



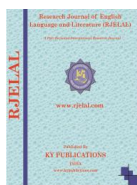
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HULLABALOO IN THE GUAVA ORCHARD: A READING OF THE FEMININE PSYCHE

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Abstract

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard a seemingly hilarious comedy, is a poignant novel about Indian life amidst east-west merger and conflict, concentrating on the multiculturalism prevalent in Indian society. Set around the Chawla family, the novel showcases Indian life in a small town called Shakot akin to R. K. Narayan's Malgudi. Kiran Desai through the novel subtly comments on the predicament of women in Indian society, through three generations of women Ammaji, Kulfi and Pinky showcased in the novel. Analyzing gender aspects and gender role identities in Indian society and their representation in literature is of immense value. A man's response is similar, yet quite different from that of a woman to the physical, emotional, psychological and intellectual aspects of life. A man's psyche differs from that of a woman in perspective as well as dealings with life. In a man-made patriarchal society men have a better say than women in all aspects of life that bring in societal conventions. The novel describes the psychological affronts women are forced to face, that make their psyche leave its vitality. It succinctly depicts the affronts faced by the feminine psyche on account of patriarchal pressure and systemic oppression. The novel focuses on the need to overcome negative emotions like anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, fear and repression to better the well-being of the psyche of women to let them emerge with strength, fortitude and resilience to prosper on all fronts.

Key words: Indian Women, Gender, Psyche, Masculinity, Femininity,

Introduction

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard focuses on the predicament of women and the vulnerable positions women are placed in Indian society on account of patriarchal double standards. Psychoanalytic feminism when applied to the novel lays bare the psyche of Indian men and women who are caught amidst the rigmarole of gender discrimination. Three generations of women characters represented in the novel via Ammaji, Kulfi and Pinky are neurotic personalities exhibiting neurosis of various levels that does not border on terrible mental illness. Moreover, the three women want to be free of patriarchal control to free

themselves of mental turbidity, though they are forced to bow down to it.

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard a seemingly hilarious comedy, is a poignant novel about Indian life amidst east-west merger and conflict, concentrating on the multiculturalism prevalent in Indian society. Published in the year 1998 the novel fetched for Kiran Desai the Betty Trask award for fiction. It is a commentary on human relationships amidst changing times, and ethics. Set around the Chawla family, the novel showcases Indian life in a small town called Shakot akin to R. K. Narayan's Malgudi. The novel is a serious, yet hilarious commentary on the psychosis and neurosis faced by

Indian women amidst bustling family life when their own identity is at stake. Kiran Desai through the novel subtly comments on the predicament of women in Indian society, through three generations of women Ammaji, Kulfi and Pinky showcased in the novel.

In India, women are venerated and valued as miniscule forms of divine energy who procreate, nourish and nurture life. In India, women are not venerated for their reproductive function alone. They are given a high pedestal of reverence, for their ability to nurture and nourish life and make India a better place to live in, through all the roles they play in family life and in Indian society. Analyzing gender aspects and gender role identities in Indian society and their representation in literature is of immense value. A man's response is similar yet quite different from that of a woman on the physical, emotional, psychological and intellectual aspects of life. A man's psyche differs from that of a woman in perspective as well as dealings with life. Psyche is the mind and the self of an individual in all its perspectives; conscious, unconscious and sub-conscious. De Castillejo asserts upon the distinction between the basic masculine and feminine attitude towards life:

If we realize that on the whole the basic masculine attitude to life is that of focus, division and change; and the feminine (in either sex) is more nearly an attitude of acceptance, an awareness of the unity of all life and a readiness for relationship, then we can accept a rough division of the psyche into masculine and feminine. But today, when masculine and feminine characteristics are so interwoven in people of both sexes, it may be clearer to speak of "focused consciousness" on the one hand and "diffuse awareness" on the other, knowing that these qualities belong to both men and women in varying degrees. It is important to remember, however, that diffuse awareness more commonly pertains to women. (15)

