

Tribhuvan University

Coming of Age in Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the research paper entitled,
“Coming of Age in Anne Frank’s *The Diary of a Young Girl*”
is my own original work carried out as a Master’s student at the Department of
English at Ratna Rajya Laxmi campus except to the extent that
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 have been fully and properly cited. It contains no
material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the
award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or
any other educational institution, except where
due acknowledgment is made in the thesis.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Coming of Age in Anne Frank’s *The Diary of a Young Girl*” is submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus by Kalawati Bhandari has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Introduction: *The Diary of a Young Girl* and Bildungsroman

This thesis explores the coming of age in *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank. By analysing the diary from Bildungsroman perspective, this thesis aims to manifest that *The Diary of a Young Girl* is coming of age story, set during World War II. It is a clear depiction of the life of Jewish citizen under Nazi rule. The diary describes events occurring in Amsterdam. Anne Frank's diary is a memoir, written when her family was forced to go into hiding to avoid being captured by the Nazis in Amsterdam.

This thesis presupposes that an adolescent girl, Anne learns how to cope with the physical development and psyche during war. Despite the impact of changes she is sensing and experiencing the fear of war, Anne struggles to deal with these difficulties by immersing herself in her writing and interacting with other adolescents and adults around her. Her diary was her close friend throughout her time in hiding, which she used as a means of emotional relief and practicing her writing, as her eyes were set on journalism career after the war.

In order to show the characteristics of Bildungsroman in *The Diary of a Young Girl*, this thesis uses the theoretical insights forwarded by Bildungsroman's theorist, Jerome Buckley in *Season of Youth*. *The Diary of a Young Girl* is coming-of-age story. The coming of age story, also called Bildungsroman, is all about the protagonist's journey from being a child to being an adult. It is a journey that takes a young person from naive to wise, from idealist to realist and from immature to mature. The path of a protagonist, or main character, can vary from story to story. Perhaps he/she has to go to war or lost his mother, or experienced extreme injustice, or went on some great worldwide adventure. There will usually be pain and suffering along the way growing up isn't easy. However, no matter the narrative direction, the

result is that the hero grows from his experiences and in some way loses the childhood innocence that helps steer him towards adulthood.

In his *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, literary critic M. H. Abrams states that the Bildungsroman illustrates “the development of the protagonist’s mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences - and often through a spiritual crisis – into maturity, which usually involves recognition of one’s identity and role in the world” (255). As the story progresses, the subject undergoes noticeable mental, physical, social, emotional, moral, and often spiritual advancement and strengthening before the readers’ eyes.

Oxford dictionary of literary terms defines the Bildungsroman as, “a kind of novel that follows the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a troubled quest for identity” (35). All the sufferings and pain make the protagonist of Bildungsroman mature to adulthood from adolescence or childhood. Cuddon in his *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* states about the Bildungsroman novel saying that, “it refers to a novel which is an account of the youthful development of a hero or heroine (usually the former). It describes the process by which maturity is achieved through the various ups and downs of life” (77). Therefore there is not any particular definition of the Bildungsroman genre.

The canonical definition of the novel proposed by Georg Lukacs exactly invokes what the Bildungsroman is made of: “The inner form of the novel has been understood as the process of the problematic individual’s journeying towards himself, the road from dull captivity within a merely present reality... towards clear self-recognition” (80-89). While Lukacs undertakes to differentiate the novel from the other literary genres prior to the novel such as the epic, quest romance and

picaresque adventure story, his definition of the novel depends on to a considerable extent, some archetypal narrative elements selected from various kinds of narrative genre.

According to Marc Redfield, “the Bildungsroman is frequently borrowed because the word itself connotes representation (Bild) and formation (Bildung), which engenders a homology between the education of the subject and the figuration of the text” (38-39). In his *Phantom Formations: Aesthetic Ideology and the Bildungsroman* he argues that, “the Bildungsroman, more than any other genre, demonstrates the aporias of aesthetics, because in its content instantly becomes a question of form, precisely because the content is the forming-of-content” (42).

