

A Pursuit of Identity, Liberation and Spirit of Resistance in Maxim**Gorky's Mother**

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The woman's cognisance towards her position in the society starts to develop due to different factors that take place in a certain phase of history. Social, economic, cultural, political upheavals deeply alter the woman's condition. This paper will look into the woman's position and present the woman's portrait in Maxim's Gorky's masterpiece, Mother. Presenting the depiction of woman from Maxim Gorky's view is the main objective of this paper. In this paper, I will discourse how the woman is rendered in her quest for her individuality and liberation. Due to the development in different aspects of life, woman's role changes. Mother the revolutionary novel plays a vital role in Russian social transformation and traces the woman's journey in regaining her own identity and her right from which she has been deprived for a long age. What motivates me to address such a topic is the magnificent portrayal of a woman and the new thought adhered by Gorky towards the new type of woman that appears in Gorky's Mother.

Key Words: Cognisance, exploitation, feminism, woman's rights, patriarch, revolutionary action, spirit of resistance.

Mother is one of Maxim Gorky's best-loved novels, a story of a revolutionary mother who shows truth and hope among the people of Russia. Gorky wrote in the Adirondack Mountains greater part of his classic novel, *Mother*, which appeared in 1906-1907. Its heroine, Pelageia Nilovna, adopts the cause of socialism in a religious spirit after her son's arrest as a political activist. Pelageia's husband is a drunkard and her only consolation is her religious faith. Pelageia's husband dies and her son Pavel changes from a thug to socialist role model and starts to bring his revolutionary friends to the house. The interesting side about this novel is that the novel discusses the revolution whose main character is old women. The other interesting side is the value given in *Mother*. This novel was the first novel written by a Russian author who writes sympathetically of such characters as tramps and thieves, emphasizing their daily struggles against overwhelming odds and fight against state's oppression in Russia.

Gorky as a critical observer witnessing the accelerating upheavals that take place in all aspects of life, traces the position of woman and presents her adventurous steps, in the words of Rashti, "to destabilize the structures of the patriarchal society"(ii). It is needless to state that the female character is harassed and is deprived of her rights in a male dominated society. She is treated as inferior for long time and is obliged to bear all house chores burdens silently. For a long period – to borrow Rashti's words – "the symbolic world even tries to turn women to objects of exchange and desire, silence them and change them to phallic beings"(iii)

Women themselves are tied to the world created for them, the male- dominated world, the world where they have to obey, surrender, give, and take nothing. They are worried about the unknown future. "Most women preferred to cling to the time-honored patriarchal forms of the family and village"(Clements 216), they are used to the miserable condition they experience. Women even hesitate to accept the Bolshevik's invitation to attend the meeting discussing the women's right. "They too rejected the message of female equality". They work with men in the field, doing all kinds of work. They toil and moil for the betterment of their families. But they are not acknowledged and never rewarded. Clements refers to the social view that dominates towards the poor woman. "a woman was taught from childhood to submit to the power of men, to accept their right to command obedience as heads of the family and leaders of the village commune" (217). The male dominated society uses the community's misinterpretation of religion to practice their harshness against the poor woman in the name

of religion. Clements states "It was God's will that she do so, she was told, just as it was God's will that she endure the privations of her life"(217). Even in the most developed Western countries, the condition of women is quite appalling. They are ignored physically, mentally, socially and economically. Peasants were apprehensive of the Bolshevik program that seeks to change the woman's condition. They realize the vital role played by women in forming the society structure. Their fear is not intended for the sake of woman but they used to woman's submission, loyalty and bearing the heaviest chores and they know that they themselves are unable to do what the woman does. Any change in the woman's position is regarded as threat to male's power. Clements in the article "Working-Class and Peasant Women in Russian Revolution, 1917-1932" mentions that a group of peasants asked Maxim Gorky to inform them "by registered letter or in detail in a newspaper, how [they, the peasant men] are to understand the proclaimed equality of women with [them] and what [the woman] is going to do now"(Clements 218).

The peasant men are aware that the woman's emancipation will lead to the abolition of the structure of the family and that directly will cause the demolition of the village. They also claim that woman's freedom will negatively destabilize "village morality"(Clements 219). Any change in woman's case is considered as threat against "morality, religion, and the survival of village life"(Clements 220). Bolshevik program is looked at with suspicion and fear as the peasant women are plainly persuaded that family life and village life is under threat by this new thought so they were suspicious of the issue of woman's liberation.

