

Tribhuvan University

Clash of Classes in Anton Chekhov's Selected Stories

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Master of Arts in English

by

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the thesis paper entitled,  
“Class and Clashes in Anton Chekhov’s Selected Stories”  
is my own original work carried out as a Master’s student at the Department of  
English  
at Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus except to the extent the assistance from others in the  
thesis paper’s design and conception or in presentation style and  
linguistic expression are duly acknowledged.

All sources used for the thesis paper have been fully and properly cited. It contains  
no materials which to a substantial extent have been accepted for the award of  
any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational  
institution, except where due acknowledgement  
is made in the thesis paper.

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis titled “Class and Clashes in Anton Chekhov’s Selected Stories” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, by Mr. Tika Ram Kandel has been approved by the undersigned of the research committee.

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## **Abstract**

The focus of this research is in the area of clashes in small coterie of family or close circle such as lovers and co-workers determined by economic hegemony or class consciousness in the selected stories of Anton Chekhov. Such a study is important in order to see how have the characters in the stories of Chekhov been psychologically and socially influenced by economic hegemony. The stories selected in this project do not cover the large spectrum of class conflict, production and distribution as loudly discussed from the perspective of Marxism.

The research approach adopted in this thesis includes realism intermingling economy and its impact upon behavior. The finding from this research provides an idea that characters in the stories of Chekhov are bound to ruin their sagacity and rational thinking due to economic phenomena. Even the family members cannot be together in some cases. When the poor fail to fight against the rich, they want mercy and love from the rich instead of fighting against the rich. To take a reference, in Chekhov's story, "On the Road" Liharev was in the movement of abolition of private property five years ago but later he expects love and kindness from them instead of fighting against them. The main conclusion drawn from this study is that an ideal view of people about good treatment to each other is not feasible in reality keeping economic matter aside. This thesis asserts that classless society as imagined by Marx is a utopian concept because characters' tussle in the stories of Chekhov is not only between the rich and the poor but between the poor too. Imposing ideal view about fair treatment to each other without solving fundamental economic problem seems baseless.

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## **Introduction**

Anton Chekhov's stories often deal with economic tussle of common people, enigmatic nature of human being, love and lust and sometime freewill versus social code. Human psychology is guided by economic issues to some extent shaking the grand narratives of idealism. Stories of Chekhov try to scrutinize this fact portraying ups and downs, attachment and detachment, attraction and repulsion in relationship taking small coterie of family members, spouse, co-workers and lovers. The stories selected in this project do not cover the large spectrum of class conflict, production and distribution as loudly discussed from the perspective of Marxism. Realism in the stories of Chekhov can be observed intermingling economy and its impacts upon psychology. At their core, economics and psychology share a common desire to understand human demeanor but the communication between two is not mature. This research asserts that human being is more economic though it is social highlighting realism in this regard. Observing the behaviour of character from selected stories by Chekhov, this project can reveal human's mercy, love, bondage, care etcetera are not absolute, they are relatives with economic concerns in real setting of life.

## **Statement of Problem**

For this research four stories of Chekhov are picked up. They are: "Bet", "On the Road", "Difficult People" and "Excellent People". A young lawyer's choice to live in the story "Bet" in the argument of choosing death penalty and life imprisonment is guided by better prospect of economic empowerment in the future. "On the Road" shows a man, despite thrown in a position of beggar still has ample desire of his reminiscence and will to encounter ladies. In "Excellent People" fascinating relation between brother and sister becomes just fake due to sister's ill health to pursue her career for making money. In "Difficult People" son and father's

relation becomes sour due to greedy nature of father. In this story son thinks of abandoning home being tired of father's dominating nature and intimidation but cannot do so as he is dependent to his father. The major question is: How have the characters in the stories of Chekhov been psychologically and socially influenced by economic phenomena?

### **Hypothesis**

Changes in the attitude and dealing of characters by the influence of economic matter is prevalent in the stories of Chekhov. Economic issue is powerful enough to invite change in the relationship if not separation in most of the cases and sometimes it causes separation too. People try to subdue their attitude and also try to show themselves ideal but in reality economic issue is overwhelming to shape behavior. For instance, in the story "Difficult People" the son's submission to father is not natural. It is not psychological but constructed. One day the son bursts making his father wrong and surprised. Fear to father is economically constructed psychology and not same always. What we call psychological is economically constructed in some places if we go to the background and search the reality.

### **Review of Literature**

Chekhov describes the Russian life of his time on his literary works using deceptively simple technique devoid of obstructive literary devices. He is the outstanding representative of the nineteenth century Russian realist school. During the last half of nineteenth century the old order in Russia was crumbling. The agrarian, aristocratic society was increasing yielding to an urban bourgeoisie and a new capitalist class. In his stories he depicts a world essentially without heroes and villains. Romantic illusion contradicts with economic limitation. By mimicking reality he produced a representational art through his stories. In *Anton Chekhov and Late*



*Nineteenth Century Russian Realist Literature* Kristin Clark and Nick Mirdala write , “Realism was a reaction to Romanticism, which privileged the creative mind and the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling . In contrast to Romanticism, Realism sought to document as it actually is, doing away it flowery language and subjective emotion” (n .p.). In the story “Bet” a young lawyer becomes the victim of fifteen years of imprisonment due to just simple greed for money. In the story “On the Road” Liharev expects mercy from other as he is in the position of beggar now. Ironically, when he was rich he did not care his wife. He made his wife’s death quicker due to his reckless behavior. In “Difficult People” and “Excellent People” relation between father and son, brother and sister respectively becomes up and down and sometime even sour due to the economic domination of father in “Difficult People” and brother in “Excellent People”. In both “Difficult People” and “Excellent People” son and sister are submissive due to their dependency but it is not long lasting.

The perceived value of money is misconstrued by numerous people. In the story “Bet” the banker becomes to stake his money for bet but at last he believes his only chance of surviving in the world is if he holds onto as much as money as he could. The banker absolutely opposes giving up his money; therefore the banker is willing to kill the lawyer so that this plan shows the banker valued his money above everything else, even another human. In real life, many people believe that once they have money can solve problems. Little do they know that there is more than money as it is shown in romantic literature. The value of human life is immeasurable as exemplified in the story “ Bet” by the lawyer as he demonstrates he is understanding that the value of human life is greater than the value of money when he contemplates whether or not he should accept the two million dollars upon completing the fifteen

years of imprisonment. He abandoned money but it is still considerable that he lived fifteen years in prison due to greed of the same money.

In *Critical Theory Today* Lois Tyson writes, “Realism gives us characters and plot as if we were looking through a window onto an actual scene taking place before our eyes” (66). Anton Chekhov presents such overarching view of Russian society through his stories. He challenged all the established doctrines. In his story “On the Road” a poor father is living with his sick daughter. She often complains her shoulder aches. He cares her a lot but cannot take her for treatment and he says, “It’s the journey has made your shoulder ache, Sasha” (100). He is talking with a lady at night. He has desire to talk the lady even in this dismal situation. He says to lady, “I am exhausted, though, by sleeping in a sitting position, and I feel as though I were drunk. Oh dear! Sasha, and I feel sick as it is, and then you cry!” (100). He may be hoping some consolation from the lady to his exhaustion but reality is different. The lady says to Sasha, “It’s only little babies cry. If you are ill, dear, you must undress and go to sleep... let us take off your things!” (101). He is expecting sympathy as he is poor now. Once he was rich. He confesses in the story, “I was wealthy like my brothers, but now I am a beggar. In the delirium of my enthusiasm I smashed up my own fortune and my wife’s- a heap of other people’s money” (106).

