

CHAPTER-II

POWER RELATIONSHIP IN INDIAN FAMILIES CONCERNED WITH MODERNITY

From time immemorial we are witnessing that men were ruling the Indian families because there was a concept that man is born to rule, all the powers were vested in his hand only, women were treated as a second rate citizens. During the middle of the 20th century the scenario got changed, still we witness this evil practice in Indian families. Ruth praver Jhabavala nicely portrays this concept in her first novel *To Whom She Will* published in 1955 shortly after the independence of India.

The original title of *To Whom She Will* is borrowed from Arthur W. Ryder's English translation of a couplet from the Panchatantra, which is used in an epigraph, "For if she bides a maiden still she gives herself to whom she will; then marry her in tender age so warns the heaven-begotten sage" (Sucher 14).

This epigraph is addressed to all the parents of eligible daughters and the injunction to marry them in tender age i.e. marry the girls before they are able to enforce their say in the household matter. The theme of the novel is the traditional arranged marriage taking into consideration family, status, caste etc. The novel however was republished in the year 1956 in the United States under the changed title *Amrita*. This title obviously directs the reader towards the central character of the novel *Amrita*, hinting that it is the story of 'her' maturing. Later in 1985 the edition published by Penguin uses the original title and was taken again by omitting the epigraph, which suggests that the novel should not be "seen as comedy of marriage alone but also as a novel of maturing" (Daisy 31).

To Whom She Will has been divided into 39 chapters. Each chapter begins with a separate scene and incident. But the whole novel has a single action having a good beginning, middle and an end. The central themes of the novel is marriage, love and parents' opposition in adopting the modern ways of life.

The central figure of the novel is an Indian girl Amrita, who is 19 years old and all the remaining characters of the novel revolve around her only, she is the daughter of late Nirad Chakravarty, who was a freedom fighter and her mother is Radha, who is the daughter of an aristocratic barrister Rai Bahaddur Tara Chand. Amrita is a graduate from the most prestigious women's college of Delhi, and she is working in radio station as an announcer. Where she falls in love with Hari Sahni a poor young Punjabi boy, who is also working as an announcer in the same Radio station. Amrita plans to marry him. But the strong opposition came from her family because of the young man's class. Amrita's grandfather and her mother think that Hari is from a poor family and he will not match to Amrita. So, they plan to divide them, at the same time Hari's family also thinks to search a girl in their own class only. Hari is in a dilemma now whether to marry Amrita or to marry another girl of his family's wish, in the mean time both family elders made conspiracy against them and they plan to break their love in the name of class, and at last they succeeded in that. Hari gets married in a traditional manner to a girl of his own class, without intimating Amrita. Amrita's innocence is exploded when she gets to know about it and she silently transfers her love to Krishna Sen Gupta, her lodger who is an England returned professor in Delhi University. Here in this novel Ruth Praver Jhabvala nicely portrays how the power relationship played an important role to break the love of Amrita and Hari Sahni.

In Indian families relationship plays an important role. In the novel *To Whom She Will*, it is shown very brilliantly. Let us discuss how the dominant characters influence Amrita's love, at the very outset in the first chapter of the novel only we come to know that the grandfather of Amrita Rai Bahaddur Tara Chand is the head of the family. Everyone is sitting together at his dining table, there is complete silence during the meal as Rai Bahaddur, Amrita's grandfather does not encourage idle conversation:

The dining-room was also furnished in oppressive Victorian style. The dark curtains were drawn to shut out the sun. The silver shone dully. The broad heavy dining table, with legs carved into lion's heads, was spread with a gleaming white cloth and laid with initialed cutlery. The servants moved noiselessly over the marble floor, filling up the water glasses and holding the trays with food for the diners to serve themselves. (Jhabvala, *To Whom* 9)

This scene shows that he is the dominant figure in the family and he is a typical Anglophile aristocratic father-figure of the rich, elite and upper middle class section of post-independent India. He is like a grand old patriarch in the Victorian tradition, he is always very conscious about his family. Though he is good educated, well disciplined person he belongs to a higher class society and is respected by everyone in the society because of his wealth, and he shows himself to the society that he is very generous regarding women's education and he supports female emancipation, and he is the strong opposer of some evil concepts of society. Rai Bahadur takes pride on his advanced ideas, but it is exposed as a joke in the course of the novel. When Amrita propose the marriage to Hari Sahni, Rai Bahadur strongly opposes that, class consciousness strikes in his mind. So, he plans to break their love tactfully and all his

three daughters supported him in this endeavour. This shows how power relationship played an important role in every decision of Indian family; we may see this in the conversation between Rai Bhadur and Amrita.