Since the Bildungsroman narrates the acculturation of a self – the integration of a particular ‘I’ into the general subjectivity of a community, and thus, finally, into to the universal subjectivity of humanity – the genre can be said to repeat, as its identity or content, its own synthesis of particular instance and general form. (38)

The Bildungsroman exemplifies the ideological construction of literature by criticism. The novel of formation also reveals how genre premised on a self-referential aesthetic ideology. Franco Moretti defines the Bildungsroman as the symbolic form of modernity. He notes that, “the Bildungsroman has epitomized the features of youth in mobility and interiority. As a form of modernity, the Bildungsroman conveys youthful attributes of mobility and inner restlessness” (5). In the book *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* he argues that the defining characteristic of the novel of formation is to be found not in the protagonist’s organic or accretive growth, but rather in his youth – the gendered pronoun is intentional, for as feminist scholars were quick to observe, Moretti pays

scant attention to female development. Moretti is interested in cultural history rather than thematic taxonomy. As he explains:

In the dreams and nightmares of the so called ‘double revolution,’ Europe plunges into modernity, but without possessing a culture of modernity. If youth, therefore, achieves its symbolic centrality, and the ‘great narrative’ of the Bildungsroman comes into being, this is because Europe has to attach a meaning, not so much to youth, as to modernity. Youth is, so to speak, modernity’s ‘essence,’ the sign of a work that seeks its meaning in the future rather than in the past. (5)

The carelessness of youth allows narrative to symbolically represent the formlessness and revolutionary disorder that attend the experience of modernity but at the same also to bind and contain it, for youth must invariably end. The hero grows up, enters into a position, and the social order reasserts itself.

Mikhail Bakhtin also gives us a definition of the Bildungsroman in his unfinished essay *The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism* (1986). He categorizes the Bildungsroman as one of the subcategories of novel genre that is classified by the construction of the image of its main hero. He defines the Bildungsroman as, “novel of emergence, which thematically provides an image of man in the process of becoming” (19) and situates its protagonist on the threshold between different historical eras:

The hero emerges along with the world and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself. He is no longer within an epoch, but on the border between two epochs, at the transition point from one to the other. This transition is accomplished in him and through him . . . It is as though the very foundations of the world are changing, and man

must change along with them. (23–24)

This excerpt from Bakhtin's work in *Speech and Genres and Other Late Essays*, gives a summary about how Bildungsroman protagonist develops. For him Bildungshero matures on his own without any support of other. The Bildungsroman presents to the reader is the image of man in the process of becoming. It is the hero himself who through many difficulties becomes matured person.

According to Jerome Buckley, "the principle characteristics of the genre include a child who grows up in the country, suffers constraints on his intellectual and imaginative development and due to disputes with his family, decides to leave home and head for a large city where his real education begins" (17). "During the course of the story the protagonist also has to experience at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing and one exalting, that combined with the other events that he undergoes throughout the novel will make him not only reconsider his action and mature as a person, but also provide him with a better understanding of the world" (17). Further on, Buckley claims that, "the 19th century English Bildungsroman should contain several characteristics components.

Firstly, "the Bildungsroman is an autobiographical novel but not an autobiography. Nevertheless it may have autobiographical elements, as the author's real life is combined with fiction which provides the reader with a very authentic feeling when reading the novel" (23-25). Secondly, "the protagonist had often lost his father and is mostly likely an orphan. It is because of being an orphan that the hero experiences a difficult development and therefore sets out on the quest of finding his own identity" (19). Thirdly, Buckley argues that, "education is the crucial part of the main character's journey from being a child to reaching adulthood" (17). "The desire for new opportunities urges the protagonist to leave his home for a metropolis".

Buckley explains that “the metropolis plays a double role in the life of the protagonist, because it serves both as the agent for liberation and a source for corruption” (20). “When the protagonist has gained the desired maturity and wisdom, he may go back to his old family home in order to demonstrate his success” (17-18). Reaching maturity is found to be a difficult process in Bildungsroman and one which is accomplished along a long period of time.

During the course of journey, the protagonist struggles to find a balance between his needs and desires whilst also determining his rightful place in society, a struggle or conflict which is finally resolved when he becomes a mature adult. “A Bildungsroman should discuss childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, the large society, self-education, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for vocation and a working philosophy” (18). Although these are the principle elements of a Bildungsroman, all novels that are considered to belong to this genre do not necessarily follow the exact pattern. However, no novel overlooks two or three of these characteristics elements. “It is the hero himself who almost always has to deal with the central conflict that lies within him, and throughout the story the protagonist experiences privileged moments of insight, epiphanies, and spots of time, as he recognizes his errors and understands that his behavior and actions have to change” (22-23). This realization does not however, always mean that the hero will be able to solve his problems and the Bildungsroman can therefore end in various ways. “Most commonly, coming-of-age stories end with an uncertainty as the final choice of the hero can leave the reader wondering. Some end with the death of the main character, while only a handful of Bildungsroman end happily” (23). Bildungsroman characters often mature in a different manner from their peers as they often feel isolated from society and even their own families. Social factors such as religion and politics often

contribute to their isolation. What has contributed to making this genre unique is how much the end result depends on the ultimate happiness of the hero or heroine.

