DECIPHERING THE FEMALE PSYCHE: FRAGMENTATION AND THE ALLIED PHENOMENA IN SELECT LITERATURE

Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
by

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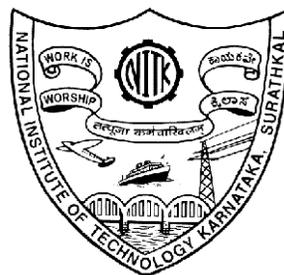
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DECLARATION

(By the PhD Research Scholar)

I hereby *declare* that the Research Thesis entitled **"Deciphering the Female Psyche: Fragmentation and the Allied Phenomena in Select Literature"** which is being submitted to the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Surathkal in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** in English Literature, is a *bonafide report of the research work carried out by me*. The material contained in this Research Thesis has not been submitted to any University or Institution for the award of any degree.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to *certify* that the Research Thesis entitled "**Deciphering the Female Psyche: Fragmentation and the Allied Phenomena in Select Literature**" submitted by **Deepali Mallya M (Register Number: 145032HM14F01)**, as the record of the research work carried out by her, is *accepted as the Research Thesis submission* in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature.**

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the possibilities of studying English literature written by female authors in close association with emerging studies in psychology. The study attempts to discern the 'female psyche' through a critique of gynocentric literatures. In doing so, some of the queries that would be addressed in this research include: Can inquiries on the female psychic process contribute to the understanding of 'female identity' and 'female self'? Are 'female self' and the psychic process evolutionary in nature? This study undertakes a gynocentric analysis of the select novels by contemporary English novelists. The novels selected for this study are *The Golden Notebook* (1962) by Lessing, *The Edible Woman* (1969) by Atwood, *The Binding Vine* (1993) by Deshpande, *The Household Guide to Dying* (2008) by Adelaide, *Maya's Notebook* (2013) by Allende, and *Americanah* (2013) by Adichie.

Taking into account the "androcentric bias" of the prevalent psychoanalytical theories, this research probes in detail, into the condition of 'female psychic fragmentation' through an in depth analysis and interpretation of the select novels. The study further aims to explore the eventual formation of the 'self' or 'identity' in woman. The methodologies used for examining these novels include textual analysis, ethnographic analysis, and discourse analysis. The study leads to major observations that the 'intra-psychic conflict' within the 'psychic structures' in a woman may lead to a state of 'fragmentation.' The failure to resolve the 'intra-psychic conflict' as could be seen from this study, could lead to the condition of 'psychic-split.' This condition could germinate certain pathological imbalances such as 'dissociation,' 'eating disorders,' and 'anxiety disorders.' As could be interpreted from this research, it is found that 'fragmentation' and allied psychic phenomena plays an important role in the 'female psyche.'

Keywords: Female psyche, Female psychic fragmentation, Psychic disorders, Id-ego-super-ego, Intra-psychic conflict, Repression, Abjection, Plurality

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Abbreviations

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ABBREVIATIONS

1	Acute Stress Disorder	ASD
2	American Psychological Association	APA
3	Association for Women in Psychology	AWP
4	Before Christ	B.C.
5	British Psychological Society	BPS
6	Canadian Psychological Association	CPA
7	Committee of Women in Psychology	CWP
8	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders	DSM
9	Dissociative Identity Disorder	DID
10	Generalized Anxiety Disorder	GAD
11	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems	ICD
12	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender	LGBT
13	Major Depressive Episode	MDE
14	Multiple Personality Disorder	MPD
15	National Comorbidity Survey	NCS
16	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	OCD
17	Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder	OCPD
18	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	PTSD
19	Section on Women and Psychology	SWP
20	Separation Anxiety Disorder	SAD
21	Status of Women in Psychology	SWP
22	World Health Organization	WHO

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY: PSYCHOANALYTIC READINGS IN LITERATURE

