hands deep into the soil. He was quaking like a malaria sufferer, and I knew that he was sharing the ox’s agonies.” (Yan LDWMO 214). After this event, Ximen Ox gets up with his shaky legs, crosses from Commune’s land to one point six acres of land belonging to the independent farmer (Lan Lian) and passes away. Ximen Ox dies on his land revealing loyalty to Lan Lian also clearing the minds of people who doubted them.

Lan Lian remains undeterred in giving off his land whatever comes between his path. His wife, children and even his animals are taken away from him but he continues to grow his staunch behavior through which others learn.

Frog is one of the most famous novels during the recent times and a novel justly mirroring the society. It is based on the One Child Policy of China, prevalent from 1970s to 1990s to curb population to the maximum. The novel invited serious claims and criticisms from all over the world People suffered under it terribly but there was no one to voice it as they feared criticism. The novel is set in Bildungsroman style on a strong

woman character, Wan Xin, also called Gugu - a hard hitting personality and a lady of stature who becomes the township's most famous obstetrician. Due to some circumstances, she turns into a child aborting obstetrician from a life giver. This rule of the People's Republic of China's government changes the lives of many from highest ranking officials to that of a normal peasant.

The individual's sense emerges to create meaning in society as he/she has an identity and has to find his/her role in society's wellbeing. The life of such an extraordinary woman is narrated in grand way; the narrator is Gugu's nephew called Xiao Pao or Tadpole who has served in the army who has turned to writing plays. Gugu's (Wan Xin) life is discussed by the narrator in form of five letters ending with a play. This novel is written in form of five books in four epistolary letters addressed to Sugitani Akihito Tadpole's Japanese mentor.

Tadpole invites him to meet Gugu, she makes a huge impact on S. Akihito suggesting that he write a novel based on Gugu's and her life's events. She is described as "*an image of a doctor racing across a frozen river on a bicycle; another of her with a medical kit slung over her back ...laughing joyfully as she holds a newborn infant in her hands, her sleeves spattered with blood; and one of a doctor with a care-laden face, a cigarette dangling from her lips...*" (Yan FROG 03).

The names of the characters in the novel bear a reference to bodily parts as such names were only kept in Northeast Gaomi Township. It is due to parents' respect for local tradition that they name their children after body parts. Gugu is named Wan Xin which means Heart, "the outlook of 'those who are badly named live long.' Either that or it

evolved from a mother's thoughts that a child represented a piece of her body" (Yan FROG 05). Some other names are Chen Bi- Nose, Chen Mei- Brow, Wan Xin- Heart and many others.

Gugu's childhood is a spectacular one. Her father, a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine who has also learnt Western medicine is working in the Eighth Route Army away from home. A Japanese General kidnaps the Commander's mother, wife and Gugu. Though they are kept with high respect and care, her credentials develop after that. She is free in spirit, has high courage and goes on to become township's first midwife who has studied western medicine.

As per the Interactionism theory, the individual strives to find himself a meaning or a symbol to lead a life through interaction. Gugu's role of becoming an obstetrician is also the need of the hour because the old system of birthing through midwifery was as dangerous as to lose life. After Gugu graduates from medical school at the age of sixteen, she is assigned to the health centre in township taking a course in modern birthing methods.

The skills she studies, are applied when she delivers the first child. Chen Bi. When Chen Bi's mother Ailian goes into labour, Gugu finds the old midwife already attending to her with a rolling pin at the other end pushing with all her might. This angers Gugu, she sends the midwife out, puts on her rubber gloves and begins working to bring Chen Bi into this world. The narrator calls her an absolute genius "Gugu was a natural genius as a woman's doctor. What her instincts told her, her hands put into practice. Women who

witnessed her at work or those who were her patients absolutely revered and admired her.”
(Yan FROG 21).

Gugu understands the need of the society and works towards it; she becomes a doctor so that she can ensure a healthy birthing for women and save them from bleeding to death and stop the practice of old midwifery. When she sees the midwife torturing the pregnant woman, she decides to take charge and abolish age old methods. Her purpose is to bring a new change in birthing through which the whole village knows of her life-saving skills.

Through interaction of ideas with others in society, an individual finds change in oneself. Gugu along with her assistant Little Lion walks proudly in the village after delivering her one thousandth child; she becomes a member of the Communist Party for a bigger role that awaits her. As she has identified her role as life saver she tries to contribute a little more and she delivers the batch of children who are known as Sweet Potato Children. Her worth as a village's famous obstetrician brings a stubborn pride within her for her job. As her association with the Communist government grows, she wants to prove her capability as a volunteer. She starts carrying out the one child policy and hence the once life saver becomes a life terminator.

Though becoming a village obstetrician is her choice, due to the situation she chooses to become a hardcore, duty bound Commune member in order to prove her devotion. Gugu sets her goal to fulfill her wish, but the society has other plans for her to act. She also changes her stand from supporting to repenting the acts of terminating pregnancy; all the while she fights within herself with the ideologies forced by times in which society lives in. Hence, Mo Yan's characters are allowed to act accordingly to the situations dealt

with and the author provides them with flaws throughout the plot to show how they carry and deal with the issues coming up.

The next chapter deals with conflict entering into the social set up, as each chosen novel has a central plot similar to the social events that happened in China. The chapter focuses on the study of social conflict following the character's resilient power in order to put up with the circumstances either directly affecting them or coming around the corner. The social inequalities and conflict sometimes bring out individual's potential which helps in transforming society. Following the social conflict, the human resilience works a way towards the upliftment of society, to tackle social vulnerability also to its perspective towards global change starting from the individual.