In difficult situation people expect love and care from others. Here the man is expecting love or at least sympathy from the lady. When he was rich he had a loving wife but he did not care. He confesses, “I do not remember a single spring, I never noticed how my wife loved me, how my children were born” (106). He further says, “Madam, that I have no one’s life upon my conscience, for my wife died before my eyes, worn out by my reckless activity” (107). Nowadays people are running after science and success. To achieve these things money matters. People thinks money is

success and success can buy love but reality is different as the man confesses in the story, “I studied day and night without rest, ruined myself over books, wept when before my eyes men exploited science for their own personal ends” (105). Thus, economy determines psychology and changes the behaviours.

Even sexual drive is being economic drive to some extent. To get a girl he likes, a boy has to be wealthy in this capitalist world. He subdues sexual drive though actually cannot and focuses to search the ways of earning money. In this story the man wants a touch from the lady. “It suddenly began to seem to him that with another touch or two that girl would have forgiven him his failures, his age, his desolate position” (114). The lady left him. She listened his story, failures, principles and desolate position. She liked him yet she cannot love him and touch him because he is in the position of beggar whatever knowledge he has and however good principles he holds. While parting away with the man she thinks giving some money but hesitates. “Turning her back on him she took out her purse, a money note, stood for a long time crumpling it in her hand, and looking round at Liharev, blushed and put it in her pocket” (113). She has Hamlet like mentality of ‘to be or not to be’. She is psychologically moved by Liharev’s story yet her psychology is more influenced by economic matter. She cannot be in touch with him due to his poverty. She cannot give him money because in the battle of ‘to be or not to be’ money matters, economy overpowers her feeling. She actually cannot do what she likes because of social system. V. Kelle and M. Kovalson write in *Historical Materialism: An Outline of Marxist Theory of Society*, “Some believed that history ran a fatally inevitable course, with men merely imagining that they were acting in accordance with their own will but in fact doing only what they were forced to do by inexorable necessity” (36). Personality is not formed merely by knowledge and wisdom in capitalism. Liharev is

educated and has good knowledge and wisdom yet he is not good personality to the lady as V. Kelle and M. Kovalson write, “ When socialism eliminates private property it reduces all men to the same low level and destroys personality” (283).

In “Excellent People”, the double standard of modern people is portrayed. It shows how the cordial relation between sister and brother is destroyed by economic concerns. On the surface it is their principle that detached them over the debate of ‘non- resistance to evil’. This project does not enter to this debate rather scrutinizes what causes that debate. Brother claims himself a good writer. He appreciates his sister to the narrator of the story saying “you know, after taking degree she married, for love, an architect. It is a complete tragedy! They had hardly been married a month when-whew-her husband-died of typhus. She caught typhus from him. I never once heard her say anything referring to her medical studies” (127). The sister is very submissive to the writer. She never boasts her medical degree. She lives at her brother’s house and may be hopeful to return to her career after recovery. Her prolonged illness and depression does not allow her to return to her work. Once the writer scolds her when he cannot defend his argument over debate. He says her, “Half educated, undeveloped! That what comes of medical studies which provide no general culture!” (134). The narrator clears this sort of writer’s behavior relating with economic matter stating “From this time he treated his sister coldly with careless irony and endured her presence in the room as one endures the presence of old women dependent on one” (135). About the economic relation and people’s behavior V. Kelly and M. Kovalson write “Money is the measure of success, property-things-the symbol of wealth. In his drive for success, the individual regards his neighbor either as a rival or means for attaining his own ends. This produces relation based on cold calculation, on the cash nexus” (287). At last the sister returns to her career mustering courage. He

asked her, “Do not you want money?” but she rejected. Later he fell ill with inflammation of the lungs and died. It is money that caused separation. Submission to sister to brother is economical. Their debate is economical and their detachment even at the time of death is economical. In reality behaviours are set by economy not principles.

Chris Barker in *Making Sense of Cultural Studies: Central Problems and Critical Debates* writes, “ We are the product of bio chemical and cultural determination” (92). Culture cannot be free from economical determination. Father and son’s relation is biochemical but economic concern cannot be neglected. In “Difficult People”, the father says to his son, “at your age I was earning my living while you.....Do you know what you cost me, you scoundrel? I’ll turn you out! Wastrel!” (118). All family members including the son are under control of father. They do not dare to utter a word against him. At the core economic issue is manifested for this control. Family members are dependent to his earning but this control is not long lasting. One day the son says to his father in excitement:

Not a dinner or tea passes without your making an uproar. Your bread sticks in our throat.....nothing is more bitter, more humiliating, than bread that sticks in one’s throat.....Though you are my father, no one, neither god nor nature, has given you the right to insult and humiliate us so horribly, to vent your ill-humour on the weak (122).

The stories of Chekov Selected for this project are not far from economic concerns for shaping psychology. These stories carry reality of human life as it actually is rather than imposing idealism. These stories show how is the behavior of human being in capitalist world, not how should be their behavior. In *Critical Theory and Practice: A Coursebook* Keith Green and Jill Lebihan write, “The individual is subject to various

bodily, social, and psychic oppression, which seem to suggest a freedom from determinate history but are in fact symptoms of it”(119).Anton Chekhov in his stories has not distorted the world to show it beautiful. He presents grimy side of human behavior in blatant form and its causes and consequences in subtle form. This research intends to see the consequences of economic matter on human psychology and their social relationship taking reference of Chekhov’s stories.

### **Methodology/Theoretical Framework**

Realism is the focal point in the light of psychological tendency of human being determined by economy in the stories of Anton Chekhov. Rob Pope refers realism in two ways : First, classical nineteenth century realism that “ usually entails detailed attention to the routine texture of social life. This is sometimes called ‘bourgeois realism’ by Marxist because of the emphasis on middle class families and values” (228). Second, any movement which claims to offer a fresh, supposedly more faithful view of reality that “replace a preceding view of reality that has become conventionalized. In this respect almost every major literary or artistic movement claims to offer a higher or deeper reality than the one preceding it” (228). In the nineteenth century in Russian society new capitalist class was emerging from feudal class. People were being more materialistic that changed their behavior. In this research nineteenth century’s Russian society people’s dealing and economic concern is covered. The researcher uses significant use of Maxism but it is not about class conflict, base and superstructure. It does not take large area of society. It is limited to close people and their intimacy who come on their daily walk of life. Obviously the characters in the stories are all from middle class. It is realism of middle class people. Chekhov’s characters are not knights, prince, princess, landlords and factory owners. Characters are all common people. The researcher uses the significant use of Chris

Barker's Cultural Studies to apply pragmatism in psychology and capitalism. Separating psychology and capitalism will be betrayal to realism. Realism cannot be studied neither keeping psychology at bay nor capitalism. So, the approach will be deconstructing psychology and capitalism and study them from realism prospective. It will be realism in psychology and economy and finding the connection between psychology and economy that results realism. It will also use Tolstoy's approach to socialist realism in Russian literature and its connection in the stories of Chekhov's selected for this project.