I have enquired into the young man's family... the result... was not satisfactory... you know the I myself am not hidebound in this way; that indeed I have allowed two of my own daughters to marry outside their immediate community, and in one case quite distinctly beneath her own level off shall we say, breeding and fortune... it is apparent that I am one who is willing to leave a generous margin in this matter; that I do not insist on the exact parallel. But in your case... the margin, the discrepancy between the two families, the young man's and yours is too wide. (Jhabvala, *To Whom* 11)

Here Rai Bahadur is trying tactfully to remove Hari Sahni from Amrita's mind by showing that he is very generous about her love, he consciously washed her mind. This shows how the 19th century Indian families were ruled over by the dominant person of the family, and also here we come to know that how the women's rights were harmed in the name of class, caste and religion. In the novel Rai Bahadur continues to wash the mind of Amrita by saying :

I have also spoken to the young man himself, and I may mention that I was not impressed either by his personality or by his capabilities. However, that is the point on which I do not wish to insist. If the family background had been satisfactory, I would not have unduly concerned myself over the young man's deficiencies. They are, after all, your affair. (Jhabvala, *To Whom* 11, 12)

About Rai Bahadur Tarlachand, Aruna Chakravarti rightly pointed that, "In the values expressed here lies key to the Rai Bahadur's

personality. That a strong conservatism and social snobbery underlies the veneer of modern liberalism indicated from the way in which he a self-avowed champion of social progress declares that family background is his concern while the young man's character and abilities are Amrita's. Obvious too is the extent of his self delusion. Overweening vanity impels him to act and hold forth with conviction. However, the gap between what he thinks he is doing and what he really does is ruthlessly through comically exposed" (Chakravarti 65 and 66).

This pseudo-modern grandfather decides to send Amrita to England in the name of higher education but main intention is to avoid her love and to avoid the unbecoming marriage, and Rai Bahadur also insults Hari Sahni, when he comes to meet Rai Bahadur, he treats him in an humiliating manner. We come to know this when Hari's is conversing with his sister Prema.

Usually he spoke English quite fluently, but under such circumstances he could somehow only speak in broken and incorrect sentences and the old man waiting for him while he groped round for, and could not find, the English word, waiting with such exaggerated, such sardonic patience, Hari shuddered and quickly slurred over the memory. (Jhabvala, *To Whom* 21)

Rai Bahadur used such English, as a means of separating the educated and the uneducated poor people. Hari is humiliated and feels much contempt because the old man regarded him only as an ill educated, unsophisticated and poor refugee. Like this the head of the family of his mothers side Rai Bahadur Tarachand made his all attempts to break the love of Amrita and Hari Sahni, everyone in his family do not show disrespect to him because he has all the power with him, he has a control over the family, like this Jhabvala skillfully has portrayed the power

relationship in Indian families. Patriarchy has inherited the men power over women in the form of family. In this social institution, women have been answerable to men at every stage, particularly the father-figure has a dominant and upper hand. He has been a strong symbol of patriarchy and its strength.

The second important character, who is dominant over Amrita and Hari's love, is Radha, Amrita's mother, who strongly opposes their love, infact she is ready to do anything to break their love. Because she is very much fond of class system and there is a reason why she is following class system because, she herself has experienced that in her life. The reason is that she was also leading a very normal life when her husband Nirad Chakravarty was fighting for the freedom movement, she follows him and he also had gone to prison, though he got education in England, he gave up everything and joined the freedom movement, like him Radha also lead a normal life wearing a cotton sari and after her husband's death, she sees the others enjoying the spoils of freedom, his own father Rai Bahadur Tarachand continued his luxurious life after independence. Radha was very much influenced by her, she threw away her cotton saris and started to wear bright rich sari's and jewelries. Like this her personality has been changed and this influenced her to break the love of Amrita and Hari.

Radha is trying to wash the mind of Amrita when Amrita doesn't care about her. Radha blursts out and at last she tries to convert her by giving sentimental touch we may see this from her speech :

Everything we have spent on you is a waste of money... we see the result of your expensive education with girls like you the only way is to marry you off at fifteen, quickly, to any respectable man who

will take you B.A., P.A, it is all only a waste. (Jhabvala, *To Whom* 150)

Radha plays an important role in the novel, we may see her as a modern character though she herself loves Nirad Chakravarty and married him according to her wish and lead a normal life but after her husband's death she suddenly changed, she opposes her daughter's love with poor class boy, this shows how she has changed from aesthetic to materialistic life, though she is a widow, she doesn't wear a white khadi sari, she wears a bright colour sari and golden jewelleryes, she also wished to lead a luxurious life like her both sisters. Yasmine Gooneratne rightly pointed about Radha's character, "Radha develops an impressively realistic vigour through the reader's perception of her psychological condition. Her wishful thinking, her self-deception, her delight in intrigue, and her vitality resist being pushed into rigid patterns and help to build an energetic personality that awakens the reader's sympathy irritation... and affection" (Goonerante 54).

Another important character in the novel is Prema, sister of Hari Sahni, who marries Suri, a wealthy Punjabi business man, she is also leading a very wealthy life because her husband is rich, she helps Hari's family in all the ways, so everyone respects and obey's her order in Hari's family. She is vary fond of western way of life, like having servants, watching television and reading magazines and romantic novels and one's she also interviews Amrita and her mother Radha and Radha praises her. It is Prema's strength of will that pulls Hari away from Amrita and pushes him towards Sushila, that forces the Anands against their wishes to postpone the wedding day and finally ensures that the marriage takes place, like this Prema also forces Hari to marry another girl, who is from her own class and she succeeded in that.

Some other characters like Tarla and Meera Aunti, sisters of Radha and Hari's mother also play an important role to break Amrita and Hari's love, they all expose themselves as broken minded people and liberated one's but class conscious awakens their mind. Jhabvala nicely portrays this 20th century Indian families mindset in this novel As Rishi Pal Singh pointed out:

Ruth Jhabvala likes to develop a plot in which the romantic love is less than adequate, although Jhabvala extracts much comedy from the romantic excesses of these sentimental lovers and portrays the conflict between youth and age, the dominant shades of the picture she draws are that of the Indian family as a loving protective cocoon. (Singh 22)

Because of the family force and also of Hari's marriage with Sushila made Amrita to divert her mind towards Amrit Sen Gupta who is lodger in her home and he is from her class only and at last Amrita marries Krishna Sen Gupta.