Buckley shows a possible explanation why finding closure in a Bildungsroman can be difficult, as he argues that, "since this genre is strongly autobiographical, often written by young authors who are at the beginning of their careers, the author's own life experiences and uncertainties about his possible success in the future may affect how the hero of the novel and the ending is depicted" (23-24). The Bildungsroman intends to lead the reader to the greater personal enrichment as the protagonist journeys from youth to psychological or emotional maturity. This growth occurs according to a pattern: the sensitive, intelligent, protagonist leaves home, undergoes stages of conflict and growth is tested by crisis and love affairs and then finally finds the best place to use his or her unique talents. Sometimes the protagonists return home to show how well things turned out. Some Bildungsroman novels end with the death of the hero leaving the promise of his life unfulfilled.

Although Buckley argues that, the Bildungsroman centers a male protagonist, in critical writings on the Bildungsroman genre in the latter half of the twentieth century and beyond, female heroines are included in the discourse and their inclusion suggests that growing acceptance of female in Bildungsroman. James Hardin editor of *Reflection and Action: Essays on the Bildungsroman* notes in the introduction that Wilhelm Dilthey, the person who takes credit for popularizing the term, did not think that the genre existed past a certain era. He sees it as "a historical phenomenon whose time had passed" (xiv). It may thus be argued that the term itself should be viewed as undergoing a rite of passage. Its best contemporary proponents are deeply involved with the issues central to the Bildungsroman genre.

Anne's diary is also a Bildungsroman or coming-of-age story. It is about a

young girl coming of age, while her family is in hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam. Anne who is a protagonist experiences many of the typical concerns of teenagers, while also having to deal with the unusual circumstances of Jewish operation and even destruction by Nazi during the war. When Anne Frank receives the diary as the gift, she at first records outings with her friends and school girl gossip. Later, as her family is forced into hiding in the secret annex, Anne begins to mature. She experiences love for the first time and copes with the isolation and loneliness of her years in hiding. The diary portrays the emotional maturation of the protagonist, Anne, from infancy to adulthood. Which is one of the element of Bildungsroman as stated by Buckley.

Anne's diary is written during the years of her adolescence. She struggles with many typical teenage characteristics- yearning for her own space away from adult meddling burgeoning sexuality, and the quest for her own identity- with little privacy. Anne continually questions herself and spends most of the diary trying to figure out what kind of person she is. She scolds herself for her selfishness, agonizes over the fate of her friends, and tries to be good in the way her parents would like her to be. Towards the end of the diary, she comes to the crucial conclusion that though she may not be the way others would like her to be, she is her own person and she respects herself. These discoveries make diary a Bildungsroman in the tradition of great coming of age story.

Before going to hiding Anne was impetuous and very clownish in behavior, but during hiding she grows to be reflective and more mature. While they were in hiding, Anne has got challenge in dealing with her mother, especially in the first six months. The stress of the close quarters and strangers that were sharing the annex with them was stressful for everyone.

So far I studied, very limited researches were done using Bildungsroman concept in *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Most of the researchers had accepted Anne's diary as holocaust literature. Limited researchers had read the diary from coming of age perspective, so to fulfil the research gap, this research article analyses *The Diary of a Young Girl* from the Bildungsroman perspective.

Anne as a Female Bildungshero

People suffer through a set of changes while growing up, as they develop a sexually mature adult body. While these changes are primarily physical in nature, deep mental, emotional and social changes also occur as youth adopt to their maturing bodies. A young Jewish girl, who had to go into hiding during the Second World War to escape from the persecution of Nazis suffered a lot. Although rejected and isolated, she did not stop showing signs of coming of age as normal girl. Such as having an imaginary friend, entering puberty and having sexual curiosity.

Although Buckley argues that the Bildungsroman centers on male protagonist (17-23), it is also possible to apply many of the characteristics that the author presents in *Season of Youth* to Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*, as it portrays the emotional maturation of the protagonist, Anne from infancy to adulthood. Anne leaves her respective home because of a central conflict that, as Buckley states, "lies with the hero himself" (22). "It is the hero himself who almost always has to deal with the central conflict that lies within him, and throughout the story the protagonist experiences privileged movements of insight, epiphanies, and spots of time" (22-23). Anne leaves her home because of the Nazis persecution on Holland. She along with all her family go for hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam. She experiences many of the typical concerns of teenagers, while also having to deal with the unusual circumstances of Jewish operation even destruction of Nazi during

the war. When Anne Frank receives the diary as the gift, she at first records outings with her friends and school girl gossip. Later, as her family is forced into hiding in the secret annex, Anne begins to mature. She experiences love for the first time and copes with the isolation and loneliness of her years in hiding.