In a man-made patriarchal society men have a better say than women in all aspects of life that bring in societal conventions. In *Jacques Lacan, A Feminist Introduction*, Elizabeth Grosz, has stated that

psychoanalysis provides an explanation of "women's social and psychical positions within patriarchal cultures" (7). Female identity, economic hold, libido, sexuality, gestation, motherhood and development are major influences that influence a woman throughout life that are influenced by men and society alike, as patriarchy rules societies of which women are a part. Neumann observes, "In the case of woman it is the Psyche itself that forces her out of the patriarchal world and into what is properly hers . . ." (*Fear of the Feminine* 56). When women are not given the freedom to make their own way out and let happen what they desire for, they lose contact with their well-being and neglect reality. It is almost impossible for women to put away patriarchal control and get on with life in patriarchal societies. *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* focuses on the predicament and vulnerable positions women are placed in Indian society on account of patriarchal double standards. Psychoanalytic feminism when applied to the novel lays bare the psyche of men and Indian women who are caught amidst the rigmarole of gender discrimination.

Discussion

Three generations of women characters represented in the novel via Ammaji, Kulfi and Pinky are neurotic personalities exhibiting neurosis of various levels that does not border on terrible mental illness. Moreover, the three women want to be free of patriarchal control though they are forced to bow down to it. "Neurosis almost always results from a compulsion to repress one's feelings and desires because they are not in consonance with the accepted norms of society. Women are mercilessly denied opportunities for open expression of their true feelings in the tradition-bound Indian society" (Rajeshwar 9). The Chawla family is a patriarchal family with much power within the hold of Mr. Chawla and through his power extension, his mother Ammaji, and later with Sampath Chawla who makes power for himself.

Ammaji mother of Mr Chawla, and grandmother of Sampath Chawla the proxy head of the family after Mr. Chawla represents the earliest generation of women showcased in the Chawla family. Acting and being the motherly, mothering

appendage of her son she shares power in the Chawla household pleasing him in all possible ways. Her knowledge, experience and ability to accomplish things makes her strong, yet brings out her vulnerable position as a woman. She musters courage and articulates power for herself by doing what she wants to. In old age she learns how to keep power intact for herself by cajoling and ruling the members of her family; her son, daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter. Much before Kulfi becomes Mrs. Chawla, Ammaji reprimands her son when he finds Kulfi's behaviour odd and suggests that the would be bride is shy, rather than strange. "Ammaji clucked her tongue. For some reason she had taken a liking to the girl, and who on earth would turn down a big sum of money like the one they had been offered? It would allow them to clear all their generations' debts and buy a refrigerator. 'Don't be so unreasonable', she said. 'She appears normal, even if she is a little bit shy'" (Desai 64). She likes the money being offered in dowry as it would give them material ease. Ammaji observes the difference in the personality of Kulfi and side-lines it, as it is way to financial gain. Kulfi's parents rush for a quick marriage anticipating that her neurosis would turn into madness and sense the need to halt it by getting her married. "They were worried that if her marriage were delayed any longer, she would be left on their hands forever, her sanity dissipating, the sense scattering from her like seeds from a poppy pod" (Desai 62). Kulfi enters the Chawla household as a young bride with the liking of Ammaji whose power onslaught she bears with patience throughout her life. Patriarchy values a woman's femininity than her being as a woman that challenges a man. She is given power, economic independence after she is made the silenced other by her man. "'Femininity' is a role, an image, a value, imposed upon women by male systems of representation. In this masquerade of femininity, the woman loses herself, and loses herself by playing on her femininity . . . this masquerade requires an effort on her part for which she is not compensated" (Irigaray *This Sex* 84). Mr Chawla being a man with patriarchal mind set likes Kulfi for her delicacy. "But although he did not admit it aloud, he (Mr. Chawla) too had been smitten by Kulfi's flower beauty, her slender frame her

impossible delicacy so different from the robustness of the neighbourhood girls with their loud laughter, their round hips, their sly nudging and winking." (Desai 64).