The second novel of Ruth Praver Jhabvala *The Nature of Passion* was written in 1956, nine years after Indian independence. In this novel Jhabvala nicely portrays the contemporary Indian situation, taking a single joint family Jhabvala portrays the traditional norms and values of an arranged marriages based on the consideration for family status, caste and general prospects in society. Here Jhabvala also portrays how the Indian family heads or leaders are ready to protect their family status in society and their main intention is to earn much respect for their family, for this they are ready to do anything, this shows the mentality of mind 20th century families. Jhabvala keenly observes all these things the novel is set in Delhi. The novel *The Nature of Passion* has been divided in three parts, part one mainly deals with Lalaji's 'rajasa' passion. Part two with

the westernization of young generation. Part three deals with the consequences, blind imitation of western culture and how parent's protect their children.

The title of the novel itself is extracted from one of the Psalms of *The Bhagavadgita*, at the very outset in the opening page of the novel only we may see this :

Know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst (for pleasure) and attachment. It binds the embodied by attachment to action. (Bhagvad Gita XIV, 7, Translated by Swami Paramananda)

Dr. Radhakrishnan Comments :

The three modes are present in all human beings, though in different degrees. No one is free from them and in each soul one or the other predominates. Men are said to be sattvika, rajasa or tamasa according to the mode which prevails.... while the activities of sattvika temperament are free, calm and selfless, the rajasa nature wishes to be always active and cannot sit still and its activities are tainted by selfish desires. (Jhabvala, *Passion* 5)

This Rajasa (nature of passion) nature we may see in the central character Lala Narayan Dass Verma, well known as Lalaji, who is very greedy and money minded person and head of the family, he has three sons and three daughters, because of his wealth, everyone respects him in the society. He shows himself as a modern man, who gives freedom to all his sons, he decorated his house in modern way and there is a separate quarter for women and always dresses like a very rich man, and he also sends his second son Chandra abroad for higher education, and he always talks about womens liberation and always is very conscious about class

system. For portraying him and his family as a modern one he takes all the necessary steps. He is a successful businessman and contractor, he is very rich in Delhi. But he knows poverty and hunger, he is not a richman by birth, he came to Delhi as a penniless refugee from Punjab, because of his hard work and shrewd practices he became rich. For the extension of business and to earn a money he is ready to take any false steps and his main intention is to earn money. Money plays a very important role in this novel. Throughout the novel Lalaji is seen pursuing his foul activities and selfish desires and all the remaining characters revolve around him only, he has the control over the family and all the powers are vested in him only, he bribes the government servants to get his work done.

In this novel Jhabvala has very successfully delineated the life of the 'New rich - Middle class' who emerged after the independence, she clearly shows us how the higher class people bribe the government servants to get their work done and amass wealth. Still we may see this evil practice in the present scenario also. Like this Jhabvala throws a light on some evil practices which are playing an important role in emerging India and Lalaji is one example for that. If we want to study any character in this novel we should study Lalaji because he is a foil to every character in this novel. He is a dominant figure because of his wealth, though many characters oppose him and try to come out of his vicious circle all their efforts become futile.

Lalaji's eldest son is very traditionalist, he grew up in his fathers shadow only, he sticks to his father, he is bread and brought up in traditional surroundings, he looks after his father's business and his character is similar to his father except one thing that he doesn't show much affection to his family, He is also not good educated person though he is the eldest son, he doesn't have any power to take a decision in

business or family matter because, his father has not given him any power. The novel opens with his wife giving birth to a female child. Lalaji was very happy about this message and ordered everyone to visit the hospital but he doesn't want to go there, this shows his attitude towards his family, he is always worried about his father that he is not providing him an air conditioner to his office. This shows how Lalaji controls Om. And his eldest daughter Rani is also like Om only, very traditionalist and both are proud of their father.

Chandra Prakash was the first among Lalaji's children to enjoy the benefits of his father's newly acquired wealth, a good educated England returned son, who had an independent and modern idea, who refused to join his father's business, instead he takes a job as a gazzetted government officer. This shocks Lalaji, and he also marries a modern independent girl Kanta, who does not belong to the same class, this all creates a bad impression about western culture in Lalaji's mind. Still also he is very tolerant about his son and Chandra is the only son who is living outside his father's family with his wife Kanta, she is also a very modern woman who decorated her house in westernized way and she also hosts dinner parties to promote her husband and they are leading an independent life with modern ideas. Both Chandra and Kanta are ashamed of Lalaji and his family, they were ashamed of their old-fashioned ways, their rigid orthodoxy and their corruptness. Kanta says, "It is terrible to be related to such man (Lalaji). I wish we need have nothing to do with him" (Jhabvala, *Passion* 155). Like this these couples oppose the greediness of Lalaji and they want to come out from all this, and they plan to lead an ideal life. But they can't because Chandra Prakasha's salary is not enough to maintain the family, they lack money, when the question of money comes they still depend on Lalaji.