### **Objectives and Limitation**

The primary objective of the research is to bring economic discourse while analyzing society, culture and psychology focusing nineteenth century Russian Society's reflection in the stories of Anton Chekhov. Through critical analysis of human relation and its change with economic matter, this research aims at deconstructing humans intimacy that is often portrayed as psychological. Chekhov's characters are taken from everyday life. They are not enlightened and special. This study is not related to enlightened and special people and their psychological bonding. All the characters are subaltern and common. Moreover, the study does not ignore the role of psychological attachment between people. It just aims at establishing the importance of economic power that is influencing to bring change in the level of thinking and changing behavior in common people's life. It tries to seek the answer of dilemma if human bonding is merely psychological, why the behavior of people change with the effect of economic issue in Chekhov's stories in a more encompassing way. It focuses on human's psychic feeling like love, pity, mercy, sympathy, empathy etcetera but tries to offer an analysis of these psyche and its change with economic influence in real life.

## **Significance of the Study**

This study makes significant contribution, mainly in three areas of concerns. First, this study highlights psychology in relation to economic status in the characters in the selected stories of Chekhov. Second, economic status is often portrayed power of domination but this study also shows poverty and commercialization as the cause of conflict leading to change in behavior. Third, Marxism expects revolution and egalitarian society as result of economic imperialism. However, Chekhov's characters revolution no longer brings egalitarian concept in their relationship. It further rifts their relation . Revolution of character does not give solution. Modern society is found corrupt and full of depression. Marx's egalitarian society is unlikely to happen. Chris Barker's view of teaching moral values to modern society by strengthening economic status seems to be better. This study shows neither egalitarian society can be formed nor moral values alone can change people's behavior. So, people can spend normal life if only state takes the responsibilities to life related problems that are not normal like various diseases, catastrophes etcetera.

## **Organization of the Research Report**

The proposed research report shall be an extended form of a scholarly article. In the beginning there shall be introduction to the topic of research supporting by argument. Next section will be followed by several coherent paragraphs with ideas, including facts and evidences supporting the research question that the researcher pin points at the beginning. At last the researcher will offer the conclusion.

### **Timeline/ Tentative Schedule**

The researcher will conduct this project within 60 days.

February 2017 : 1.1: Realism Pertaining to Economy and Anton Chekhov



February/March 2017 : 1.2: Depiction of Economy, Behaviour and Realism in  
Chekhov's Selected Stories

March 2017: 1.3: Conclusion

## **Realism, Clash of classes and Anton Chekhov**

This research focuses on clashes in family or people of a close circle such as lovers, co-workers determined by economy in the selected stories of Anton Chekhov. His stories often deal with economic tussle of common people, enigmatic nature of human being, love and lust and sometimes free will versus social code. Human behavior is guided by economic issue to some extent shaking grand narratives of idealism.

Chekhov is the outstanding representative of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Russian realist school. During the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the old order in Russia was crumbling. The agrarian, aristocratic society was increasing yielding to an urban bourgeoisie and a new capitalist class. In his stories Chekhov depicts a world essentiality without heroes and villains. Romantic illusion contradicts with economic limitation. By mimicking reality he portrays ugly picture of society often associated with economic concern. Stories of Chekhov try to scrutinize this fact portraying ups and downs, attachment and detachment, attraction and repulsion in relationship taking small coteries of family members, spouse, co-workers and lovers. The stories selected for this research do not cover the large spectrum of class conflict, production and distribution system as loudly discussed from the perspective of Marxism. Stories of Chekhov can be observed intermingling economy and its impacts upon behavior. Class and clashes in the stories of Chekhov is observed in this research from the perspective of realism. Here, class does not deal with proletariat and bourgeoisie rather it is class consciousness within a close circle of family, lovers or co-workers invited by economic phenomenon.

In the nineteenth century in Russian society, new capitalist class was emerging from feudal class. People were being more materialistic that changed their behavior.

Chekhov does not take large society. It is limited to close people and their intimacy that comes on their daily walk of life. Obviously, characters in the stories are from middle class. Chekhov's characters are not knights, princes, princesses, landlords, and factory owners. Realism cannot be dealt in isolation. It contains in every literary movement. Rob Pope refers realism in two ways: First, classical nineteenth century realism that "usually entails detailed attention to the routine texture of social life. This is sometimes called bourgeoisie realism by Marxist because of the emphasis on middle class families and values" (228). Second, any movement which claims to offer a fresh supposedly more faithful view of reality that "replaces a preceding view of reality that has become conventionalized. In this respect almost every major literary and artistic movement claims to offer a higher or deeper reality than the one preceding it" (228). Realism offers the fresh view of the world.

Realism coincided with Victorianism, yet has a distinct collection of aesthetic of its own light. The realist writers were heavily informed by journalistic technique, objective, and fidelity to the facts of the matter. The idea of writing fiction as a "report" grew out of this marriage between literature and journalism. Another fair comparison would be to think of the realist fiction as the form of document where fictional person and event are intended to seamlessly reproduce the real world. Socialist realism also emerged in this era. In Russia Leo Tolstoy was the pioneer of socialist realism. This can be described as Louis Tyson forwards "For some Marxist, realism, is the best form for Marxist purpose because it clearly and accurately represents the real world, with all its socio-economic inequalities and ideological contradictions" (66). Marxism observes realism to see the world from the perspective of socio-economic inequalities.

Marxists take sole economic status as power of domination but Chekhov

shows poverty and commercialization as the cause of conflict leading to change in behavior. Marxism expects revolution and egalitarian society as result of class conflict. But the characters in Chekhov's story no longer bring egalitarian concept in their relation. It further rifts their relation. Modern society is found corrupt and full of depression. Revolution of characters does not give solution in the stories of Chekhov. Chekhov's stories show neither egalitarian society can be formed nor moral values alone can make people ideal in the capitalistic world.

Simple techniques out of any obstructive literary devices and flowery language is used in realist literature. The stories of Chekhov selected for this research are not far from economic concern for shaping behavior. The characters, their deeds and languages they use are simple. M.H. Abrams treats realism in opposition to romanticism. He writes, "the romance is said to present life as we would have it be more picturesque, fantastic, adventurous, or heroic than actually; realism, on the other hand, is said to represent life as it really is" (260). The stories of Chekhov selected for the research carry reality of human as it actually is rather than imposing idealism. These stories show how is the behavior of human being in capitalist world, not how should be their behavior. Chekhov in these stories has not distorted the world to show it beautiful. He presents grimy side of human behavior in blatant form and its causes and consequences in subtle form. Abrams further writes, "Realistic fiction is written to give the effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common readers, evoking the sense that its characters might in fact exist, and that such things might well happen"(26). Realism often deals with the life of common people than presenting romantic illusion.

Realism is associated with every literary movement. Here, it is linked with economy and its impacts on behavior in everyday life. Sajal Bhattarai mentions,

“Reality or realism is the converse of utopianism. Reality and human thought or imagination mostly has contradiction. Realism signifies the assertion of the existence of a reality independently of our thought and beliefs about it.”(76). What human being intend to do and what actually they do differs. Human’s mercy, love, bondage, care, etcetera are often portrayed as psychological. Chekhov’s stories reveal they are not absolute but relative with economic concerns in real setting of life. Sometimes it is social taboo to say these factors are not merely psychological but economic too. Sajal Bhattarai future writes, “realism has been challenged a lot by various skeptical arguments commonly come by appealing to our dreams, illusions and hallucinations, in which our senses mislead us”(76).

Every activities of daily life are associated with economic issue. Chekhov boldly portrays even love and care as the byproduct of economic concern to some extent. Chekhov does not suggest any practical solution to the problems as done by socialist realist writers. He just shows the grimy side of capitalism on human values. He performs his works as literary worker, not as social scientist. Chekhov is not interested on art for art sake movement. He doesn’t get drown in the romantic illusion. He presents vivid pictures of society. Leo Tolstoy shares the time that Chekhov lived. Tolstoy attacks on art for art sake movement. Literary works are often drifting away from realism. Tolstoy appeals for social progress and humanity through his literary works but Chekhov merely depicts the world as it is. Tyson claims, “Realism gives us characters and plot as if we were looking through a window on to actual scene taking place before our eyes”(66). Chekhov views the world from the window and expresses it to his literary works. Tolstoy views the world and also asks the reader to judge how fair it is.