Ammaji rules her daughter-in-law like a queen. She watches that she never becomes an outright rebel. She deals with Kulfi with studied ease and contempt at the same time. Ammaji deals with contempt for not strictly following her terms and deals with ease as she dominates all aspects of her life. She cleverly leaves Kulfi to continue her stupidity and neurosis which at times borders on insanity. Ammaji has written formulae on how things should be done from running the kitchen to Kulfi's pregnancy.

Ammaji had her own ideas. She had her own ideas of how a woman's pregnancy should be managed. She fussed with pillows and herbs, with hairbrushes and bottles of strong-scented oil for massages. 'Sing songs to improve the baby's mood', she advised. 'Go to the temple. Say the right prayers. Make sure the baby is healthy. Make sure the planetary configurations are good. Make sure you have no lice. Make sure you smell nice, and the baby will smell nice too. (Desai 6-7)

The stultifying atmosphere at the Chawla household worsens Kulfi's neurosis after initial marital happiness. Neither Mr. Chawla nor Ammaji dare venture into Kulfi's imaginary world. Ammaji feels happy that she still has her supreme say in the Chawla household.

Ammaji too left Kulfi to herself, apart from a few muttered comments and laments that were her duty as a mother-in-law. She was secretly pleased by how her place in the household and in Mr Chawla's life had not been altered at all when Kulfi had arrived. Some poor women suffered the fate of having their sons turn their backs on them and ignore them completely after marriage. (Desai 78)

After initial marital happiness the marriage of Kulfi and Mr. Chawla works in favour of Mr Chawla who is an absolute patriarch, who is kind towards those

who comply to him. As Neumann has said "The cultural symbiosis of the patriarchal marriage works out much less favourably for the Feminine and for women than it does for the Masculine and for men" (33).

Ammaji is a domineering mother-in law, mother and grandmother. Ammaji takes hold of the affection of her grandchildren from Kulfi to keep her power intact. The subtle power politics she plays creates further neurosis in Kulfi. Pinky is left far away from the onslaught of Ammaji as she is her granddaughter. She dares and checks into the path Of Sampath and tells him; "But the world is round . . . wait and see! Even if it appears he is going downhill, he will come up out on the other side. Yes, on top of the world. He is just taking the longer route". (Desai 26). When he achieves popularity as a hermit she pampers him and cajoles him with more kindness, concern and love, and has her share of power. Ammaji is very kind and patient with Sampath. She showers him with attention, good food, love and affection as he is the male child of the family. When Mr. Chawla, find faults with Sampath She makes Sampath feel comfortable by stating:

"I'am also talking about Sampath's career prospects. If he didn't eat properly, he would not even reach the office. He would fall into the gutter from hunger. Anyway, how can you sit all day and add up numbers when in your stomach there is a zero amount of food?' she asked triumphantly. 'Oh, leave him alone', said Ammaji. 'His stars are good. This is just a temporary phase. Give him a good head massage every day and the obstruction to his progress will go away." (Desai 25-26).

She offers suggestions and contributes to making Sampath's stay comfortable as Monkey Baba and helps his visitors. She takes over the tea stall made for visitors into her hands and maintains it in a better way for visitors. Ammaji does all that is possible to increase Sampath's popularity by highlighting incidents in Sampath's life and making them important.

" 'Oh', said Ammaji, chiming in delightfully as she rolled a betel leaf, 'he was born with spiritual tendencies. Everybody was saying maybe he is a little mad, maybe he is a little simple-minded, but it is just that he could never interest himself in the material world. . . . And such a pretty girl we found for him!' said Ammaji, getting more and more carried away. 'But no, he would have nothing to do with her...' 'What use can a hermit have for ladies? For such a person, it is an affront even to suggest marriage." (Desai 96- 97).

In the case of Ammaji, her life as a single parent looking after the Chawla household permeates into neurosis like state that demands power to be sane and normal. Whenever, she has power in her hands, she overcomes her neurosis and conducts herself with dignity and gets on with life with the required pace.