Chandra is not in a position to afford everything, it is very difficult for him to pay the children's education fees and Kanta's holiday trip in the hills every summer. Though hating Lalaji's way and means to get it they are unable to reject the economic and material factor which is essential for married life, they understand the passion for money, even if they do not like it.

Lalaji is always bribing the government officers to get his work done and in one case he was caught while giving bribery, and corruption case is filed on him, to overcome from this problem he uses Chandra Prakash, through Chandra refuses to do so, he tactfully washes the brain of Chandra, for that moment Lalaji visits Chandra's house and in that house he feels a stranger because Chandra's children treat him like a stranger.

... When he gathered them into his arms and drew them close, they squirmed away from him and then stood staring at him from a distance... Lalaji thought of his other grand children, Rani's children and Om's and how they came running to him and rubbed themselves against his chest. His eyes became melancholy and he said to Chandra in gentle voice. 'You have not taught your children to love their father's father'. (Jhabvala, *Passion* 193)

This shows how Chandra's family maintains distance with Lalaji, still Chandra helped his father by removing the incriminating letter which was written by his father from the government file, he did so because his economical background is not good enough, for that he should take help from his father, for this reason he did so. Through this incident Jhabvala shows how the ideal people also bribe the rich persons and how money is playing an important role in life i.e, money power.

Lalaji's youngest son Viddi (Ved Praksh) is superficially modern one, he is a very lazy person. Sitting in restaurant with friends dreams about western life, he calls himself as a lover of art. He is educated in India, he visits clubs, hotels and restaurant, like his brother he also wants to go to England for higher education but his father does not allow him, he had enough experience sending one son abroad. He complains about his father stating, "You would not think so if you had to live with it everyday as I have to. My father, my elder brother it is all they know, all they can think of money. More and more and more money. It is the only thing they understand" (39). He calls himself a lover of poetry and beauty. But like other characters he also needs money to buy chocolates, cigars and pastries.

Lalaji tackfully launched him into his business by offering him Rs. 500 as his starting salary and Viddi excepted this offer by thinking.

What all the things he could do with 500 rupees a month : how many chocolates, milkshakes and cigars and pastries, he could stand streat for in rendezvous; what beautiful cloths he could buy for himself, suits and shirts and shoes and a gold cores watch and of course, books and pictures and records of classical music. (Jhabvala, *Passion* 129)

This shows how he is fond of money, though he wants to lead an artistic life, still he needs money to fulfill his needs, and making this as a weakness his father brings him to his family business at the end of the novel he also becomes like his elder brother Om.

Nimmi, Lalaji's youngest daughter, is the second most important character in the novel, in one respect we may see that this novel is about this girl. She wants to come out from all the old customs and traditions of her family. This modern girl revolts against her families life style, she

tries to adopt the modern way of life. She believes in women's emancipation, she shows lack of interest in money and she also opposes her father's philosophy that money can buy anything but the irony is that, she wears fine fashionable clothes and ornaments. She goes to college and is very much affected by Western culture. She wishes to go abroad and lead a very luxurious life she also visits the clubs secretly with her friend and in every step her family opposes her lifestyle. Nimmi's going to college is opposed by her brother. He condemned her education by saying what is the use of reading English literature? When they will find her husband? He says, It is only a waste of money and time and will perhaps even give her wrong idea. But Nimmi strongly opposed this idea by saying, she is not in Purdah. Here Jhabvala pictures the mentality of men towards women and she also shows how women started to rebel against men, but the sad thing is that even Nimmi's mother also opposes the ideas of Nimmi.

She blindly follows the Western way of life, she thought that westerners are educated, well behaved and their culture is superior than ours. She thinks like that because she has already enjoyed the Indian lifestyle and also she is fed up with her families blind traditions, but she has failed to understand the reality that without her father's support she can't enjoy the thing which she is enjoying now. She visits the clubs and plays tennis and once playing tennis she felt it was strange showing her legs in public, she felt uncomfortable every time. She thought what the family would say if they could see her. This shows her mentality. She is in a dilemma what to follow and what not to follow?

Nimmi's friends are from high class society and she also has a boyfriend by name Pheroze. She picked him as a boyfriend because he is

England returned, good looking man and he takes her to Kutub Minar and kissed her and it is her first kiss and she was shocked.

She kept her eyes wide open and thought : So this is how a man kisses, and next : What would they say at home? And next : How excited Rajen will be when she hears! (Jhabvala, *Passion* 137)

Like this she is enjoying all the materialistic life and tries to become modern, sophisticated girl and to achieve this, in every respect, she takes aggressive steps, another interesting thing is that Nimmi's haircut; she cuts hair very short like westerner's. This is the big issue in her house, her mother, her aunt and everyone condemned this because in the orthodox families it is banned, that too in the 1950s and 60's it was very strange, this poor lady takes every necessary step to prove her as a modern one.

At last her father Lalaji arranges her marriage with Kuku, son of the director of Happy Hindustan Trading Company, and the interesting thing is that Nimmi also agrees for this marriage because, like her brothers she also learns the importance of money, for the first time she thinks down-to-earth and her father promises that her marriage would be grand.