Anne matures through the experiences she goes through while in hiding. While in hiding she learns all about life. According to Buckley, “all the action and events that a protagonist undergoes make him not only reconsider his action and mature as a person, but also provide him with a better understanding of the world” (17).

I came across letters dealing with the subject ‘Mummy’ in such a hotheaded way that I was quite shocked, and asked my-self: ‘Anne, is it really you who mentioned hate? Oh Anne how could you!’ I remained sitting with the open page in my hand, and thought about it and how it came about that I should have been so brimful of rage and really so filled with such a thing as hate that I had to confide it all in you. (141-42)

As Anne writes about her emotional turmoil and the war, her perceptions and awareness of herself about the situation she is in can be noticed. She regrets about her past behaviour she has shown to her mother. She feels sorry for her behaviours. This shows Anne’s maturation during the course of hiding. As she turned the previous pages of her diary, she could not believe that she was such a rude girl with childish nature. She regrets about her past behaviour. Before she was immature and did not know what is right and what is wrong, but during hiding she starts to mature internally.

While in hiding the difficulties that she was facing made her think deeper to

the realities of life. She replaced useless thoughts with deep ones, her broken relationship with her mother made her think how badly she treated her mother at past and regrets about it when she started taking things maturely. Her changing attitude toward her mother can be seen as a part of her journey into greater maturity.

“Mummy’s birthday is rapidly approaching. She got some extra sugar from Kraler, which made Van Daans jealous as Mrs Van Daan had not been favoured in this way for her birthday” (154). This shows Anne’s journey into adolescence involves questioning and assessing the actions of the adults around her. She wonders if this selfishness is just part of human nature. At the same time, by being confined with the adults Anne is getting a true glimpse into the adult world, and learning that this world, which children often imagine as being rational and good is much more complex, and filled with both positive and negative aspects.

Anne wonders why she behaves differently when she is around her people and wonders whether there will be anyone to whom she can truly confide in. She has a new attitude toward the conflicts with in the annex. She hopes to be more insightful in her interactions with other members!

Mrs Van Daan has one good side, and that is that you can talk to her.

Despite all her selfishness, stinginess and underhandedness, you can make her give in easy, as long as you don’t irritate her and get on the wrong side of her. This way doesn’t work every time, but if you have patience you can try again and see how far you get. (156)

This shows Anne’s inside into herself and her relationship to other grow more mature and experienced day by day. She realizes that all people contain inner and outer selves. She reflects on how she only shows her outer self in public, and wonders if she will ever share her inner self with someone. Her inside into conflicts

in the annex reveals her growing maturity and generosity. Anne looks back on her life in 1942, and cannot believe how wonderful it was compared to her existence in the annex. She wonders who she was and compares to who she is now. “Now I look back at the Anne as an amusing, but very superficial girl, who has nothing to do with the Anne of today” (188). As Anne looks back into her life in 1942, she compares her several selves. She compares previous Anne who was very childish, innocent and immature with more mature and experienced Anne. She also compares her inner self with outer self. She strives to distinguish her feelings and attitude toward her mother which is one of the signs of maturation.

As stated by Buckley, “reaching maturity is found to be a difficult process” (17). This is prominent in case of Anne. As Anne’s diary is written during the years of her adolescence. She struggles with many typical teenage characteristics, yearning for her own space away from adult meddling burgeoning sexuality, and the quest for her own identity- with little privacy. Anne continually questions herself and spends most of the diary trying to figure out what kind of person she is. Anne describes her situation within the annex. She was so depressed of the terror of the war because of which she has to go under medication. As she writes,

I swallow Valerian pills everyday against worry and depression, but it doesn’t prevent me from being even more miserable the next day, a good hearty laugh would help more than ten Valerian pills, but we’ve almost forgotten how to laugh. I feel afraid sometimes that from having to be so serious I’ll grow a long face and my mouth will drop at the corners. The others don’t get any better either. (122)

Anne was in her teen years while she was in hiding. Due to Nazis occupation of the Netherlands, she was forced to go in hiding. During the time of development, she

has to go through a great terror of war which caused her depressed day by day. The war affected her psyche which lead her life in a miserable condition. Anne feels that although she is under medication against her mental trouble, she is not getting better, her condition was going worse day by day. Rather than taking medicine, good heartily laughter would help to be healthy for the person of her age. But it is impossible for her because she could not laugh even though she wish to do, because she fears that her place of hiding may be discovered and she along with her family might be taken to the concentration camps.