The poor single woman was the target of the community leaders who victimize, in the words of Clements, "The most defenseless...least productive land holder – single women"(222). They are obliged to accept the nonfertile land and one peasant in a letter to Maxim Gorky in 1918 writes "I declare "to you [Maxim Gorky], a friend of the people, that a lot of nonsense is going on in the villages because soldiers' wives are allotted land which is bad and good for nothing, and they are howling like mad. When their husbands come back from the war, you can be sure there will be a good fight because of this"(qtd. in Clements 222).

The harshness practiced on the women is reported all over Russia. It has been stated that a "woman being beaten or even expelled from their home when angry husbands or fathers discovered that they had even fleeting contact with the Bolsheviks"(Clements 224). The condition of the people in Gorky's early age was crucial and worse. One of the papers published in that time portrays the condition. "The daily newspaper

Nizhegorodskii birzhevoilistok (The Nizhegorod Financial Page) often reported the brutal beating of wives, the deserting of children, and the excess of cheap and wild entertainment" (qtd. in Yedlin 1). The authority also practiced its tyranny on the common people. Gorky depicts the atrocity of the police in the house of Pelagueya in the middle of the night. Pelagueya disgusts "What sort of a thing? They come at night. People are asleep and they come-" (Mother 124). Harshness and oppression are practiced on the women in general. "Here are we women who are insulted all our lives along" (214).

Pavel the son with sorrow, witnesses the torture his mother undergoes. . . . [his mother] had remained unnoticed in the house. She had been silent and had always lived in anxious expectation of blows... she was tall and somewhat stooping. Her heavy body broken down with long years of toil and the beatings of her husband, moved about noiselessly and inclined to one side, as if she were in constant fear of knocking up against something. Her broad oval face, wrinkled and puffy, was lighted up with a pair of dark eyes, troubled and melancholy as those of most women in the village. On her right eyebrow was a deep scar . . . Altogether she was soft, melancholy, and submissive. (25) Women do nothing deserves such harassment and punishment. They are blamed for no reason. They stand testimony to man's arrogance. Natasha remembered the ordeal her mother experiences. "She was not yet fifty. She had a long life before her still. But when you look at it from the other side you can't help thinking that death is easier than such a life-always alone, a stranger to everybody, needed by no one, scared by the shouts of my father. Can you call that living? People live waiting for something good, and she had nothing to expect except insults" (609). Violence perpetrated against woman is unbearable and unspeakable. Pelagueya narrates the brutal treatment of her husband as she remembers,

Once her husband came home late, extremely intoxicated. He grasped her hand, threw her from the bed to the floor, kicked her in the side with his foot, and said: "Get out! I'm sick of you! Get out!" in order to protect herself from his blows, she quickly gathered her two-year-old son into her arms, and kneeling covered herself with his body as with a shield... without outcries or complaints, barefoot, in nothing but a shirt under her jacket, walked out into the street. It was in the month of May, and the night was fresh. The cold, damp dust of the street struck to her feet, and got between her toes. The child wept and struggled. She opened her breast, pressed her son to her body, and pursued by fear walked down the street, quietly lulling her baby... It began to grow light. She was afraid and ashamed lest someone come out on the street and see her half naked ... then shivering with cold, she walked home to confront

the horror of blows and new insults. (524-526) The woman's condition is quiet pathetic. Tatyana speaks about her condition as woman who is a representative of all woman in her society. She with agony states "But what sense is there in the work we do? We go half-hungry from day to day anyhow. Children are born; there's no time to look after them on account of the work that doesn't give us bread...I had two children; one, when he was two years old, was boiled to death in hot water; the other was born dead –from this thrice-accursed work. Such a happy life! (765) Woman's hesitation and fear towards involvement in the Bolshevik program has its own justification as the program is a promise that may be fulfilled or not. Clement argues that being bound to the male world, the abusive but also protective shouldnot plainly considered "ignorant behavior" but could be justified as rational choice for the oppressed woman.(Clement 224) But the matter is different with the workingclass woman in the urban areas where upheavals -to some extent- questioned the rooted,old concepts as patriarchy.