Leaving his literary work apart, if we go to Chekhov's real life he is the pioneer of humanism and social change. During the famine and cholera epidemic of 1892-93, he served as head of a district sanitary committee and treated many of the epidemic poorest victims. His grandfather was a serf who had purchased his freedom and that of his family in 1841AD. Only one generation removed from serfdom Chekhov remained acutely aware of his background. His background is depicted in his literary works. Tolstoy evoked for change and Chekhov showed nasty effects of capitalism in their literary works. In view of subsequent Russian history, in 1917 AD the communist-led Russian revolution overthrew Czar Nicholas- II and proclaimed an era of social equality. However, it is indeed not the sudden change or fair change but evoked by Tolstoy and Chekhov long before the movement. This fact is illustrated in *The Unfinished Revolution Russia 1917-1967* by Isaac Detacher. He mentions:

We need not assume that the course of the Russian revolution was predetermined in all its features or in the sequences of all its major phases and incidents. But its general direction had been set not by the events of few years or months; indeed of several epochs. The historian who labours to reduce the mountain of the revolution to a few contingencies, stands as helpless before it as once stood the political leaders who sought to prevent its rise (8).

An Individual tries to break the social code in the stories of Chekhov but fails to do so. It is not like the bold activities shown in romantic literature. *In Anton Chekhov and Late Nineteenth Century Russian Realist Literature* Kristin Clark and Nick Mirdala write, "Realism was a reaction to Romanticism, which privileged the creative mind and spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling. In contrast to Romanticism, Realism sought to document as it actually is, doing away its flowery

language and subjective emotion” (n.p.) Chekhov’s characters fail to keep moral standard on what they believe but moved by economic power. V. Kelle and M. Kovalsion assert “with the development of society, with the changes in its economic structure inevitable changes occur in morality as well. Morality is historical and concrete. There is no abstract, immutable, everlasting and extra-historical morality. In class society morality has a class character” (146). Morality is relative. There is no extra-historical morality. In class society morality is defined by class character.

### **Depiction of Clash of Classes in Chekhov’s Selected Stories**

Class and Clashes in the stories of Chekhov is observed intermingling economy and its impacts upon behavior. In the characters of some short stories of Chekhov human being is shown as more economic though it is social highlighting realism in this regard. A young lawyer’s choice to live in the story “Bet” in the argument of choosing death penalty and life imprisonment is guided by better prospect of economic empowerment in the future. In “Enigmatic Nature”, an author meets a pretty lady on a railway carriage who lives together with an old general for accumulating his properties before running away with her lover got entangled by another old general in the pursuit of grabbing his properties too. “In the Graveyard”, his story about blind adherence to celebrity, an actor is really remembered after his death by his fan for “harming” him. Harming, in a sense that the later is influenced by charismatic art of the actor that becomes just his hobby but could not support economically. “On the Road”, shows a man, despite thrown in a position of beggar still has ample desire of his reminiscence and will to encounter ladies. In “Excellent People” fascinating relation between brother and sister becomes just fake due to sister’s ill health to pursue her career for making money. In “Difficult People” son and father’s relation becomes sour due to greedy nature of

father. In this story the son thinks of abandoning home being tired of father's dominating nature and intimidation but cannot do so as he is dependent to his father economically.

In the story "Bet", in the beginning the lawyer is being greedy when he accepts the bet with the banker. This acceptance is the economic action by the lawyer because he falsely believes that the value of money won in the bet will compensate for fifteen years of imprisonment. The imprisonment later proves not to be worth the money as the lawyer breaks the conduct in order to disqualify himself from receiving the money. After spending fifteen years of imprisonment the lawyer writes to the banker:

And I despise your books, I despise wisdom and the blessing of the world. It is all worthless, fleeting, illusory and deceptive like a mirage. You may be proud, wise and fine, but death will wipe you off the face of the earth as though you were no more than mice burrowing under the floor, and your posterity, your history, your immortal geniuses will burn or freeze together with the earthly globe. You have lost your reason and taken the wrong path. You have taken lies for truth, and hideousness for beauty. To prove to you it in action how I despise all that you live by. I renounce the two million of which I once dreamed as of paradise (8).

It takes fifteen years for the lawyers to understand money is not the eternal source of happiness which once he dreamed as of paradise. People cannot be kept fifteen years in prison to make them understand that money is not the absolute source of happiness. Many people in real life are constantly looking to make more and more money.



Businessmen who live at their work cannot be seen beyond the money signs. They work around the clock in hope of making more money. Greed can control the mind of people. Human life outweighs the value of money but to realize this fact people have to face extreme condition.

The banker becomes ready for bet because he cannot believe that the lawyers would live fifteen years in prison as he says, “think better of it, young man, while there is still time. To me two millions are a trifle, but you are losing three or four of your best years of your life. I say three or four, because you won’t stay longer. Don’t forget either, you unhappy man, the voluntary confinement is a great deal harder to bear than compulsory” (2). Surprisingly, the lawyer spends fifteen years in prison. The banker changes his mind. Fifteen years ago he said that two millions were a trifle for him but now it could not be trifle. Now money matters a lot. He says clutching his head in desperation:

Cursed bet! Why didn’t the man die? He is only forty now. He will take my last penny from me, he will marry, will enjoy life, will gamble on the exchange, while I shall look at him with envy like a beggar, and hear from him every day the same sentence: I am indebted to you for the happiness of my life, let me help you! No, it is too much! The one means of being saved from bankruptcy and disgrace is the death of that man (5).

The banker wishes death of the lawyer to save his money in the bet.

The perceived value of money is misconstrued by numerous people. In the story “Bet” the banker becomes ready to forsake his money for bet but at last he believes his money for happiness; therefore, the banker is willing to kill the lawyer. This plan shows the banker valued his money above everything else, even another

human. In real life, many people believe that once they have money can solve problems. They know little that there is more than money as it is shown in romantic literature. The value of human life is immeasurable as exemplified in the story “Bet” by the lawyer as he demonstrates he understand that the value of life is greater than the value of money when he contemplates whether or not he should accept the two million dollars upon completing the fifteen years of imprisonment. He abandoned money but it is still considerable that he lived fifteen years in prison due to greed of the same money.

In capitalism value of commodities even supersede value of life. Greed dominates mind. Marx imagined the persistence of capitalism while maintaining its demise could still be brought about. Chris Barker opposes the view of Marxism. Barker asserts, “it now seems to me that capitalism is transformed and here to say; Indeed it is capitalism itself that is the contemporary revolution force. Our world currently has no viable alternative to global capitalism” (18). Kornfield does not see capitalism as the essence of problem rather he focuses to minimize ill effects of it . Kornfield focuses on spiritual aspect. Ill effects can be controlled by having “war within” in the world. This can be done, referring Kornfield Barker writes, “By staying in the present moment rather than drifting off into the fantasies of our thought pattern that are driven by desire/attraction and fear /aversion” (218). In the story “Bet” the lawyer lives fifteen years in voluntary imprisonment due to fantasies of the thought of better future that includes better commodities, facilities and even attractive wife as imagined by the banker.