Anne gets depressed and becomes pessimistic about her families chances of survival, when war goes on and all the people in Europe gets suffered. She hangs herself in-between imagination about what her future will be like and fearing that one day people will discover her with all the members of the Annex. "I see the eight of us with our 'Secret Annex' as if we were a little piece of heaven, surrounded by heavy black rain clouds. The round, clearly defined spot where we stand is still safe, but the clouds gather more closely about us" (128). She tries to express her fear and the anxiety and desperation that plague the residents of the annex. Here she expressed her fear metaphorically. While in hiding, she cannot do whatever she wants and go wherever she likes. Her life was bordered within the annex. So, she misses most about the outer world is nature. So she describes her fear and entrapment with an image of nature. Her blue sky can be compared to the peace and freedom, and dark clouds to the restrictions and oppression on Jews. As both sky and freedom remain beyond her reach, she compared sky with the freedom.

Anne was a normal teen age girl, who has been forced into extraordinary circumstances. Like other teenagers she wanted to live normal life having too much freedom. But the situation in which she is in was the opposite one. Therefore she

asks herself if people understand her. "I sometimes ask myself, 'Would anyone, either Jew or non-Jew, understand this about me that I simply a young girl badly in need of some rollicking fun?' I don't know and I couldn't talk about it to anyone, because then I know I should cry. Crying can bring such relief" (138). Anne makes clear that she is just a normal young girl, who has to live in a cruel environment. She simply makes sacrifices and deals with restriction of the annex without much complaint because she knows that she is more fortunate than her friends who have already been arrested and sent to concentration camps. So she just cry without saying anything to anyone. She feels that crying can bring much more relief. This attitude shows Anne's remarkable maturity. Anne simply wants to experience a normal life. She does not want to live in a world that places such importance on what religion she follow, or whether she behaves well with adults. This shows her as a normal girl with real human feelings, who falls victim to the tragedy of the Holocaust during her coming of age.

The disgust in Anne's writing is evident. She is angry with those Germans who started and supported this war. Her despair is brought on by the betrayal she feels at the hands of her own countryman. Anne is frustrated as not being in control of the situation she finds herself in. Her hopeless thought is heightened by the fact she feels helpless to do anything.

I myself keep very quiet and don't take any notice of all the fuss and excitement. I have now reached the stage that I don't care much whether I live or die. The world will still keep on turning without me; what is going to happen, will happen, and anyway it's no good trying to resist. I trust to luck and do nothing but work, hoping that all will end well. (168)

This shows that, Anne feels she cannot affect any changes to what is going on around her. Her feelings of helplessness and resolve to accept whatever will happen show her surrender to the circumstance she is in. Even though Anne tries to be courageous and does not want to show her sufferings to other, it comes to the forefront when she heard the news that the war does not seem to end quickly.

Though Anne does not show her despair over life and her pain to others, she could not stop herself to write in her diary. As she writes,

but the moment I was alone I knew that I would have to cry my heart out. So clad in my nightdress, I let myself go slipped down into the floor. First I said my long prayer very earnestly, then I cried with my head on my arms, my knees bent up, on the bare floor, completely folded up, one large sob brought me back to earth again, and I quelled my tears because I didn't want them to hear anything in the next room. Then I began trying to talk some courage into myself.

(219)

This shows Anne's struggles with her emotions. She feels frustrated and angry and helpless, yet she puts on a brave face in front of the other. She lets her feelings come out only when she is alone. Her emotions comes out in the form of tear when she cries. And after some time she consoles herself to be brave and brings courage inside her.

According to Buckley, the protagonist of the Bildungsroman have often lost his father and is mostly likely an orphan (19). Though Anne has not lost her father and she is not an orphan, this element of Bildungsroman can be applied in the life of Anne because she feels quite alone like an orphan feels. As she writes,

since no one will believe that a girl of thirteen feels herself quite

alone in the world, nor it is so. I have darling parents and a sister of sixteen. I know about thirty people whom one might call friends—I have strings of boyfriends, anxious to catch a glimpse of me who, failing that, peep at me through mirrors in class. (3)

Despite having her parents, sister and many other relatives, Anne feels herself quite alone in the world. She feels it is because she can never confide herself to others. As she does not seem to be close to them. Therefore, she chooses her diary as a very close friend to whom she can confide each and every feelings from her heart without any shyness and awkwardness.