The working woman looks at Bolshevik as a savior and warmly embraces their thoughts. The same Pelagueya Nilovna adheres to the principles her son Pavel propagates. Though politics is considered as "men's business" in the urban areas and woman's business in rural area is to "work for family" (Clements: 225), Maxim Gorky presents brave women as Sofya, Nilovna, Natasha, Sashenka involved in the protests and political affairs.Clements quotes the one activist, demonstrator Aleksandra Rodionova, a twenty –two –year old tram conductress, revealing her circumstance and how she was indulged in the revolutionary deed. "I remember how we marched around the city. The streets were full of people. The trams weren't running, overturned cars lay across the tracks. I did not know then, I did not understand what was happening. I yelled along with everyone, "Down with the tsar!" but when I thought how will it be without the tsar? It was as if a bottomless pit opened before me and my heart sank. Nevertheless I yelled again and again. 'Down with the tsar! I felt that all of my familiar life was falling apart, and I rejoiced in its destruction"(qtd. in Clements 226).

Many women participated in the revolutionary movements though they are aware that their indulgence is "a venture into the male sphere of politics". The First All- Russian Conference of Working Women and Peasant Women is organized in 1918 by Aleksandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand and The woman's Bureau is established the year later.(Clements 227) Women take cognizance of their oppressors and take on them suitably. The same is declared in a letter written by an unnamed hospital employee to Pravvada in 1919. "I am worker, and only now do I see who buries our rights deep and does not want us to be free"(qtd. in Clements 234).

Gorky's *Mother* "... the most important work of that period..., inspired and encouraged generations of revolutionaries"(Yeldin76-229).This literary manifestation is published in the beginning of the century(1906), which witnesses accelerating changes. This era, in the words of Wrenn, was " a time of confusion and growing tension, of unease with social order and of uproar and revolution...A time of new advents, inventions, thought patterns and a sense of liberation from many traditional bonds"(Wrenn 9). Gorky in his masterpiece, *Mother* presents the torment and hardship the woman encounters in her pursuit of individuality and independence.*Mother* is considered as "the literary model for the Socialist Realist portrayal of Women"(Gray 711).

The female, Gorky presents is not the submissive, obedient creature but a woman with an extraordinary power whose concern is to defy and challenge the masculine world with all of its repressive chores. Gorky, the revolutionary writer confronts the common prominent attitude men bear towards woman. He, the freedom's preacher exposes the hidden power and the marginalized ability of the woman. Woman in Maxim's *Mother* is not the victim who is silenced but a force to reckon with. The woman, whom we used to is nowhere. She is not the one who is waiting for arranged marriage, but the woman who takes the initiative action to decide her destiny. Gorky portrays a kind of woman of different mould. It is a tale of woman's transformation.It is not a rare case embodied in the character of Pelagueya Nilovna but we meet the brave Natasha who is ready to pay the price in full to attain her objective, Sashenka who defies the prisoner and obliges him to apologize. They are seeking freedom not for themselves but for mankind. *Mother* who bears patiently the blows of her repressive husband, whom we encounter in the beginning of the novel, is nowhere as we unfold the chapters of the novel.

Maxim Gorky's depiction is a complete diversion against the so prominent negative representation of female characters in male literature. Needless to say, *Mother* is an artistic exposure of women's power and potentiality in resisting the oppression. Maxim Gorky presents group of women seeking truth, equality, freedom. *Mother's* heroine is Pelagueya Nilovna, who adopts socialism after her only son's arrest due to his political activity. Pelagueya is not the sole heroine but we encounter Natasha, Sashenka, Sofya who devote their life for the sake of their sacred cause that is justice, equality, goodness. They are not the delicate creatures who could easily fall prey to the world, full of temptation, ferocity and

hardship. Women in general are tied with gender stereotypes and that make their efforts to go beyond this point "are often questioned"(Peter1). We rarely meet female characters presented as heroines doing heroic deed in literary works by male writers, whereas man is depicted as dominant, strong,undefeated character.The depiction of female as subsidiary character who keeps silent throughout the narrative is not excluded to Russian literature but Arabic literature and African literature patronize this case. Peter discusses Ogunyemi's view regarding African literature which is described as" phallic", dominated as it is by male writers and male critics who deal almost exclusively with male characters and male concerns, naturally aimed at a predominantly male audience"(Peter 2).