Chekhov challenges the established doctrines of idealism and present overarching view of the then Russian society. Rob Pope refers Dickens, Balzac, Lucacs and Tolstoy stating, “they could present overarching view of the societies they

lived”(107). Chekhov presents such overarching view of the Russian society through his stories. In his story, “On the Road” a poor father is living with his sick daughter. She often complains her shoulder aches. He cares her a lot but cannot take her for treatment and says, “it’s the journey has made your shoulder ache, Sasha”(100). He is talking with a lady at night. He has desire to talk the lady even in this dismal situation. He says, “ I am exhausted, though, by sleeping in a sitting position, and I feel sick as it is, and then you cry”(100) ! He may be hoping some consolation from the lady to his exhaustion but the reality is different. The lady says to Sasha,” its only little babies cry. If you are ill, dear, you must undress and go to sleep... let us take off your things”(101)! He is expecting sympathy as he is poor now. Once he was rich. He confesses in the story, “ I was wealthy like my brothers, but now I am a beggar. In the delirium of my enthusiasm I smashed up my own fortune and my wife’s- a heap of other people’s money” (106). The cause of the low position of Liharev is the expectation of the class character that led to follow the passion than the need.

People spend myriad / sundry types of life in the pursuit of being successful and rich. They see their life full of colour and beauty, in reality it passes like a mirage and they feel empty. In the story “On the Road” Liharev runs after his enthusiasm than running after the call of time. He turns himself from believer to atheist to nihilist to communist to absurdist. He confess, “ in my enthusiasm I have been absurd, far from the truth, unjust, Cruel, dangerous. God alone has seen how often I have wept and bitten my pillow in shame for my enthusiasm” (107). Input is not the measure of weighing success. People always want output specially in cash nexus, not in knowledge and wisdom. He brooded over chemistry and zoology. When he fails to change his knowledge to cash nexus he wants love. He says, “That... that great hearted fortitude, faithfulness unto death, poetry of the heart, the meaning of life lies

in just that unrepining martyrdom, in the tear which would soften a stone, in the boundless, all forgiving love which brings light and warmth into the chaos of life..." (108). While following the enthusiasm Liharev could not know the meaning of love now, it is too late.

In difficult situation people expect love and care from other. Here, the man is expecting love or at least sympathy from the lady. When he was rich he had a loving wife but he didn't care. He confesses, "I don't remember a single spring, I never noticed how my wife loved me, how my children were born" (106). Now he talks about love that brings light and warmth in the chaos of life. Here is the contradiction that people expect love in the chaos of life. Normally people are lost in lust saying it love. He says, "I was enthusiastic over ideas, people, events and places... my enthusiasm was endless! Five years ago I was working for the abolition of private property"(106). His revolution to abolish private property and establish egalitarian society could not be successful. Now he is hungry of love and knows the value of love. He further says, "Madam, that I have no one's life upon my conscience, for my wife died before my eyes, worn out by my reckless activity"(107). He illustrates how powerful is the economic issue to keep women under male's control saying, " My God! For the sake of same trumpety masculine enthusiasm she will cut off her hair, abandon her family, die among strangers"(107). Nowadays people are running after science and success. To achieve these things money matters. People think money is success and it can buy love but reality is different as the man confesses in the story

I gave myself up to science, heart and soul, passionately as the woman one loves. I was it's slave. I found it the sun of my existence, and asked for no other. I studied day and night without rest, ruined myself over books, wept when before my eyes men exploited science for their own

personal ends. But my enthusiasm did not last long. The trouble is that every science has a beginning but not an end, like a recurring decimal (105).

Liharev gave himself to science only to find him empty economically at last. His passion to science could not feed him.

The soaring desire of Liharev crushes. He tried hard, studied science, ruined himself and turned to the position of beggar. He attempted to abolish private property and form classless society. Money matters everywhere. He wants love now. Thus, economy determines psychology and changes the behavior.

Even sexual desire is being economic drive to some extent. To get a girl he likes, a boy has to be wealthy in this capitalistic world. He subdues sexual drive though actually he cannot and focuses to search the ways of earning money. In this story the man wants a touch from the lady. "It suddenly began to seem to him that with another touch or two that the girl would have forgiven him, his failure, his age, his desolate position"(114). The lady left him. She listened his story, failures, principles and desolate position. She might like him yet she cannot forgive, love and touch him because he is in the position of beggar whatever knowledge he has and however good principles he holds. While parting away with the man she might have thought giving some money but hesitates. "Turning her back on him she took out her purse, a money note, stood for a long time crumpling it in her hand, and looking round at Liharev, blushed and put it in her pocket" (113) She has Hamlet like mentality to be or not to be. She is psychologically moved by Liharev's story yet her psychology is more influenced by economic matter. She cannot be in touch with him due to his poverty.

She cannot give him money because in the battle of to be or not to be money matters, economy overpowers her feeling. She actually cannot do what she likes because of social system. V. Kelle and M. Kovalson claim, "Some believed that history ran a fatally inevitable course, with men merely imagining that they were acting in accordance with their own will but in fact doing only what they were forced to do by inexorable necessity" (36). Personality is not merely formed by knowledge and wisdom in capitalism. Liharev is educated and has good knowledge and wisdom yet he is not good personality to the lady as V. Kelle and M. Kovalson write, "When socialism eliminates private property it reduces all men to the some low level and destroys personality"(283). Personality cannot be determined by education, knowledge, and wisdom in class society. To maintain personality people should possess property.

Human being is byproduct of cultural determination. Culture cannot be isolated from economic constraint. Chris Barker point out, "We are the product of bio-chemical and cultural determination"(92). Father-son relation is bio-chemical but economic concern cannot be neglected. In "Difficult People" the father says to his son, "At your age I was earning my living while you ... Do you know what you cost me, you scoundrel? I will turn you out! Wastrel"(118)! All family members including the son are under the control of father. They do not dare to utter a word against him. At the core economic issue is manifested for this control. Family members are dependent to his earning but this control is not long lasting. .One day the son says to his father in excitement, " Not a dinner or tea passes without your making an uproar. Your bread sticks in our throat... nothing is more bitter, more humiliating, than bread that sticks in one's throat... though you are my father, neither god nor nature, has given you the right to insult and humiliate us so horribly, to vent your ill humour on

the weak” (119). The conflict between the son and his father lies in the center of economic phenomenon.

Keith Green and Jill Lebihan state, “The individual is subject to various bodily, social and psychic oppression which seems to suggest a freedom from determinate history but in fact symptoms of it” (119). People try to subdue their attitude and also try to show themselves ideal but in reality economic issue is overwhelming to shape behavior. In “Difficult People” the son’s submission to father is not natural. It is the matter of closeness of being together. Bonding of people by blood and marriage causes intimacy from the psychological perspective. Economic issue cannot separate them easily. It is social stigma too. But economic relation is powerful enough to invite change in the relationship if not separation in most of the cases. In close society separation is low but in open society where people can earn their own living and have less fear of social stigma, separation is more. The submission of the son to father is constructed. Fear of father is not psychological. It is economically constructed psychology and not same always. Tyson writes, “Psychoanalysis distracts our attention from the real forces that create human experience: the economic system that structure human societies” (53). Psychoanalysis cannot offer the true view of reality escaping from the economic system of society.