There is saying that ‘paper is more patient than man’; it came back to me on one of my slightly melancholy days, while I sat chin in hand, feeling too bored and limp even to make up my mind whether to go out to stay at home. Yes, there is no doubt that paper is patient and as I don’t intend to show this cardboard - covered notebook, bearing the proud name of ‘diary’ to anyone, unless I find a real friend, boy or girl, probably nobody cares. (2-3)

Anne feels that no one is interested of what a thirteen year-old girl has to say and it is better to write what she feels without fear of being judged and that was really hard for her because of being Jewish in times of the Holocaust. After Germany invaded Netherlands and the government began to persecute Jews, Anne dropped her studies and lost contact with all her Jewish friends. In the course of hiding, Kitty acted as Anne’s trusted confidant when there was no one else to tell her secrets.

Along with it, her diary provided comfort in times of stress and companionship when she was lonely. Anne was a popular girl in the school but she felt like she did not have a lot of friends and that is one of the reasons why she had

such a strong relationship with her diary. As neither her mother nor her sister, Margot helped Anne for her emotional support and even though Anne's father tried everything he could, he failed. While in hiding Anne suffers a great deal from the regular criticism of the other members of the group. She also quarrels with her mother and complains to her diary. She writes;

Just had a big bust-up with mummy for the umpteenth time, we simply don't get on together these days and Margot and I don't hit it off any too well either. As a rule we don't go for such outbursts as this on our family. Still it's by no means always pleasant for me. Margot's and mummy's natures are completely strange to me. I can understand my friends more than my own mother — too bad! (34)

In the above entries, Anne complains that she cannot understand her mother and her mother also cannot understand her. As she is just entering her teenage, it becomes difficult for Anne to deal with other people within the annex. She finds herself lonely though she is with her family.

She goes into detail regarding her puberty as she explains how it affects her emotionally; and she also admits how the war has brought her life to linger. Her transition to adulthood seems to take central stage, however. This is shown by how her adolescence causes her to be more emotional and isolated from those around her. While most people in the annex are aware of her growing pains, it is only through her discourse with her diary that she reveals her growing complaints for her sister and mother.

I love them; but only because they are Mummy and Margot. With Daddy it's different. If he holds Margot up as an example, approves of what she does, praises and caresses her, then something gnaws at

me inside, because I adore Daddy. He is the one I look up to. I don't love anyone in the world but him. (49-50)

Anne is trying to reach out to the normal world beyond her limited quarters by writing all her feelings in her diary. She misses school and her old friends. As the youngest in the secret annex, she feels that she is treated as inferior by the adults and sometimes scolded for her excitable nature. To overcome these feelings of isolation, she creates a friend to whom she can share all her feelings. During her transition period, Kitty, Anne's diary came to help her to deal all the situation. Her dairy became her friend; her recovery from the fear she is feeling because of Hitler's plan of genocide against Jews and other groups. Even before the Franks entered into hiding, Anne named her diary "Kitty". Kitty helped Anne deal with the huge change. It is seen when she writes about Annex; "I expect I have thoroughly bored you with my long descriptions of our dwelling. But still I think you should know where we've landed" (21). And when how her world turned upside down because of the sudden change. As she writes, "Years seem to have passed between Sunday and now. So much has happened, it is just as if the whole world had turned upside down. But I am still alive, Kitty, and that is the main thing, Daddy says" (14-15). Anne is telling Kitty that a lot have happened and she does not feel comfortable being in hideout but at least she is still alive and has a friend to whom she can tell everything.

Anne seems to be closer to her father and in turn shows a level of hostility towards her mother and sister. Anne also makes mention of the various boys whom she claims are in love with her and the ones she loved. Buckley claims that, "the Bildungsroman hero must have at least two love affairs or sexual encounters" (17). This is exactly prominent in the case of Anne. As she has written about her love

affairs with Peter Wessel and Peter Van Daan. While Anne was telling her diary about her past, she wrote about her love affair with Peter Wessel, “Then Peter crossed my path, and in my childish way I really fell in love. He liked me very much, too, and we were inseparable for one whole summer. I can still remember us walking hand in hand through the streets together” (149). Along with Peter Wessel Anne do falls in love with Peter Van Daan. While writing in her diary, she writes more about her feelings for Peter Van Daan, who was regarded as the disgusting figure at the beginning, but as time passes he becomes an intimate friend. She writes about her intimacies with Peter. She writes about her first kiss.