The oppression, negligence and intended marginalization aim, in the words of Peter, "[to] limit females' ability and serve to silence them, making them invisible in circles that have been deemed "exclusive for men"(Peter 2). It is rooted custom where women has to be inferior. It is worthwhile to quote what Nowpa states about the discrimination practiced on woman.Nowpa concludes, "oppression of women starts in the home. In our homes today we treat girls differently, and we treat boys as if they are kings"(qtd. in Peter 90). Motherbrings us something different from the literary endeavors that mostly reflects "a sad legacy of female who is verbally bullied and derided" (Peter 99), physically harassed and emotionally suppressed. The woman in Mother is not the archaic simple vulnerable character but she is the inspirer whose duty is not confined to bringing up the children, doing the house chores, she isthe brave warrior in the battlefield. Nilovna, the courageous mother never returns to ordinary life.She never hesitates to continue her efforts in spreading her son's revolutionary speech among the common people. When her son told her that she will be arrested, she reveals no fear stating "I don't mind" (435).

It is a depiction of a women's attempt to break away from their male mates. She rebels against oppression with all of its types. It is injustice and bias based view where woman is dealt with as weaker sex. Peter sums up the society's viewtowards woman: "It is suggested that in whatever situation of life female characters are portrayed, from the cradle to the grave, a spirit of obedience and submission, pliability of temper, and humility of mind is required of them... and in some cases are relegated to the same status as that of a child" (Peter 90). Gorky's point of view is clearly perceived through the episodes of Mother. He presents the woman who tries to free herself from stereotypes and cruel cultural rule that imposed on her for long time. The tamed mother who used to silently bear the misery and sorrow starts to rethink about her own wretched life. We hear Pelagueyareveals: I've thought

all my life, ...what did I live for? Beatings, work! I saw nothing except my husband. I knew nothing but fear! ...All my concerns, all my thoughts were centered upon one thing- to feed my beast, to propitiate the master of my life with enough food, pleasing to his palate, and served on time, so as not to incur his displeasure, so as to escape the terrors of a beating, to get him to spare me but once! But I do not remember that he ever did spare me. He beat me so –not as a wife is beaten, but as one whom you hate and detest. Twenty years I lived like that, and what was up to the time of my marriage I do not recall. I remember certain things, but I see nothing! I am as a blind person.(240)

The social discrimination prevails and the class bias deprive poor people from their rights to live. They are not supposed to have the requirements and needs for simple life and they are exploited by those who consider themselves superior. The scene is clearly depicted in the words of Pelagueya: Poverty, hunger, and sickness-that's what work gives to the poor people. This order of things pushes us to theft and to corruption; and over us, satiated and calm, live the rich. In order that we should obey the police, the authorities, the soldiers, all are in their hands, all are against us... They glut themselves to corpulence, to vomiting-the servants of the devil of greed. Is it not so? (997) The mother Pelagueya Nilovna was asked to carry the banned books to the village. In her way, carrying heavy valise, she confronts a lot of difficulties and challenges.

The mother is deeply offended when Sofya asked "You're not afraid to go, are you, Nilovna?" responding, she assures "when have I ever been afraid? I was without fear even the first time" she became filled with a zealous greed for work. This was her condition to-day; and, therefore, Sofya's question was all the more displeasing to her. "There's no use for you to ask me whether or not I 'm afraid and various other things," she sighed. "I've nothing to be afraid of. Those people are afraid who have something. What have I ? Only a son."(711) The young activists believe in the principles they adhere to. Sofya states "Our power to work, our faith in the victory of truth we obtain from you, from the people; and the people is the inexhaustible source of spiritual and physical strength. In the people are vested all possibilities, and with them everything is attainable. It is necessary to arouse their consciousness, their soul, their great soul of a child, who is not given the liberty to grow"(Mother 551).