Selfishness lies in the kind words of people. People respect others keeping economic issues in centre. In “Excellent People” the double standard of modern people is portrayed. It shows how the cordial relation between sister and brother is destroyed by economic concern. On the surface it is their principle that detached them over the debate of ‘non-resistant to evil’. This research does not enter to this debate rather scrutinizes what causes that debate. Brother claims himself a good writer. He appreciates his sister to the narrator of the story saying, “You know, after taking

degree she married , for love, an architect . It is the complete tragedy! They had hardly been married a month when –whew- her husband died of typhus. She caught typhus from him. I never once heard her say anything referring to her medical studies” (127). The sister is very submissive to the writer . She never boasts her medical degree. She lives at her brother’s house and may be hopeful to return to her career after recovery. Her prolonged illness and depression does not allow her to return to her work. Once the writer scolds her when he cannot defend his argument over debate. He says, “Half educated, undeveloped, that what comes of medical studies which provides no general culture” (134). The narrator clears this sort of writer’s behavior relating with economic matter stating, “From this time he treated his sister coldly with careless irony and endured her presence in the room as one endures the presence of old women that depend on one” (135). About the economic relation and people’s behavior V. Kelly and M. Kovalson write, “Money is the measure of success, the individual regards his neighbor either as a rival or means of attaining his own ends. This produces relation based on cold calculation, on the cash nexus” (287). At last the sister returns to her career mustering courage. He asks her, “Do not you want money?” but she rejected. Later he fell ill with inflammation of the lungs and died. It is money that caused separation. Submission of sister to brother is economical. This debate is economical and detachment even at the time of death is economical. In reality behaviours are set by economy more than principles.

People try to keep their relation intact but sours with economic concerns. One day when coming home from the office, the brother finds his sister crying. The writer’s heart is touched, throbbled with pain. He tries to forgive her and make relation fresh again. “He knelt down and kissed her head, her hands, her shoulders...” (135). He immediately requests her to read a book instead of taking champagne on the



happy moment of making relation good. The sister couldn't be convinced by his unusual activities. She says, "A year ... two years ago... I read it long ago, and I know it" (135). It is all the writer's vanity. The narrator clears it stating he again began to treat her as 'dependent one'. Jostein Gaarder state, "Marx thought that, to a great extent, it was the material factors in society which determined the way we think"(393). The writer tries to think positively and treat his sister nicely but fails and treats her coldly as "dependent one". Economic issue is overwhelming to the relation of family members. This is often in hidden form but reveals in course of time. In broad term, social relation is determined by economic matter. In *Sophie's World* Jostein Gaarder further writes, "Material change creates new spiritual relation. Marx particularly emphasized that it was the economic forces in society that created change and drove history forward" (393). Spiritual relation is not isolated, it dwells along with material change.

The brother wants to see himself ideal, change the sour relationship and begin new cordial relationship again. To prove it in action he kisses his sister. His hobby to make enough money couldn't be successful. He hides his identity to show himself a pioneer writer. About him Chekhov writes in the beginning of the story, " He took his degree at the university in the faculty of law and had a post on the board of management of some railway; but if you had asked him what his work was, he would look candidly and openly at you with his large bright eyes through his gold princenez, and would answer in a soft, velvety lisping baritone: my work is literature"(125). He is working in one place keeping heart in another place. He has resentment to himself that is revealed to other. He wants to be reputed writer but the journal he works is not wide spread. He was proud of her sister's medical degree. Her medical degree was associated with her personality and economic nexus. If his sister was healthy, she

would come to his home occasionally and he would love her or yet another possibility he would be jealous of her comparing his social status with her. V. Kelly and M. Kovalson write, “It is not human nature but society that is defective, for it stimulates men’s baser instincts and passion, and mould him accordingly” (119). The brother is not ready to accept himself as a poor writer and the sister couldn’t accept herself as mere spectator and praise his folly as good forever. Her attempt to be submissive couldn’t be long lasting. Chekhov appropriately select the little “Excelent People”. At last their baser instinct was revealed and fell into debate leading to separation.

The characters in the stories of Chekhov fail to get liberation they want. They are doomed to surrender to their circumstances. Utopian and transcendental vision of the characters is just illusion. They are compelled to surrender to their baser instincts because economic power is entangled in complicated way in their daily life. About this approach of Chekhov Andrew Shcherbekok writes in *Killing Realism: Insight and Meaning in Anton Chekhov*:

His characters fail to gain a true and timely insight into the state of the world in general and their individual predicament in particular requires an elaborate vision of life as it really is, so as to measure the characters’ delusion against it, sometimes the standard of accuracy is explicated. Any claim that Chekhov portrays the lamentable deficiency of his characters’ perception of the world makes the notion of Chekhov’s realism indispensable. Thus, not only the account of Chekhov’s place in the history of Russian literature but also the analysis of Chekhov’s cultural critique depend on the notion of Chekhov as a writer whose text have a superior grasp of the real world (n.p.).

Realism massively contradicts with the words people utter and action they perform. People can change their principle in course of life guided by the question of survival and economic surveillance upon daily life. In the story "On the Road" Liharev talks about festivals like Easter and Christmas and gives the reference of his brother stating, "My brother for instance, argues that there is no God, but he is the first to hurry to Martins at Easter"(103). Narrator in the story talks about Russian people stating, "If a Russian does not believe in God, it means he believes in something else" (103). Liharev fell in the fancy of dream, read science, became atheist, nihilist and the communist. Chekhov writes referring Liharev, "Five years ago I was working for the abolition of private property ; my last creed was non-resistance to evil" (106). He was working for the abolition of private property five years ago but not now. Marx talks about abolishing private property and forming classless society uniting the proletariat. In this story the brothers of Liharev are very rich. They invested for the education of Liharev. Now, they cannot help him because they are busy with their way of life. They are against the doctrine of Liharev. In the same family also there is division of rich and poor. Liharev is isolated and abandons the idea of abolishing private property. He might have college friends who were involved in the mission of abolishing private property five years ago but now they are not with him. They are compelled to work for bread as it is portrayed in the story. The story implies that Liharev's brother does not believe in God but goes to Easter to make him social. Liharev does not do as his brother does. As a result, he is abandoned from the family and society. In *Critical Theory and Practice: A Course Book*, Keith Green and Jill Lebian write, "Power for Foucault is not necessarily a repressive, tyrannical thing, it is a generative, productive force. Power is that which binds together the desperate forces of a society even though that binding is illusory"(116).

People trespass the inner instinct sometimes just to seem social. In the story the brother of Liharev does not believe in God but goes to Easter to be bound by social code or to be social. Liharev himself abandoned the idea of abolishing private property and shifted to “non-resistance to evil”. He is in search of care and mercy of rich to run his life. It indicates that he is bound together with them whom he decided to fight abolishing their property five years ago. Here, power plays important role to bind atheists and believers, rich and poor due to unavoidable economic necessity of life. Uniting poor for abolishing private property seems like fallacy. Power unites people, though the unity is illusory it takes place. People like to stay in illusion than following their true understanding that keep their life in danger of economic problems.

Unity of the poor to fight against the rich is unlikely to take place. To fulfill the needs and necessities the poor have to depend upon the rich. They cannot depend upon the poor lot. The unity of the poor can be for bargaining with the rich. It is not to pull them down and create the supremacy of the poor. Economic matter has bound them in such a way it is difficult to break the tie with the rich. If the tie is broken the rich have loss of benefit and the poor have loss of life. It is true that the poor work hard. The poor are the real source of income but the income goes to the rich. In the story “On the Road” the son shows his intimacy with mother and wants to be with her breaking the supremacy of his father. The son says, “You can quarrel with me as much as you like, but leave my mother in peace! I will not allow you to torment my mother! You are spoilt because no one has yet dared to oppose you. They tremble and are mute towards you, but now that is over! Course, ill-bred man ! you are course... do you understand? You are course, ill-humoured, unfeeling. And peasant can’t endure you” (122). These words of son show that he has strong attachment with

mother. He wants detachment with father and wants to support mother. Supporting by words is not enough in reality. Neither we can support people by words nor by touch. Money is essential to support. These words of the son is just for bargaining with his father. Chekhov writes immediately about the son, “He lays till midnight without moving or opening his eyes. He felt neither anger nor shame, but a vague ache in his soul. He neither blamed his father nor pitied his mother”(123). He expressed his anger to his father not to be away from him and to be near to mother but to bargain for money.