At every step someone to attend her, every wish to be fulfilled before she had wished it, and when she went out, all the world should turn its head and ask 'Who is this queen? To be answered, she is the daughter of Lala Narayan Dass Verma. (Jhabvala, *Passion* 261)

This shows how the elders show their affection towards their children, and it also shows the importance of marriage, because marriage is a holy practice in Indian culture and the sad thing is that it shows how

the Indian's spend much money during their daughter's marriage instead of her education Jhabvala has picturised this very effectively.

Swarnita and Ashish Sharma commented about the modernism of Nimmi, they commented "In this novel Jhabvala depicted a clash between tradition and modernism at a personal and familial level, infact modernism of Nimmi is pseudo modernism because, it loses its ground as soon as it faces real problems of life and also she marries Kuku not for love, but for social and individuals grasses and for preserving the group values of community and family life" (Sharma 100).

Jhabvala portrays Lala Narayan Dass Verma as a symbol of newly emerged upper middle class societal figure because he plays a dual role in this novel. After reading this novel reader is confused whether to consider Lalaji as a good character or bad one because he is playing multidynamic role in this novel, as a father and as a head of the family. He protects his family, he takes care of each person and make them feel happy. His sentimental affection for his family is great and he also gets readers sympathy when he is trapped in difficulty. Yasmine Gooneratne rightly said about this character.

Ruth Jhabvala creates in him a crooked businessman one of the great character of contemporary fiction, a 'godfather' ahead of his time, who enlists our unwilling admiration and amused respect for the determination with which he rules his wayward family, remaining true to his own 'practical' values while brushing aside as irrelevant the universally accepted standards of law and morality. (Gooneratne 52)

At the same time he is presented as a dishonest person, to earn money he bribes the government officers and though he was a follower of modern values in the subconscious level he is following blind traditions

only. On one occasion he said, 'A girl of that age has no right to enjoy herself! She should be managing household and bearing children, and looking after her husband' (89), this shows his attitude towards the girl and he also considers briefly a respectable and civilized way of carrying on business, he rejects the universally accepted standards of morality and law. When caught in bribery and corruption case, using Chandra's power he came out from that case, like this in this perspective he plays a negative role. Jhabvala nicely portrays how the power relationship played an important role in the Indian family.

Esmond in India is the third novel of Ruth Praver Jhabvala, which was written in 1958, at the very outset, the title of the novel shows that the theme i.e. foreigner Esmond Stillwood's story in India. Here Jhabvala depicts the cross-cultural confrontation, East-West encounter and more importantly the clash between Materialism and Idealism. Because the novel set in Delhi after ten years of independence, Indians adjusted themselves to the realities of Swaraj. Depicting one or two families Jhabvala shows the real picture of post-Independence of India, like her early two novels, this novel also shows the picture of Indian family life, compared to her earlier novels this one is different because both the early novels were very comic in their depiction, this one is serious because her stories become sharper and her writing becomes more satirical. Ruth Praver Jhabvala, in her earlier novels was an observer but in this novel she is confronted with her own experience in India. By showing Esmond and Gulab's family Jhabvala contrarily shows the clash between two more families.

Jhabvala has nicely portrayed the clash between the traditions in this novel. Esmond the protagonist of the novel is from the England and a girl of India Gulab, both of them are brought together by marital ties, but

soon there is a break-up when both realize that they cannot live under the same roof, because of different cultural, social and religious background.

In this novel Jhabvala throws light on the two families one is Ramnath's family and another one is Har Dayal's. Both were schoolmates and later in their youth fought for India's freedom, and now Ramnath gave up everything to country and leads a very simple life and his sister Uma is also leading the same life, and her daughter Gulab is married to a Englishman Esmond that is the only cause of worry to her, and looking about Har Dayal's family, it is still in good position. He has not given up anything and he is leading a materialistic life and his daughter Shakuntala is also following her father who later in the novel is attracted towards Esmond, and Esmond is a sort of link between these two families. In the first family of Gulab as an irresponsible husband and in the second family Shakuntala's lover.

India, which has had years of Independence is the setting in *Esmond in India*. The British living in India are no longer the rulers but visitors. Some of whom have overstayed and got mixed up with the natives. Esmond an Englishman makes his living by giving private tuitions about Indian History and literature to English memsabibs, tourists and sophisticated rich Indians. The rich class of Indians are fascinated by western culture to such an extent that they have forgotten their own rich culture and dress and behave like Europeans.

Esmond falls in love with an Indian beauty Gulab and marries her but Esmond and Gulab prove to be as incompatible with each other as their cultures. They have been married for five years and have a son Ravi. Ravi becomes a matter of dispute between them. Esmond wants his son to be fed on boiled English food, on the contrary Gulab true to her tradition wants to give him spicy and oily Indian dishes. The eating habits of

Gulab are disgusting to Esmond. But Gulab loves to eat with her hand when Bachani, her maid servant brings something from the mother's house. "At eleven o' clock she sat down to eat. She sat on the floor and ate with her fingers. She always did so, whenever Esmond was out for that was the way she enjoyed her food most" (Jhabvala, *Esmond* 17). For her being simple was a joy. She enjoyed such incidents in Esmonds absence. On contrary Esmonds food habit is different from Gulab's, which carries their own customs. The difference is visible clearly:

He sat alone at his smart little dining table in his smart little dining corner and ate his cheese salad. Everything on the table was colourful and modern - the bright table masts, the painted drinking glass, the earthenware plates of rich dark green - so that it looked rather like a beautiful photographed full-page advertisement in an American magazine. It was very different form Gulab's spicy meal eaten on the floor out of brass bowls. (Jhabvala, *Esmond* 33)

Esmond wants Gulab to take to Western way of life in everything. Gulab cannot sleep with her son Ravi and shower sentimental love on him by kissing again and again because this was forbidden by Esmond.