Kulfi, wife of Mr. Chawla sustains neurosis throughout her life that at times it borders on the verge of insanity. Ammaji experiences symptoms akin to neurosis when she is made powerless alone or is terribly bothered by Kulfi's behaviour. Kulfi as a young woman is shattered by the thoughts of how a would be bride should be, as she is no way like that. As the writer comments :

This girl who is to marry the son of the house must come from a good family. She must have a pleasant personality. Her character must be decent and not shameless and bold. This girl should keep her eyes lowered and, because she is humble and shy, she should keep her head bowed as well. Nobody wants a girl who stares people right in the face with big froggy eyes. . . . She should be fair-complexioned, but if she is dark the dowry should include at least one of the following items: a television set, a refrigerator, a Godrej steel cupboard and maybe even a scooter. (Desai 57).

Kulfi comes from a well to do family, but not an extremely rich family and is only equipped with the basic education of her times. She is not well educated and employed like women of the next generation. Neither is she extremely beautiful, nor

does she meet society's expectation of how a would be bride should be. The novelist succinctly describes the qualities to be present in the most desirable bride stating that :

She should not be fat. She should be pleasantly plump, with large hips and breasts but a small waist. Though generous and good-tempered, this girl should be frugal and not the sort who would squander the family's wealth. A girl who, though quiet, would be able to shout down the prices of vegetables and haggle with the shopkeepers and spot all their dirty tricks and expose them. Talk of husband and children should so overcome her with shyness and embarrassment that she should hide her face, pink as a rosebud in the fold of her sari. (Desai 58)

Her parents face strife as they don't want their daughter to turn insane without getting her married. They want her to move ahead in life. Kulfi wonders whether she can impart the boy's family pride, in making her their son's bride. The dowry offered by her father tames the spirits of Ammaji who side-lines her visible awkwardness as shyness. Mr. Chawla likes her for the visible calmness on her face. Little does he know about the hurricanes in her heart, that cause flutters in her existence. Marriage helps Kulfi come out of the worry of being unmarried and staying at her father's home. "The value of a woman would accrue to her from her maternal role, and, in addition, from her "femininity." (Irigaray This Sex 84). Kulfi brims with femininity that attracts the attention of Mr. Chawla. He values her femininity and Kulfi increases her value with motherhood, however hard the period of gestation turns out to be. Kulfi's pregnancy and delivery are described by Kiran Desai in a funny, hilarious way. The insatiable hunger in Kulfi is described as :

"Meal after meal of just rice and lentils could not begin to satisfy the hunger that grew inside Kulfi; she bribed the vegetable sellers and the fruit sellers and the butcher...her hunger was so fierce, it was like a big prowling animal. In her mind, aubergines grew large and purple and crisp, and then, in a pan, turned tender and melting. Ladyfingers

were flavoured with tamarind and coriander. Chicken was stewed with cloves and cardamom. She thought of chapping and bubbling, of frying, slicing, stirring, grating" (Desai 5).

Ammaji and Mr. Chawla worry seeing slender Kulfi become bigger and bigger as her strange behaviour becomes more and more obvious. With her growing stomach, pregnant Kulfi becomes :

enormously large, she seemed to be claiming all the earth's energy for herself, sapping it dry, leaving it withered, shrivelled and yellow. People stopped short in amazement as she walked down the street. How big she was! They forgot their dealing in the almost empty marketplace. They teetered on their bicycles as they looked around for just another sight of that stomach extending improbably before her like a huge growth upon a slender tree. (Desai 3-4)

Kulfi feels lethargic and restless with growing pregnancy. A sort of rage builds inside her. The neurotic feelings in her make things worse for her. Violent feelings take the form of drawings on the wall. Kulfi keeps drawing whatever comes to the focus of her mind. As De Castillejo has adroitly put it, a woman experiencing neurotic rage is :

consumed by an inner rage which is buried in a layer of the unconscious often too deep for us to recognize. She becomes destructive of anything and every dung, sometimes violently but often by subtle passive obstruction. I believe it is often this inner protest which breaks out in neurotic illness, in sensitive men as well as in women; or turns destructive in places where it was not intended. With more consciousness, feminine anger could be harnessed to a creative end. (42)

Kulfi never seeks making creativity out of her neurosis. She scares Ammaji and Mr. Chawla with her broodings and drawings. Despite her neurotic drawings on the wall, they keep their calmness intact for the unborn child. Mr. Chawla and Ammaji worry that Kulfi is on the verge of insanity and know not

what to do. Furthermore, the Neurosis in her takes the form of unimaginable creative drawing.