We got up at half past eight. Peter put on his gym shoes, so that when he toured the house he wouldn't make a noise, and I stood beside him. How it came about so suddenly, I don't know but before we went downstairs he kissed me, through my hair, half on my left cheek, half on my ear; I tore downstairs with looking round, and am simply longing for today! (236)

This shows that nobody knows Anne's secret except her diary. She does not hide anything to her diary. Her emphasis on her emotions for those around her and her apparent mood swings again are reasonable in light of her coming of age.

Anne learns to trust on God. Her belief and faith on God is unquestionable, but her belief that helps her to overcome her problems is even more impressing. Her belief and faith on god helped her to remain positive, even in the most hopeless situations. According to Buckley education is crucial for the Bildungsroman hero.

(18)

Be brave! Let us remain aware of our task and not grumble, a situation will come, God has never deserted our people. Right through

the ages there have been Jews through all the ages they had to suffer, but it has made them strong too; the weak fall, but the strong will remain and never go under!(232)

Her beliefs allow her to make free from her problems and see them as a transitory test which Jews will be rewarded for, if they are able to escape this. Her regular faith in God is seen as a reducing resources for her fears, which is the source of most of her problem. Her belief becomes an immovable pillar of her knowledge and it granted her to remain faithful to god.

Anne's self-awareness goes along with her religious beliefs. She develops resistance against all the situations around her by preparing herself, in a way and convincing herself that her time of difficulties and very struggle will certainly pass. Through this believe in her mind she starts to live positively.

We Jews mustn't show our feelings, must be brave and strong, must accept all inconveniences and not grumble, must do what is within our power and trust in God. Sometime this terrible war will be over. Surely the time will come when we are people again, and not just Jews. (231)

Many of the Anne's struggles during her adolescence were the result of the anti-semantic society in which she lived, which ultimately led to Hitler's Nazi regime. To come out of all these circumstance, Anne wrote all her fear and internal feelings in the diary, which helped her to live normal life in such a hard situation.

Anne's numbness to the inhumanity of war, her despair at her own situation and her hope and belief in the human spirit in the face of horrors of war and Nazi persecution make her character even stronger. She develops and shows an apparent numbness to the accounts of inhumanity committed by the Nazis. She relates a news

account of what happens to Nazi resisters in a matter of fact manner. Anne writes,

Have you ever heard of hostages? That's the latest thing in penalties for sabotage. Can you imagine anything so dreadful? Prominent citizens — innocent people — are thrown into prison to await their fate. If the saboteur can't be traced, the Gestapo simply put about five hostages against the wall. Announcement of their deaths appear in the paper frequently. These outrages are described as fatal accidents. (44)

The manner in which Anne relates this account shows a kind of acceptance of what is happening. It does not seem to horrify her or outrage her. Living in the annex has had a great effect on her. She feels sorry to her world and sees the war outside the annex as distance. In her diary she writes, "If I just think of how we live here, I usually come to the conclusion that it is a paradise compared with how other Jews who are not in hiding must be living" (88). This entry shows Anne's acceptance of the situation she is in. She sees and hears about what is happening to the Jews but feels separated, unaffected by it. She has become insulated in the annex, separated from the war. As time passes, Anne becomes habituated to the sights and sounds of war.

Before a quarter of an hour had passed the shooting started up again. Mrs van Daan sat bolt upright at once and then went downstairs to Mr Dussel's room, seeking there the rest which she could not find with her spouse. Dussel received her with the words, 'come into my bed, my child!' which sent us off into uncontrollable laughter. The gunfire troubled us no longer, our fear was banished! (91)

This shows Anne's acceptance of the sounds of war. Unable to do anything about it,

unable to escape it, it becomes a part of her daily life. Although Anne tries to see something positive in most situations and remain optimistic, she at times falls into great depths of despair and she becomes angry or deeply saddened.

On the subject of her heritage, after hearing how the Germans are treating the Jewish population of Germany through BBC broadcasts, Anne becomes very angry and hurt because she too is German. “Nice people, the Germans! To think that I was once one of them too! No Hitler took away our nationality long ago. In fact, Germans and Jews are the greatest enemies in the world” (44). Anne never lets go of her belief in the strength of the human spirit, throughout her time in hiding within the annex. Though she fears the war and struggles with the many of her problems, still she believes that there is good side in every one. And one day because of the same good side, the war will end and peace will be re-established. “It’s really a wonder that I haven’t dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carryout. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are good at heart” (294). Though sometimes Anne shows her disgusts while writing in the diary, her faith in the goodness of the person and the spirit has not been lost. She still believes that though sometimes people become cruel and act oppositely, they are good at the core. And the same goodness of the people help her to overcome the war and she can live her life peacefully without hiding. It is Anne’s expression of optimism within an incomprehensible cruelty. It shows how a harsh environment changed Anne. At the beginning, Anne would likely never have self-insight to make such statement but after two years of growth while living in difficult circumstances, she is able to find herself a core of hope and optimism.