Esmond wants him to sleep in a separate bed because he knew that if the child slept with Gulab, there would be far too much petting and unhygienic sharing of beds. Gulab puts a lot of oil in her hair and uses strong scents which Esmond simply cannot tolerate. He is very fastidious and wants his house to be kept clean and beautiful and really hates Gulab's habit of sleeping all the time. Gulab dislikes moving out whereas he wants her to be an asset in his career as an expert on Indian culture. Esmond is proud of his elegant furniture which fits in the little flat so nicely and appreciated by all, but Gulab who has been used to her mother's big house with much less furniture, finds herself suffocated in

his nicely decorated flat. Gulab is seen to revert to Indian ways (lying on floors, eating with fingers sitting on floor, petting Ravi etc) in the absence of Esmond, which when he finds out, irritates him and he becomes rough and inconsiderate. He starts treating Gulab with contempt. But like a typical Indian women, Gulab looks upon her husband as her God and clings to him, she doesn't mind Esmond's ill treatment and submits to her husband as her lord.

R. G. Agarwal commenting on the relationship between two cultures says, "Jhabvala deals with the clash between two culture in its simplest aspects. Putting oil to the hair, eating fried food or the smell coming from the kitchen is a trivial things but perhaps she means to suggest that life is made of trivialities and much depends on them in our day-today life. Because she also shows the basic difference between the English and the Indian characters that keep them apart. According to her the English are rational and Indians emotional. Thus, the clash between the two is also a clash between two conceptions of culture" (Agarwal 34).

Esmond and Gulab are unable to understand each other and so their marriage becomes a cold affair. Bored of Gulab, Esmond goes to picnic with the European ladies to Agra as a guide. There he gets involved in an affair with Shakuntala, who is just out of college and who happens to be the only pampered daughter of Har Dayal, Shakuntala falls in love with him, she doesn't mind that Esmond is a married man with a wife and son. Shakuntala is an immature teenager and falls to the temptation of the flesh, she expresses her feelings to Esmond without any hesitation.

"Shakuntala; he said gently, you mustn't act like that.'

Why should I lie to you? Why should I not show you how much, how deeply, how greatly I love you?

Shakuntala, please'

I do love you, from the very first moment I saw you, I loved you.

I cannot hide it any longer, if I do, it will break me, my heart will burst" (Jhabvala, *Esmond* 147).

Esmond is rather skeptical of Shakuntala's passion and tries to make her understand that her parents had sent her with him so that he could protect her, But when Shakuntala doesn't pay any heed to his words, he gives the call of passion and the flesh. He says, "I give up, and kissed her long and expertly on the mouth, so that night he allowed her to stay with him, and her bed in Betty's room remained empty" (Jhabvala, *Esmond* 148).

Jhabvala in an ironical way tells how an inexperienced girl, just out of college and full of notions of love can fall into the temptation of the flesh. When Esmond goes out to meet her again in market place, he finds Shakuntala in very joyous mood. But when Esmond looks into her eyes, he is reminded of Gulab's eyes as they had been when he first married her. This suggests that Shakuntala will be another Gulab to him in course of time.

On the same day when Esmond has gone to meet Shakuntala in the market, Gulab is alone at the home and their new servant enters her room and tries to molest her. Gulab tries to defend herself from the clutches of the servant and feels hurt that the her husband has failed in his duty as a husband as he is unable to protect her, she finds it impossible to live with a man who is unable to look after his wife. So, she decides to leave him and go to her own people. Although Gulab leaves him Esmond feels that Gulab's presence surrounds him. He is constantly reminded of her passion for meat and spices and strong perfumes.

Esmond also craved for freedom, he longed to be a free man, from the tangles not to have any bindings for him, he is free to roam about with anyone. The modern westerners consider marriage as a business contract, but the Indians regard it as a relationship lasting for a life time.

Jhabvala is very ironic towards her Indian as well as Western characters. In this novel the two ways of living are contrasted. Jhabvala shows how the westerners cannot adjust with the life style of Indians and vice-versa. Jhabvala is critical of both Indians and foreigners staying in India. The contrast between the two ways of living, their habits, likes-dislikes causes tension in the mixed married life, leading to the ultimate separation of Esmond and Gulab. Esmond dreams of being in England and having another family there, while Gulab with no hopes for future return to her mother's house. The novel ends with Esmond thinking of the life he would enjoy in England dreaming of playing tennis with Betty on the ship. Like the earlier novels here also the powers are vested in men (Esmond) only, he easily breaks up his marriage, he has not tried to meet Gulab any longer, from this Jhabvala picturises not only in Indian family but in the mixed marriage of Indian and Europe power plays a vary important role in breaking relationship.