“She found a box of old crayons in the back of a cupboard and, with a feeling bordering on hysteria, she began to draw on the dirty, stained walls of the house. She drew around the pictures of babies Ammaji had put up . . . Kulfi drew around these pictures and sometimes over them. She drew a pond, dark but leaping with colourful fish. A field of bright pineapples and pale, dangling snake-gourd. Big lumbering jackfruit in a jackfruit tree and a scratching bunch of chickens. As her husband and mother-in-law retreated in horror, not daring to upset her or the baby still inside her, she drew a parade of cooks beheading goats” (Desai 7).

Kulfi does not make solace in pregnancy. Gestational happiness that is a part of motherhood does not impress and unnerve her neurosis. For a woman:

The prospect of motherhood holds out a composite solution for many of her difficulties. The psychological implications of her social status as a bride and a new corner, the tense, often humiliating relationship with others in her husband's family; her home sickness and sense of isolation, her identity confusion, the awkwardness of marital intimacy, and thus often, the unfulfilled yearnings of her sexual life-these are tangled up in a developmental knot, as it were. With the anticipation of motherhood, this knot begins almost miraculously to be unravelled. (Kakkar 76)

Kulfi wonders how her baby would turn out to be. When the child Sampath is finally born, Kulfi senses a release that tames her neurosis as marriage tamed her neurosis earlier :

She looked at the tiny creature in her hands, a creature that looked as if he had come from another planet altogether, or had been discovered in the woods, like something alien and strange. The baby's eyes were closed and his fingers were tightly curled. His face was red and his skull pointed. She looked at its

strangeness and felt a sense of peace and comfort descend upon her. (Desai 12)

Predictions of a marvellous future for Sampath tame Kulfi's low spirits. She gains societal acceptance and is showered with praises for having given birth to a son, a legal male heir to the Chawla household. After few years of Sampath's birth, Kulfi exhibits eccentricity of neurosis and people in Shakot “generally acknowledged that she was a little eccentric . . . As the years progressed, she grew more peculiar.” (Desai 21). Birth of Pinky, sets in another relief for Kulfi for some time, after the same sort of pregnancy like Sampath. Desai by showcasing Kulfi, comments on the unbearable pressure women are forced to face on the domestic front on account of strict patriarchal upbringing of the girl child with no chance to be herself, but a puppet in the hands of patriarchy when their psyche is forced to bow down to patriarchal pressure. Elisa Armellino observes : “She (Kulfi) is the real ‘sufferer’, the one who cannot stand the rules of society her husband strongly respects and adheres to. Indeed, she is an unhappy wife. She is married only because of her parents’ imposition, since her family thought marriage was the only way to keep her craziness under control.” (80).

Kulfi is engulfed in pressure when Sampath starts behaving odd, neglecting his work at the post office. Kulfi finds streaks of her personality in both Sampath and Pinky. Sampath camouflages it being Monkey Baba while Pinky exhibits terrible eccentric behaviour unable to camouflage it like Sampath. Kulfi is left aghast:

Looking at her son, Kulfi felt the past come rushing back to her, engulfing her in the memory of a time when she was young, when her mind was full of dark corners, when her thoughts grew deep and underground and could not be easily uttered aloud. She remembered the light of a far star in her eyes, an unrecognizable look that had made her a stranger to herself when she stared into the mirror. She remembered the desperation she had sometimes felt, that rose about her as if she were being surrounded and enclosed by an enormous wall. She looked at her son

sitting up in the tree and felt her emotions shift like a fast movement of the spheres, and then she said : 'Let him be'. (Desai 54-55).