It is true that he loves mother deeply and wants to make her free from the bullying of his father. Though he is angry with father he has no alternative to surrender to him and leave his mother with father and go away taking money. This fact is clarified with this reference in the story, “At five o’ clock in the morning he said goodbye to them all affectionately, and even shed tears. As he passed his father’s room, he glanced in at the door and said goodbye, I’m going” (124). The son once said to his father that he does not want to eat another morsel from the earning of his father. He rather goes to his father with tear to say goodbye. His father says, “Goodbye... the money is on the round table...” (124). After getting money the son departs for college and forgets the idea of making his mother free from the bullying of his father. Economy has bound people in such a way that enemies turn to be like fellowmen and good wishers turns to be like aliens. In *Critical Theory and Practice: A Course Book*, Keith Green and Jill Lebihan write, “We believe, in any event, that the body obeys the exclusive laws of physiology and that it escapes the influence of history, but it is too false”(117). In the story “ The Difficult People” the son could not be guided by his feeling. His body could not obey the feeling that comes from his inner soul. He compromises with economy. He could not change the history that is

running its fatal course. He is too fragile to change history of father's domination to mother. Until and unless the mother is economically capable herself, the feeling of the attachment to her by the son cannot change the course of life immediately.

Physiologically people smile to express their happiness. In reality that smile can be official, commercial or for the response to people. In pain people cannot smile but they have to smile to exist. In the story "The Difficult People" the son thinks to go away from home feeling agony of the torture and bullying of his father. He thinks his life terrible and full of isolation. Immediately he thinks about an old lady and his college friends and consoles assimilating himself with other. He refers the agony of an old lady, "The father of the old lady who had just driven by, for instance, had for some offence lain for half his lifetime under the ban of the wrath of Tsar Nicholas-I; her husband had been a gambler; of her four sons, not one had turned out well"(121). The old lady's father's struggle against Tsar Nicholas-I could not bring happiness in her life. Her gambler husband and reckless sons added the pain. She cannot show this pain to other. She runs her life in a pattern and seems satisfied. The narrator further states about her, "One could imagine how many terrible scenes there must have been in her life, how many tears must have been shed. And yet the old lady seemed happy and satisfied, and she had answered his smile by smiling too"(121). Due to economic reason people are forced to run their life in certain limited pattern rather than breaking the widespread system that is very hard nut to crack.

People keep on lying and hide the secret. Chekhov further writes in the story, "The student thought of his comrades who did not like talking about their families; he thought of his mother, who almost always lied when she had to speak of her husband and children..." (121). The old woman's smile is lying or accepting her misery and let the days to flow without any fundamental transformation. His mother's lying is her

acceptance that she cannot change her fate and let the days to flow under the mercy of her husband to survive. She is not appealing others who have same misery like her to be united to break the domination. She rather tells them lie and runs her life without any fundamental change. His friends do not like to talk about their families. It indicates that their families have some secret that society should not know. Realism hides the misery of economically oppressed people. It is bewildering how Marx talks about uniting proletariat to fight against bourgeoisie and owner of resources when people are compelled to surrender to economic power home by home or when there is silence home by home. It is good way to be united to break the economic chain and change the political course. But domestic economy is so strong that prevents people from being united. Keith Green and Jill Lebian state, “The fundamental Marxist postulate is that the economic base of a society determines just above everything with political meaning” (124). Politics cannot escape from economic phenomenon in capitalism. Economics determines politics in capitalism.

Political meaning cannot guide economic course but economic course can halt political meaning. Marxist theory is itself contradictory from this perspective. Advocating the poor to be united is fallacy without breaking the chain of economy even in a family. The rich are not the sole barriers but the family itself is barrier. Domination is not only by the high class to low class but also by breadwinners to dependents in a family. Economic surveillance is rampant but hidden.

In materialistic world people work what is designed by the society. They cannot use their conscience for the choice of work. In the story “On the Road” Liharev works keeping prestige at the centre. He does not work what is necessary to work. His brothers are rich and do not care him now. He could be rich like his brother if he had worked what was necessary to do keeping survival at priority. He was

soaring with his fancy dream. Economy was not in his priority. His knowledge of science could not feed him. He could not attract girls with the knowledge. V. Kelle and M. Kovalson write, "Men act under the influence of passion, reflection or at worst whim" (7). Idealistic view of following the passion for success is fallacy in the life of Liharev. Celebrities follow the passion and become successful. When they become successful they give interview saying nothing is impossible when one works hard and follow his/her passion. There are so many people in the world who followed passion, worked hard, ruined themselves with their passion and ultimately either shifted their course or depressed. These people are not in limelight because they are common. Their interview is not taken. Since our childhood our mind is preoccupied by the constructed beliefs of society. Liharev says in the story "On the Road", "My mother liked the children to eat a great deal, and when she gave me food she used to say: Eat! Soup is great thing in life! I believed and ate the soup ten times a day, ate like a shark, ate till I was disgusted and stupefied. My nurse used to tell me fairy tales, and I believed in house-spirits"(104). So many theories are made in the world and laden to common people that are worthless from the perspective of survival. The theories cannot solve the problems. They are not usable in daily life. But to know them is taken as matter of prestige and civilization. If we do not know these we are taken as wild. Liharev clarifies this fact stating, " When they sent me to high school and pelted me with all sorts of truths- that is, that the earth goes round the sun, or that white light is not white, but is made up of seven colours-my poor little head began to go round ! Everything was thrown into a whirl in me" (104). Liharev was not taught how to make good relationship with family and how to earn living. He was pelted with truths about zoology, chemistry, physics etcetera. At last he had nothing to be proud of these knowledge. He confesses:



If I were simply unhappy I should thank God. My personal unhappiness sinks into the background when I remember how often in my enthusiasm I have been abused, far from the truth, unjust, cruel, dangerous! How often I have hated and despised those whom I ought to have loved, and vice versa. One day I believe, fall down and worship, the next I flee like a coward from the gods and friends of yesterday, and swallow in silence the 'scoundrel!' they hurl after me. God alone has seen how often I have wept and bitten my pillow in shame for my enthusiasm (107).

Soaring with fancy dream, following the enthusiasm, following the footprints of celebrities, accepting the beliefs pelted by people do not help to be great. Obviously all so-called great people are great by following the above mentioned facts. But without solving economic concern, attempts to be great can be disaster in materialistic world. Theories, in many cases, have made human like slave that they cannot use their conscience. Scientists turn to be religious when they find their knowledge worthless. Being deeply religious and giving oneself to god is also impractical. It is surrender to god. It cannot solve day to day problems. In the story "On the Road" Liharev gave himself to science, in his words "as to the woman one loves". He wept when he found people exploited science for their personal ends. Similarly in the story "The Excellent People" Vera Semyonitch is a medical doctor by profession but she suffered from prolonged illness that makes her surrender to her brother for survival. She is silent in the beginning. She never talks about her medical degree. After her slight recovery she breaks the silence and begins arguments with her brother about his superficial arrogance of being a good writer. Psychological theories of family bonding are broken with economic concern. Scientific theories about health

are broken when science cannot give solution about health. V. Kelle and M. Kovalson write, “The idealistic outlook basically gives the distorted view of the world, imposing on the sciences its own schemes, and these hamper their development and slow down the advance of true knowledge” (13). Society runs its course by the social system that is generally agreed. It is not neutral and massively determined by economy. V. Kelle and M. Kovalson further write, “Society is not a biological or cultural, but a social system” (40). People create system keeping their existence in center that may even challenge culture and biological characteristics.