When Anne hears news of an attempt on Hitler’s life, she holds out hope that people will do the right thing. Her optimistic thoughts helps her to be hopeful

towards the situation she is in. “Now I am getting really hopeful, now things are going well at last. Yes, really, they’re going well! Super news! An attempt has been made on Hitler’s life and not even by Jewish communists or English capitalists this time, but by a proud German general” (295). This reinforces Anne’s belief about the goodness of the people. She believes that although some people are cruel and want to send Jews in concentration camps, there are still some non-Jewish who are good inside, want to do right thing by eradicating the cruelty. Actually not only Jewish are fed up with war, but also there are lots of officers and generals who want to stop war and like to see Hitler’s rule fall down. By listening about this news, Anne’s hope of getting out of hiding gets risen. Anne has hope for the future. Despite all the fears of war and all her sufferings she sees and feels that things will change. She truly believes for the hope of having a better future.

The Diary of a Young Girl has a strong sense of autobiography which is one of the distinctive feature of Bildungsroman as stated by Buckley (24-25). *The Diary of a Young Girl* is the diary entries written in the form of letter. It is a self-narrative story of a young girl written in first person pronoun. At the start of her diary, Anne describes her girlhood experiences, about her friendships with other girls, her academic performances at school and many other things related to her life.

The ending of *The Diary of a Young Girl* shows that it is a Bildungsroman, as the diary ends on August 1, 1944 without any comment, it does not provide a clear answer regarding what happens to Anne. As Buckley mentions, “since this genre is strongly autobiographical, often written by young authors who are at the beginning of their careers, the author’s own life experiences and uncertainties about his possible success in the future may affect how the hero of the novel and the ending is depicted” (23-24). The writer of *The Diary of a Young Girl* is a teenage girl. And it

has a strong sense of autobiography written in first person self-narrative.

As stated by Buckley, “every Bildungsroman does not have include all the elements that are presented in *Season of Youth*” (18), but it is clear that even though the genre at least according to Buckley is mainly about the hero’s journey rather than the heroine’s, Anne despite some differences in path, she becomes mature towards the end of the diary in a manner that follows Buckley’s requirements of what a Bildungsroman should contain. *The Diary of a Young Girl* follows some of the elements of Bildungsroman. Therefore *The Diary of a Young Girl* can be viewed as the coming of age story which shows the journey of protagonist from infancy to maturity.

Conclusion: Anne Matures Like Bildungshero

The coming of age story, also called Bildungsroman, is all about the protagonist’s journey from being a child to being an adult. It is a literary genre that since the late 18th century has educated and entertained readers worldwide. In this essay, I hope to have shown that *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank is a coming of age story, which shows the journey of protagonist that is “Anne” from infancy to mature. By using Buckley’s exploration of the Bildungsroman, it has been possible to analyse *The Diary of a Young Girl* from the perspective of Bildungsroman.

According to Buckley, the emotional maturation of protagonist is one of the element of Bildungsroman literature. By using Buckley’s concept while analysing this book, I hope I have illustrated that *The Diary of a Young Girl* follows the Buckley’s list of requirements in the Bildungsroman literature.

Anne narrates her life story to her diary which she named as “Kitty”, in the form of letter. Since her diary is written in the years of adolescence, she has written

about many of the typical teenage problems. In the beginning of the diary, Anne only wrote about superficial things like what her friends were doing and who liked her etc. but after she goes into hiding she becomes more introverted and thinks more about life more even sort of spiritual. The hard environment and experiences during hiding made her more independent. This was because she had to face the difficult task of changing herself alone. Her changing attitude toward other people in the annex is a sign of maturity. Anne change physically and mentally as the year passed by annex. Most of the changes she went through is the part of growing up. As she grew up, she got a taste of a different age from other teenagers. From the influence of the people around her, she chooses the way she wanted to grow up. These all shows that Anne was maturing during the course of hiding.

As the diary is written in the first person describing all the activities of a protagonist, it has a strong sense of autobiography. As stated by Buckley Bildungsroman is an autobiographical novel, though *The Diary of a Young Girl* is not a novel, it is one of the holocaust literature which is written by a teenage girl narrating her story, it falls under Bildungsroman genre in the tradition of great coming of age story. By analysing the elements of Bildungsroman in *The Diary of a Young Girl* as stated by Buckley in *Season of Youth*, I have tried to show that this book is all about coming of age story.

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