Mr. Chawla reprimands Kulfi for supporting their son being an ascetic like man and seeking peace and refuge on the high branches of trees. Distracted Kulfi shivers and wants Mr. Chawla to leave their son to his liking and his destiny. He finds both Kulfi and Sampath strange. He asks Kulfi: "Do families allow their sons to climb up trees? You are the number one most strange mother in the world. Your son climbs up a tree and leaves home and you say: "Let him be." With you as his mother, no wonder he has turned out like this. How can I keep normality within this family?" (Desai 55) Kulfi finds freedom and refuge through her son Sampath who has grown up. People of Sahkot think that Sampath has metamorphosed into a hermit with spiritual powers. Kulfi leaves family members and people of Sahkot to their own conclusions and keeps herself busy with cooking. She cooks unusual special dishes for her son to increase his special powers that would bring in more visitors to visit her son seeking answers to their problems.

She waded out into the muddy ponds to collect lotus stems, raided bird's nests, prised open tightly sealed pods, nibbled at the grasses and buds, dug at roots, shook the fruit from the trees and returned home with her hair wild, her muddy hands full of flowers, her mouth blue and red from all she had sampled. The corner of her sari were tied into knots containing ginger lilies and rain-fever mushrooms, samples of seeds and bits of bark. Sometimes she brought back a partridge or a jungle quail, strung on to a stick and carried over her shoulder. She returned via the steep path that led to the back of the watchman's shed so as to avoid the visitors and the talk which had ceased to interest her. (Desai 100-101)

Kulfi helps her son with more servings expecting him to develop high psychic and spiritual powers. She basks in her son's new found glory though she slowly keeps herself away from visitors after the initial days. When devotees throng around their son with

affinity, Sampath senses that "His mother, the monkeys and himself he thought they were a band together" (128). Dilip M. Menon's remark on Kulfi is noteworthy in this respect : "Kulfi, Sampath's mother, combines maternal love with the desire of a good Indian wife to serve a charismatic male by cooking meals dredged up from her febrile unconscious. After having served up orioles, hoopoes and shrikes she dreams of armadillos, yaks, macaques and weeps for flesh as yet undiscovered." (114).Kulfi's identity is marked and accentuated as Sampath Chawla's mother and Mr. Chawla's wife rather than as Pinky's mother who leads an insignificant life when compared to her brother Sampath Chawla. Though out of the box, Sampath's popularity as Monkey baba and tree baba, make him precious and brings in immense popularity and material benefits home. Kulfi loves her new identity as the mother of Monkey baba.

Pinky, the daughter of Chawla family, is more a caricature than a character. Pinky engulfed in her thought processes neglects education and only concentrates on being a woman as per patriarchal standards under the patriarch of the house Mr. Chawla. She is a below average girl, uninterested in anything other than preening herself and going to the market place :

Pinky was not interested in typing, and she certainly did not wish to do anything useful in modern India, but she was well aware of the necessity of putting in an appearance in the bazaar every day. If you did not do so, your place in the hierarchy of things, indeed your very identity in the social sphere, would be totally obliterated. (Desai 80-81)

Pinky's obsession with clothes and trinkets to beautify herself shows how much she values the social mobility she has an access to, through her market trips. She banks on the need to impress others with her appearance. She loves the attention and praises showered by others. Her personality becomes better with more social interaction. All her daily endeavours go into making her appearance better and better.

"She knew she was at a disadvantage with a mother who was incapable of going shopping

for clothes, who could not discuss which ensemble should be worn to which event and what trinket matched what pair of slippers. Ammaji's tastes were a century behind the times and her father and Sampath were of no help either. She was all alone in this attempt to maintain her position in bazaar society." (Desai 81)

With the progression of the novel Pinky's character becomes more and more endearing and comic. She dislikes confining herself to the demands of patriarchy but finally descends and conforms to patriarchy. She has streaks of Ammaji's and Kulfi's personality that vie for importance and attention. Pinky keeps moving to town in the name of shopping or discharging errands for Ammaji and Kulfi as the trips make her feel better. They help her dress up and preen better than at home. She likes being the cynosure of Shakot amidst the people of Shakot. Her interest in cinema and 'Hungry Hop ice cream boy' too explain her need to feel better than people around her. When Sampath turns into a hermit and a saint, she sits around him providing him meals in time garnering the attention of the people of Shakot.