Economic dependency makes people silent. Though they speak against the domination and intimidation they are again compelled to surrender. In the story “The Difficult People” the father scolds his son saying, “At your age I was earning my living, while you... Do you know what you cost me, you scoundrel? I’ll turn you out! (118). Then the father turns to his wife, “it is you who have spoilt them – you! It is all your fault! He has no respect for us, does not says his prayers, and earns nothing! I am only one against the ten of you! I’ll turn you out of here!”(118). The mother and daughters are afraid. They are silent. They do not reply to him. They cannot run away. They cannot expose this fact to other. Domination is continuous and silence is also continuous. The son musters the courage and says, “These reproaches are loathsome! Sickening to me! I want nothing from you! Nothing! I would rather die of hunger than eat another mouthful at your expense! Take your nasty money back! Take it!”(119). What the son says is just to say, not to do. The son imagines the horrible scenes of abandoning home and compromises. At last he takes money from his father before going out of home for college education. The son does not have viable option to abandon home immediately. One can guess once he earns his living he will abandon his father but this is also not true. Before leaving home he says

goodbye to father feeling sorry to himself. Furthermore, once he begins to earn his father will not scold him rather he will praise his son. If sons and daughters are not able to earn in their youth they are thought to be damaged. The mother and daughters cannot resist the father's bullying as the son does ultimately though it is momentary.

Conflict between family members is determined by ideology that lies with economic nexus. People stay together in the family due to material necessity. In the story "Excellent People" the sister is staying with her brother due to material necessity as she is ill to lead independent life. Terry Eagleton expresses, "Men are not free to choose their social relation; they are constrained into them by material necessity" (6). Ideology of intimacy is targeted to meet the requirements of daily life. Eagleton asserts, "An ideology is never a simple reflection of ruling class ideas; on the contrary, it is always a complex phenomenon, which may incorporate conflicting, even contradictory views" (6). To take broad area in a society, a ruling block rules a subordinate block not only by force but by seeking to win consent. Similarly in a family, bread givers rule to others seeking their consent. Eagleton further mentions, "To understand an ideology, we must analyze the precise relations between different classes in a society; and to do that means grasping where those classes stand in relation to the mode of production" (6). Mode of production and social relation run simultaneously. Social relation is based on the principle of production system to some extent.

Social structure is formed in a way that women should not speak, that they cannot go out of home for earning as men can do. Gender role is constructed by society. Males construct gender role in their favour because in economic matter usually their hand is high. What we call gender role is economically constructed too. In the story "On the Road" Liharev states, "I'll tell you that woman has been and

always will be the slave of man, she is soft, tender wax which a man always moulds into anything he likes..." (107). Moulding women in the shape that males want is economic phenomenon more than biological and psychological phenomena. It is true that women are weaker physically than males. It is not true that women cannot earn their living. In the story "The Excellent People" the sister is silent as long as she stays with her brother in the mercy of him. Her prolonged illness could not allow her to pursue her career as medical doctor. Her silence about her ability is often taken as gender role. Once she decided to leave her brother's home and pursue her career again after being recovered. She could not maintain silence and opposed her brother's supremacy. The title "excellent People" is aptly kept. Both brother and sister try to prove excellent. Excellency is not measured only by genius, it is also connected with economic nexus.

Depriving women to involve in productive sectors, limiting them to domestic works and calling their role as gender role is betrayal. women can break silence once they get empowered. In the story "Excellent People" the sister is a medical doctor by profession. She married with an architect. Unfortunately her husband died of typhus. She did love marriage because she could choose her partner as she was a capable woman. Suddenly her role changed when she could not use her capacity due to her prolonged illness. She stayed with her brother being completely submissive to him. But this submission is not long lasting. It is not gender role as society calls. When the economic role of women changes, the gender role also changes. Science and technology is emerging in such a way that many works of using force can be done using technology. This may change the gender role in the immediate future. Science and technology can ease the works of physical force enhancing women's capacity to earn and changes gender role too.

## Conclusion

Behaviour cannot be taken as an isolated phenomenon. Human being is guided by inexorable necessity of material need. In Chekhov's view it is not lack of wisdom but economic issue to make people to behave other unfairly. When economy overpowers feeling people change their previous ideal view. Psychology is not stagnant, it is moveable. Human psychology is evolutionary. Psychology determines behavior but psychology is determined by construction of society. Teaching moral values to people without addressing fundamental economic problem is not useful. Economic problems can be categorized as fundamental necessity and commercial greed. Commercial greed cannot be solved imposing ideal view over people. Imposing ideal view about fair treatment to each- other without solving fundamental economic problem is baseless.

Capitalism ruins people's sagacity and rational thinking. Classless society is a utopian concept. Uniting all poor people together is not an easy task. Even the family members and spouse cannot be together in some cases due to economic concern. Fight for power is not only between the rich and the poor, it is among the poor also. When the poor fail to fight against the rich they want mercy and love from the rich instead of fighting against the rich. In Chekhov's story, "On the Road", Liharev was in the movement of abolition of private property five years ago but later he expects love and kindness from them instead of fighting against them. Poverty makes people beggar instead of fighter. Capitalism makes the poor people's life so monotonous that they have to work for daily bread. They may fight for the bread but not against the breadgivers. Breadgivers always think themselves superior. "Difficult People", a story of Chekhov about economic tussle especially between a son and his father gives idea that the son may fight for the money from his father but not against his father. The son's idea of abandoning home fails. He surrenders to his father and takes money

before leaving home. To challenge his father he must be capable for self earning otherwise his father tells him ‘ hold your tongue’. The son cannot hold his tongue and bursts in excitement to his father only to bargain for money but not for justice to family members. The son thinks about making his mother and sister free from the father’s domination but when he gets money he leaves for college. He cannot make them free. Due to economic concern we cannot do what we think but do what is necessary to do.

Plutonic love and sacrifice are not available in Chekhov’s stories. Economy has bound people in such a way they love for economic benefit and care keeping economic benefit in center and other factors on side. We cannot observe people’s behavior from what they say but we have go through what they do ultimately. Behavior cannot be shaped by education and spiritual teaching alone. Chris Barker writes:

‘More education is not the solution to all our problems, nor is the teaching and learning emotional skills a panacea for the affective problems of people, let alone the black hole of meaninglessness that sits at the heart of western culture. Nevertheless, emotional turmoil, personal meaninglessness, the repression of the moral questions of day to day life and resources required to respond to them are vital issues for contemporary culture. We cannot simply declare the need for change and expect it happen (196).

Need of change can be stimulated by education but more education does not solve the emotional problems caused by economic hardship rather it gives birth to conflict.

In Chekhov’s short stories, we cannot expect change in the behavior of characters by education. Even personal wisdom is superseded by

economic issue and characters change their behavior. Ideal view of characters about good treatment to each-other cannot be achieved in reality keeping economic matter aside.

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