The young female revolutionists in Gorky's *Mother* are self-reliant and are certain of their success and victory. Sofya assures "We shall be victorious, because we are with working

people ...our power to work, our faith in the victory of truth we obtain from you, from the people; and the people is the inexhaustible source of spiritual and physical strength. In the people are vested all possibilities, and with them everything is attainable. It's necessary only to arouse their consciousness, their soul, the great soul of a child, who is not given the liberty to grow."(551) They experience happiness and joy in their revolutionary deed as they find themselves sacrificing for the liberation of mankind. Sofya with delight explains to the mother Pelagueya "We are already rewarded for everything. We have found a life that satisfies us; we live broadly and fully, with all the power of our souls. What else can we desire?"(552) .

Despair has no place in the life of activists but they faithfully do their tasks with such belief that mankind will reap the fruits. Sofya with Pelagueya travelled to distribute the proclamations, leaflets and banned books to other villages. Sofya talks with the peasants about the struggle of the German farmers and "about the misfortune of the Irish, about the great exploits of the working men of France in their frequent battling for freedom."(590) They are looking hopefully for tomorrow. "A day is coming when the workingmen of all countries will raise their heads, and firmly declare, " Enough ! We want no more of this life... And then the fantastic power of those who are mighty by their greed will crumble, the earth will vanish from under their feet, and their support will be gone."(592)

Sofya, though revolutionary is always altruistic. The mother bravely distributed the illegal leaflets, proclamations, newspapers. "She considered it her duty to carry the books regularly to the factory."(319) She fears nothing and faithfully does her duty and defies the regime. Several times a month, dressed as a nun or as a peddler of laces or small linen articles, as a rich merchant's wife or a religious pilgrim, she rode or walked about with a sack on her back, or a valise in her hand. Everywhere, in the train, in the streamer, in hotels and inns, she behaved simply and unobtrusively. She was the first to enter into conversations with strangers, fearlessly drawing attention to herself by her kind, sociable talk and the confident manner of an experienced person who has seen and heard much." (610)

The mother Pelagueya does not surrender and decides to continue her task that may cause her a lot of troubles. Though she is attacked and insulted from the soldier, she continues her resistance. "Go, you devil" a young soldier with a big mustache shouted right into the mother's ear. He brushed against her and shoved her onto the sidewalk... she waved her hands, and certain words flashed up in her heart like sparks, kindling in her strong, stubborn

desire to speak them, to shout them.(467-8) The new woman became the inspirer, the preacher who enlightens the common people's insight and try to arouse them from the prolonged sleep they experience. Asking them to wipe out the dust gripped to their clothes due to the steady condition as they sit motionless, unable to take action. Pelagueya sympathetically presents the young's' sacred duty and attracts the attention of the common people towards this inevitable confrontation between the oppressors and the oppressed. She adds: "Understand the children's hearts. Believe your sons' hearts; they have brought forth the truth; it burns in them; they perish for it. Believe them!"(Mother 471)

The woman realizes the sacredness of the task, the young activists indulge in. Pelagueya is overwhelmed with revolutionary spirit and she is totally involved in such courageous deed. She in her sermon glorifies the offspring's heroism that enlightens the route of the mankind. Pelagueya, put her hand on Liudmila's breast ...as if herself meditating upon the words she spoke. "Children go through the world; that's what I understand; children go into the world, over all the earth, from everywhere towards one thing. The best hearts go; people of honest minds; they relentlessly attack all evil, all darkness. They go, they trample falsehood with heavy feet, understanding everything, justifying everybody –justifying everybody, they go. Young, strong, they carry their power, their invincible power, all toward one thing-toward justice. They go to conquer all human misery, they arm themselves to wipe away misfortune from the face of the earth; they go to subdue what is monstrous, and they will subdue it. We will kindle a new sun, somebody told me; and they will kindle it... Yesterday they sentenced them because they carried to you, to all the people, the honest, sacred truth. How do you live? (979-996)