The author shows sibling rivalry between Pinky and Sampath that arrests the attention of the readers. Each tries to defeat and take over the other even in small acts like getting the attention of Ammaji or accomplishing popularity for themselves. When Ammaji asks Pinky to accompany Sampath she retorts: "What good will Sampath be! The monkeys, will probably choose me as the best person to target if Sampath is with me" (Desai 22). Being his companion too Pinky wants to take over Sampath's role as a saint without being one. When Sampath does not allow her take over his audience she reprimands him softly relating the situation to some other situation. When Sampath decides to climb on to trees and stay there making an abode for himself amidst tall high branches Pinky admonishes and asks him to get down: "Get out of the tree-the whole family is being shamed", she said bitterly". (Desai 54).

Sampath's new found glory arrests Pinky's attention which she wants for herself. Ammaji's and Kulfi's concern for him agitate her heart and mind. After

realizing that the family has a new found glory and popularity because of Sampath, she gives way to him and sits below the trees he climbs on to. The novelist describes the change in Pinky's personality as:

This was not a feeling she had ever had before; it was different from the exasperation or amusement she had usually experienced in relation to him . . . Now she felt, she too understood the dreadfulness of life, recognized the need to be by herself with sadness, and from this moment of realization onwards, she spent hours sitting under Sampath's tree, in a private cocoon within which she indulged her every thought, wrapping herself in endless imaginings, endless ruminations, snapping in quite an uncharacteristic way if she was interrupted. (Desai 109-110).

Pinky gets petrified when Sampath becomes the prime centre of attraction becoming a hermit amidst tree tops. She craves for the attention of Ammaji and tries to maintain it accompanying her, on her market visits. The attack of the monkey at the cinema hall and the foolishness of Hungry Hop boy-leave her totally affronted: "Pinky could not remember being so mortified in all her life. There she was, looking like a sweeper woman, with her grandmother's dentures being displayed in public, first atop an ice-cream cone being borne away by a monkey, and then dangling humiliatingly on the end of a stick. What a spectacle they had made of themselves" (Desai 87). On returning home she cries and wails for not being the center of attention. She sees the foible of her own life and regrets as she can't correct herself completely meeting the standards set by her patriarchal father and the patriarchal society of which she is a part. She hates the humiliation bestowed on her for being the neglected girl child of the family and not being Sampath in his new glory. Kiran Desai shows how women like Pinky seek attention and love being loci of attention to avoid neurosis

She cried tears of rage because she had looked so plain, because it was all her family's fault; she cried loud and long...Oh, she thought, her awful, awful father, who sent

her out like a servant when other fathers went through all sorts of efforts to make sure their daughters looked well cared for and were properly dressed. Her horrible grandmother, who had added to her humiliation. Her terrible, terrible family, who would no doubt ruin all her chances of love forever. (Desai 88)

Desai through Pinky's character showcases how a woman who does not concentrate on anything else other than seeking attention, falls into pits of insecurity and indecisiveness. Pinky's attraction towards Hungry Hop ice-cream boy remains a tragic mystery as both do not suit each other, nor is their love fair and frank. Furthermore, he does not suit her class. Neither does he suit her family, nor the patriarchal standards set by her father. She tries to impress a fool who does not suit her, or care for her. Pinky repents for the truth that Hungry Hop ice-cream boy is not prepared to accept her true usual self.

To think she had seen him so often, beautifully dressed, and hardly noticed him at all... and today, here she was, staring at him with new-found interest, wearing an old white salwar kameez, badly cut and faded, with no nose ring, no toe ring, slippers without a trim or a puff, her eyes without the kohl that made them smoulder ... so conscious of her drabness was she, she could not even manage to return his smile; in fact, it was all she could do to keep from bursting into tears . . . Oh, and she thought again of the Hungry Hop boy, who might, had she looked her usual self, have played a role in her life well beyond the mere parameters of ice cream. (Desai 87-88).