We may see socio-political change in Post-Independent India in this novel. Jhabval shifts her attention to one family that has been actively involved in the struggle for independence and another family that has been benefitted from India's freedom without having made any sacrifices along the way. The first family is that Ramnath's, he came of a rich family, he had been to Cambridge and he could have settled down to a comfortable life but after returning from Cambridge he cared more about freedom of the country, he actively involved in the freedom movement and he went to jail. His family life was disrupted by his long absences

and he was very much influenced by Gandhiji, and even he also forced his wife Lakshmi to part with her jewellery and lead an austere life, and he instilled the same spirit in his only son Narayan, who is a doctor and works in a remote village, where there is not even basic comfort. So, this is another part of power relationship, though Ramnath is the head of the family, in his absence Lakshmi leads the family though she was not much more interested in the freedom struggle. She gave up everything for the nation and lead an isolated life, because of her husband she was obedient to him and her son Narayan was good educated and knew everything, and he also followed his father's path this shows how the power relationship works in Indian families.

Another family is that of Har Dayals who is stylish and mean minded person, he is also from Cambridge but he has not given anything for country, no one from his family went to prison, he has not sacrificed his wealth or property but he is enjoying the benefit of freedom and becomes a very important man in the society by showing himself as an idealistic person. He has a two sons and a daughter all are leading a very materialistic life and he considers themselves as a modernist, they are following the western way of life. His daughter Shakuntala is attracted towards Esmond and even she dates with him in Agra picnic and when the proposal came from Ramnath about his son's marriage with a Har Dayal's daughter Shakuntala, Har Dayal rejects this because of class system from this we may see the pseudo-modernistic personality of this family and how one is class conscious, we can consider this as another face of power.

From comparing these two families Jhabvala clearly shows how the power-relation is good in one family and it's bad in another family, and she shows the realistic picture of Indian family system. S. Selva Raja

rightly comments about Jhabvala, “In her novels, Ruth Praver Jhabvala concentrates upon family life, social problems and personal relationship, with all its opportunities for intrigue, clash between generations and marital feuding. Her novels deftly ring the chimes on the same themes, tracing numerous permutations on family conflicts” (Raja 322).

The novel *The Householder* was published in 1960, it is another important novel of Ruth Praver Jhabvala, the main themes of the novel is arranged marriage, joint family, and conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Here Jhabvala concentrates more on relation between older and younger generation and how the power of elder generations decisions irritate the younger one’s. Famous critic Laurie Sucher states, “*The Householder* is a harmonious vision of the first two novels of Jhabvala. The only difference is where as *To Whom She Will* and *The Nature of Passion* describe the events and misunderstandings that finally lead to the prospects of happy marriages. *The Householder* is a study of an arranged marriage that has already taken place (Sucher 15).

The break-up of the joint family and mushrooming of nuclear units that followed created a need for new adaptations and adjustments. This phenomenon is characteristic feature of the new India as the decay of the aristocracy and the emergence of the business class enters Jhabvala’s fiction for the first time.

The Indian joint family, essentially is patriarchal in character, kept itself alive by satisfying two vital needs of its male members, the patriarch’s love of power and the young men’s need for financial security. By undertaking to support them, the system enabled young men to marry and raise a family before attaining financial independence.

Prem, the central figure of the novel *The Householder* is an underpaid Hindi Lecturer at a private college in Dehli. He is newly

married and he scarcely knows Indu, his young wife. Having recently arrived in Delhi, he lives in a small flat for which he is paying quarter of what he earns from his job. Apart from Prem and Indu, a single domestic servant also lives in the flat, the novel's title provides its own frame of reference as we see Prem entering the second stage of a traditional Hindu life, that 'of a Householder.' We see Prem explaining to Mr. Seigal, his landlord:

... there are four stages to a man's life. When he is young, he is a student, learning from his father and his teachers... After that comes the life of Householder." Prem said: "In this stage a man must raise a family and see to their needs... The third stage is when a man retires from his duties as a householder and spends his time in contemplation. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 40)

Sohan Lal remarks convey deep-reaching criticism, not only of the Indian system of early arranged marriage which has deprived him of freedom to live the spiritual life of his liking, but of the Hindu view of life, of which such marriage is a part:

... Here in our India... It is so that while we are still children and know nothing of what we want, they take and tie us up with a wife and children... so... when we are old enough to know what the world is and God is, then it is too late, for we have a burden on our back which we cannot shake off for the rest of our days. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 27)

Prem is not a good degree holder and is lucky to have got a job. The college where he teaches is owned by the snobbish Mr. Khanna and his even more despicable wife who do not pay their staff well, but-lives on the profits that the college fetches. They also treat their staff with scant respect. Prem who belongs to lower middle class milieu is obviously

exploited by Mr. Khanna the principal of the college and Mr. Seigal, and his landlord. Consequently he is in severe financial crisis throughout the novel. He plans to ask for a rise in salary and reduction in rent but never succeeds in his attempt. He says:

My salary is not very big and it is difficult for me to pay so much rent every month.... 'Ai' said Mr. Seigal in irritation at his tooth and digging deeper. Especially now I expect my expenses to go up higher.... Perhaps you know already you see I am expecting.... my wife is expecting a baby.... Mr. Seigel said Ah' as he dislodged the of ending particle; ... 'let us hope for a boy'... very nice he said again and went indoors. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 174)

That landlord even doesn't care about Prem's situation. Prem is economically deprived in the traditional role of being a householder. He feels genuinely unhappy and also lonely. He longs to talk to someone, to share and discuss his problems, but ironically he does not turn to Indu, who is equally lonely and unhappy.