Nothing diverts her from the cause she bestows herself for and to fulfill the promise she gave to her son , she continues her task in fighting for the sacred cause. The mother's courage is summed up in her response to the policeman who came to her house the next day of her son's arrest. His existence means nothing to her and his words do not touch her interest. The woman who was obliged for a long time "to withdraw into the background, not daring to enter into conversation or even to remain nearby"(Peter 38), rebels against marginalization and bravely challenges the authority. We hear Pelagueya Nilovna in her argument with the commander assures the activists' rights in opposing the regime's atrocity. "Yes, our children are our judges. They visit just punishment upon us for abandoning them on such a road."(480) When the policeman threatens her "his words buzzed around her without touching her."(480) Nilovna's will is indomitable. She is very resolute in her mission. Unlike

the submissive woman whom we used to know and whose heart broken down due to any encounter with the oppression, the mother here, is totally different. She felt pride to see her lovely son in prison facing the atrocity of the oppressor "This is the second time –all because he came to understand God's truth and sowed it openly without sparing himself. He's a young man, handsome, intelligent; he planned a newspaper, and gave Mikhail Ivanovich a start on his way, although he's only half of Mikhail's age. Now they 're going to try my son for all this, and sentence him; and he will escape from Siberia and continued with his work." (Mother 766)

The zeal and the courage of the woman is represented not only in the mother's deed but the action of Sashenka the revolutionist lady who was in jail and her refusal to take food for eight days to express her refusal for the atrocity of the oppressor, reflects the woman's awareness in opposing the injustice practiced on her for long time. Yegor records her revolutionary action "Here, granny, is a girl who is a thorn in the flesh of the police! Insulted by the overseer of the prison, she declared that she would starve herself to death if he did not pardon her. And for eight days she went without eating, and came within a hair's breadth of dying." (213) She is persistent who never ever surrenders, we hear her enthusiastically states "He did beg my pardon after all, One ought never to forgive an insult, never!" (214)

We find Sashenka no less committed to the liberation of women from oppression. The newwoman proves that she has her own view, not only about the materialistic world, but metaphysical issues such as death and eternity are addressed. Sasha in her words about Yegor who sacrifices for the sake of others, the "artist of the revolution, a great master, who skillfully manipulates revolutionary thoughts" (654) appears as the philosopher who has deep insight. She has her own view about death. She assures that revolutionary thought will not fade and death means nothing to the faithful activist. She argues What does 'to die' signify? What died? Did my respect for Yegor die? My love for him, a comrade? The memory of his mind's labor? Did that labor die? Did all our impressions of him as of a hero disappear without leaving a trace? Did all this die? This best in him will never die out of me, I know. It seems to me we 're in too great a hurry to say of a man 'he's dead.' That's the reason we too soon forget that a man never dies if we don't wish our impressions of his manhood, his self-denying toil for the triumph of truth and happiness to disappear.

We forget that everything should always be alive in living hearts. Don't be in a hurry to bury the eternally alive, the ever luminous, along with a man's body. (656-7) Gorky's other female

characters are also full of vigor and vitality. Natasha, a female revolutionary is presented with such a zeal, she is a living model for others. Natasha the new woman is different from her poor mother who "is a simple woman ..., a beaten-down, frightened creature, so tiny, like a little mouse – ... runs so quickly and is afraid of everybody." (83) Natasha frees herself from the shackles imposed on her. The patriarch, the father who was glorified means nothing to Natasha. She sacrifices her rich sponsor, father for the sake of her cause. Responding to Nilovna Pelagueya, Natasha assures "I have abandoned my family? ...that's nothing. My father is stupid, coarse man-my brother also- and a drunkard, besides. My oldest sister-unhappy, wretched thing-married a man much older than herself, very rich, a bore and greedy." (83)

Natasha assures that her life altered totally after she indulged in the revolutionary work. She felt happy and thrilled, explaining to Nilovna, the mother, she states "if you knew –if you but understood what a great, joyous work we are doing! You will come to feel it!" (84) Natasha, the teacher is persistent and sincere for her cause. Not only the mother, Pelagueya Nilovna whose rebellious zeal leads her to indulge in the revolutionary action but the spirit of resistance of the workers arouse and encourage the other females to challenge the atrocity of the regime. We meet Marya Korsunova who was asked by the officer to search the mother Pelagueya and she does not obey the order saying : "I can't." (481) and she murmured insulting the officers "Oh, the dogs!" (482) Natasha, the young, enthusiastic lady works side by side with the comrades. She was admired by others and her thought and insight are highly appreciated. She reveals her mother's suffering.