The patriarchal Chawla family is taken aback on knowing about Pinky's affair and her alleged behaviour with an ice cream boy.

"Since when do ladies in the town bite gentlemen', the policeman asked of Pinky, fierce and seemingly unrepentant, smouldering upon a bench back at the police station. 'You will end up in a mental home if you persist in demonstrating that that is

where you belong' . . . But she looked at him unvanquished. She was not one to be frightened by such threats. After all, this very asylum had been brought up several times in relation to her mother and her brother and, losing its ominous quality, it had begun to sound like a rather familial sort of institution." (Desai 114-115)

Pinky is left after the policeman comes to know that she is the sister of Sampath the tree baba or Monkey baba of Shakot.

Pinky fails to communicate what she wants from Hop Boy. She never expresses what she wants which causes a lag in their communication. What De Castillejo has stated regarding the difference between the communication method between a man and woman can be applied to Hungry Hop ice-cream boy and Pinky too.

A man who tries to communicate with a woman without the aid of his feminine feeling to make the bridge and enable him to meet her on her own ground, is likely to produce a dry intellectual dissertation which either paralyses her or make her angry, according to temperament. Similarly, the woman who assumes that her man will know what she is feeling without her telling him, because to her it is quite obvious, has omitted to utilize her own inner masculine clarity to convey the message and leaves her actual man bewildered and in the dark. (C 104).

Pinky chooses Hop Boy as he is not better than her in all possible ways. This makes her feel better and on top of the world. The romantic inclination between them does not fade as she takes the necessary measures to better her relationship with him even after biting his ear, which he admits that he likes. She puts that act as if it were out love, as if it were a hickey. Later on their love scales new heights with the exchange of trinkets and tokens:

This incident marked an important change in their relationship: the beginning of a mutual involvement, a series of feverish exchanges that took place almost daily, with Pinky hovering about his house with some token of

affection in her pocket and Hungry Hop waiting by the bathroom window. As the days went by, they managed to exchange all manner of bottles, toffees, sweetmeats, handkerchiefs and nightclothes, Also a comb, a toothbrush, an ear pick, a bar of soap, a pomegranate, some photographs and a towel. (Desai 148)

Pinky decides to elope with Hungry Hop boy in a van and writes a note for him asking him to be ready for elopement. " Everybody will be busy and paying no attention. Meet me under the big tamarind tree on the street leading to the orchard-bazaar road at 5.00 a.m. in the Kwality van, and from then on we will see." (Desai 188) Pinky's plans fail when her lover is caught by government personnel. The real hullabaloo comes into being with Sampath Chawla going amiss and the whole Chawla household put in a commotion wondering to what has happened.

Pinky does not fit into the traditional roles played by women like Ammaji and Kulfi. She does not turn out to be some one like Sampath's colleague. Pinky does not stick to the patriarchal standards set by patriarchy altogether. Desai through her showcases how women who are not at least independent on the physical, emotional and financial fronts are forced to meet affronts on a daily basis. Pinky does not evolve as a woman on the physical, emotional and psychological fronts by the end of the novel. Neither does she completely comply to patriarchal demands, nor does she protest and accomplish what she wants to, or what is necessary. Her neurosis becomes better with praise and affection and worst when people don't comply to what she wants. Her neurosis does not turn into madness except for eccentricity par excellence.

Conclusion

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard is an ironical novel, satirizing Indian mentality and the double standards that operate in Indian society in the treatment of women. Desai through the novel satirizes Indian patriarchy that psychologically manipulates Indian women to accept their diktats without any doubt and question. The novel is a social commentary on how women are taken for granted by arresting their psychological, academic and

economic growth making them thorough dependents on men for their well-being and succour. The novel describes the psychological affronts women are forced to face, that make their psyche leave its vitality. It succinctly depicts the affronts faced by the feminine psyche on account of patriarchal pressure and systemic oppression. The novel focuses on the need to overcome negative emotions like anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, fear and repression to better the well-being of the psyche of neurotic women to let them emerge with strength, fortitude and resilience to prosper on all fronts.

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