At the same time misunderstanding takes place in the early months of their life when he returns home rather late he finds the house dark and silent and his wife already asleep, he reflects:

... it was not right for a wife to go to sleep before she had served her husband however late he night come. He considered for a moment whether to wake her up and tell her so. But he did not feel angry enough for that. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 46)

Prem's expectations of Indu are whimsically erratic. He wants her to be 'remote and sowful' practical and competent woman at the same time. He expects her to accompany him to mixed parties where she must command respect and impress the assembly with her personality. At the

same time he expects a complete obliteration of personality and subordination of all her wishes to those of her husband. But Indu is aware of the tradition of subservient womanhood but has a mind of her own which refuses to tolerate oppression beyond reasonable limits. She believes that a woman can perform her traditional duties without succumbing her individuality and that her obligations to others need not blind her to her own needs.

Besides this, Prem's mother creates a sense of frustration and irritation in Indu by passing comments on Indu. Indu goes to bed early as a way of avoiding her mother-in-law's critical comments and glances. The maladjustment in the context of Indian family system between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is portrayed by Jhabvala very effectively in the novel. The mother-in-law throws accusations at the daughter-in-law, who bears them in silent or at the most, indirectly expressing her rage on the servant boy. At this the mother-in-law again feels sorry for her son and remarks stating that she and her son have had bad temper. As a result of these unfavourable situations, Indu suddenly goes to her mother's house without intimating Prem, this hurts him a lot, but he doesn't show this to his mother, and after spending some time her absence makes Prem realize how much he values her presence, it is a necessary stage in Prem's development. He realizes that he wanted to be looked after not by his mother but by Indu. And he wanted to look after her.

In course of time Prem feels insecure of his profession as a lecturer, once he thinks about government job also, Prem's complete urge is not towards success so much as towards security, and government is the only institution that spells out the kind of security. The author states:

Prem wanted very much to be one of them. If one succeeded in getting into government service, one's future was settled; there was nothing more to feat. And are belonged somewhere, one was part of something bigger than oneself. That was just what Prem wanted : he felt a great need to be absorbed. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 138)

Struggling to secure his life and at the house in the absence of his wife Indu, his mother serves him, his mother gives him back his boyhood. She cooks his favourite dishes, massages his temples and pampers and gives him everything he had longed for in the early days when he had felt sad because Indu was there. But now they bring him no satisfaction, for he realizes that it is not his boyhood that he is nostalgic for but his status as a married man. He laments,

Now that it was gone from him, he craved again for the sensation of being a family man with duties and responsibilities. He thought almost enviously of Raj, who had a wife and daughter to looks after, and was frowning and anxious with worrying about how to get the lavatory repaired or pay the school fees in the coming years when his child would have to start going to school. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 127)

In effect, Prem has come to terms with the fact that he is a boy no longer the moment he actually yearns for the house-holder's state: The author describing his mentality says:

At least with such burdens one was someone a family man, a member of society, living next to, in rows and colonies with, other such members of society, who had the same worries. But Prem- what was he? He was no longer a student living in his father's house : he has lost interest in his mother and in her cooking and in talk of Ankhapur. But what was he instead? Where did he belong?

It seemed to him that he belonged nowhere, was nothing, was nobody. (Jhabvala, *Householder* 127)

One afternoon Prem was amazed to see Indu in his house, she comes back to him and he was so happy. Prem's new found maturity emerges as he decisively arranged for his mother's tactful removal from his house to that of his sister; He writes a letter to his sister in Bangalore asking her to invite their mother to spend the summer with her as the Delhi heat is likely to undermine her health. In due course invitation comes. Prem's mother leaves for Bangalore to join her daughter, she is profusely apologetic about leaving him so soon, but he is transcendently happy because he will now be 'alone and supreme' with Indu.

Prem for the first time felt that she loves him. On the night of his mother's departure they sleep on the roof of their apartment building. The couple's wish to sleep outside is indicative of their new relationship. Now they are at ease with each other and are not alone as oriented individuals anymore. With these changes in their feelings, Indu becomes Prem's main source of consolation. He feels he has achieved something as a husband. Now his status in the college does not matter very much. He is matured enough to find happiness in what he has and in his confidence as a householder.

In the end when Raj comes with his family to have dinner at Prem's house on his invitation and comments, It seems your wife is a very good cook, Both Indu and Prem feel a sense of achievement. Thus, the newly married Prem and Indu who start with the rudimentary cross-fire are finally at home. Jhabvala shows that irritations like not having enough money or the presence of mother-in-law can be overcome in course of time, especially when people are young and the future is all before them.

In this novel Jhabvala is very keen about the relationship in the family, she picturises the mother-son relationship and how the mother is trying to dominate over her son's family. Prem, is in dilemma, whom to follow, his mother or his wife and finally he overcome from this problem by removing his mother from his house. Like this Jhabvala depicts power relationship of family may distrurb the happiness of their children. In the words of Amora Rama Devi, "The novel is remarkable not only for its masterly exemplification of the slow and painful process of Prem's growth to maturity, but also for its handling of interpersonal relationship within the Indian context" (Devi 18).

Power relationship is part and parcel of Indian families. We the Indians do not want to give up the tradition and standard set by our parents. Naturally it passes froms one generation to other be it a male member or mother-in-law. Patriarchal society's norms are always dominating only. No one wants to remain subordinate to his wife. The novels taken here for discussion throw much light on the power relationship.

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