"My mother died. Poor woman, she's dead!" .. I am sorry for her. She was not yet fifty. She had a long life before her still. But when you look at it from the other side you can't help thinking that death is easier than such a life-always alone, a stranger to everybody, needed by no one, scared by the shouts of my father. Can you call that living? People live waiting for something good, and she has nothing to expect except insults". (609) That mother who surrenders to man's brutality, is now ready to raise her voice and that is embodied in Sasha who with a new thought abandoned the boring life of her aristocratic father. There is a logical fulfillment in the creation of a character Sasha.

A woman with a socialistic concern, Sasha tries to interpret marriage as a harmonious institution. "I am his comrade-a wife, of course. . . I'm not capable of regarding a man as my possession. I'm not going to constrain him, no... if necessary we will part as friends". (9445)

The woman is asked to do everything and being, according to Feminist movement, as Peter, argues, "the guardian of morality and social cohesion" (Peter 48), she takes on her shoulder the burden the man fellow skip. Sasha the brave activist is sure that she will be arrested and sent to exile and she is ready to pay the price in full. To calm mother's worry about her son Pavel, She says " you know I am also awaiting a sentence. Evidently they [the repressive regime] are going to send me to Siberia, too. I will then declare that I desire to be exiled to the same locality that [Pavel] will be" (939)

The sense of resistance and protest against the atrocity practiced on woman, prevail among certain category of individuals. It is worthwhile to quote Delmar's words about this issue: "Many would agree that female suffer discrimination because of their sex; that they have specific needs which remain negate and unsatisfied, and that the satisfaction of these needs require a radical change (some would say a revolution even) in the social, economic and political order" (qtd. in Peter 187). The young activists oppose the man's harassment against women and they arouse woman's disgust and anger against this unjustified treatment. Andrey, the little Russian talking to the mother ,states " How can you forgive a man if he goes against you like a wild beast, does not recognize that there is a living soul in you, and kicks your face –a human face! You must not forgive... I don't want to show indulgence for insults. I don't want to let them learn on my back how to beat others!"(279)

The mother who used to be naïve turns to be volatile and also catalytic. Speaking to the woman who is worried about her son who involves in the demonstration, she says " let him go ! Don't be alarmed! Don't fear! I myself was afraid at first, too. Mine is right at the head- he who bears the standards- that's my son!"..."Don't be troubled !" Murmured the mother, "It's a sacred thing. Think of it !"(447-8)The mother Pelagueya arouses in the audience the feeling of disgust towards their passivity that let the soldiers arresting Pavel and his group. A new woman appears with strength and zeal. The mother like Joan of Arc rises to unleash her strong emotion to tarnish the oppressors.

We hears Pelagueya "with a broad sweep of her arms cried out, My dear ones! My people... You are all dear people, you are all good people. Open up your hearts. Look around without fear, without terror. Our children are going into the world. Our children are going, our blood is going for the truth; with honesty in their hearts they open the gates of the new road- a straight, wide road for all. For all of you, for the sake of your young ones, they have devoted themselves to the sacred cause. They seek the sun of new days that shall always be bright.

They want another life, the life of truth and justice, of goodness for all... The life is for our children and the earth is for them (470-4) Pelagueya's words have great effect on the audience and touché their souls and lead one to say " she is speaking God's words!...God's words, good people ! Listen to her!...[she] spoke the truth"(472)

From a thorough study of Gorky's *Mother*, it is clearly palpable that, women with their latent potential, can cause a thorough upheaval in the political, social and domestic spheres. Gorky has made Nilovna an archetypal character. All such dictums like women's emancipation and women's empowerment find embedded in Nilovna's professed ideals and in actions. The characterization of Natasha, Sashenka, Sofya etc. also add new dimension to Gorky's avowed theory of 'exalted motherhood'. The novel *Mother* proves to point out that women need not complement men but to supplement them. The female we encounter here is a totally new female with new thought and doctrine. Gorky witnesses the socio-political turmoil that takes place in his time and magnificently traces the initial steps that lead to rebirth of a new woman.

Through providing us with a vivid picture of the woman, we conclude that Gorky is the faithful lawyer and defender for woman's cause. It is a new world with new doctrines where woman has to say with a loud voice what she wants to say and decide her own destiny. The novel *Mother* can be read as record for feminist history through the eyes of Russian revolutionist, Gorky. It shows Russian feminist as playing a vital role in revolutionary movements that struggle for liberation, social and political transformation.

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