Literature is "an aggregate…[it] constitutes the cultural object of which they are parts" (Fowler, 1982, p. 3). It is the "condition of society" (Fowler, 2002, p. 7). Psychology studies human behavior, while literature is the creative description of human behavior. The creative act of writing allows the individual to project his/her 'psyche' or psychological thoughts onto any of the literary genres, such as novels, poetry, essays, and so on. These artistic descriptions serve to complement the scientific discipline. It aptly complements psychology wherein, the psychological theories and findings can be applied to the understanding of the creative work of art. On these grounds, psychology and literature are correlated. Psychological undertones have been present in literary works since the Graeko-Roman times. Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (1988) and *Antigone* (2001), Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (2018), Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1980)*, Macbeth* (2006) and *Othello* (2001), Kafka's *The Trial* (1995), Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* (2004), Dostovesky's *The Brothers Karamazov* (1990) are exemplars of the above testimony. Most of the characters in the above mentioned works enunciated specific psychological ailments or disorders. The character Quixote from *Don Quixote* suffered from 'hallucinations' and 'paranoia.' Lady Macbeth, the character from the tragedy *Macbeth*, displayed the traits of an 'Obsessive Compulsive Disorder' (OCD). The character Joseph K from *The Trial* suffered from the 'psychotic' disorder called 'schizophrenia.' However, the modern psychological terminologies were not assigned for all the psychological symptoms that the characters displayed. In the essay "Antigone Between Two Deaths" modern psychoanalyst, Lacan (1992) expresses an awe stating "there is something extraordinary about finding the notion expressed in 441 B.C. as one of the mankind's essential

dimensions" (p. 275). Romantic poets such as Proust and Eliot have also extensively tapped the human 'psyche' and its complicities through the use of literary devices such as metaphors, symbolisms, and the like in their writings. American literary critic, Trilling (1981), in this regard, comments:

> Yet I believe it is true that Proust did not read Freud. Or again, exegesis of *The Waste Land* often reads remarkably like the psychoanalytical interpretation of a dream, yet we know that Eliot's methods were prepared for him not by Freud but by other poets. (p. 42)

The formal affiliation between psychology and literature develops when the literary critic engages in "psychology of writing or responding to literature" as the nucleus for the critique of any literary work (Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, & Willingham, 2005).

The response to any literature (in other words, literary criticism) using the psychological perspective is termed as 'psychoanalytical literary criticism.' Several critics such as Felman and Wright have stressed that "literature and psychoanalysis are implicated in each other, traverse each other" (Weed, 2006, p. 264). It is psychoanalytic literary criticism that established a formal affiliation between psychology and literature. The father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud is accorded as the founder of this new literary school of thought (Kaplan & Kloss, 1973; Kurzwell & William, 1983). Literary critics, Kaplan and Kloss (1973) explicitly cite that in the process of "solving the riddle of the Sphinx, Sigmund Freud unknowingly laid the foundations for a new school of literary criticism, for it was he who solved, as well, the riddle of Hamlet, and the riddle of Rebecca Gamvik of *Rosmersholm*" (p. 155). Freud, has undertaken psychoanalytic reading of several literary works including, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1980) and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (1988) which was published in *The Interpretation of Dreams* in the work "The Material and Sources of Dreams" (Freud, 2001k); Shakespeare's comedy *The Merchant of Venice* (2016) and his tragedy *King Lear* (1993) which was critically studied in "The Theme of the Three Caskets (1913)" (Freud, 2001m), Shakespeare's *Richard III* (1995) and *Macbeth* (2006), as well as Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* (2004) which have been critiqued in the work "Some Character Types Met With In Psycho-Analytic Work

(1916)" (Freud, 2001h); Jenson's *Gradiva* (1903) in the 1907 work "Delusions and Dreams in Jenson's *Gradiva* (1907[1906])" (Freud, 2001a). He has also analyzed Jenson's works such as *Der Rote Schirm* (*The Red Parasol*) (2015), *Im Gothischen Hause* (*In The Gothic House*) (2015), *Fremdlingeunter den Menschen* (*Strangers Among Men*) (1911) (Freud, 2001q). E.T.A. Hoffman's *The Sandman* (Dibbern, 2002) is the subject of analysis in "The Uncanny (1919)" (Freud, 2001n) and *The Brother's Karamazov* (1990) by Dostoevsky was critically studied in "Dostoevsky and Parricide (1928[1927])" (Freud, 2001c).

Other influential psychoanalytical readings include "Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet" (1959), "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter'" (1966a) by Lacan; *Hamlet and Oedipus (1910)* (1949) and "The Theory of Symbolism" by Ernest Jones; *Edgar Poe, Etude Psychanalytique* (1933) by Princess Marie Bonaparte; *Swift and Carroll: A Psychoanalytic Study of Two Lives* (1955) by Greenacre; "Freud and Literature" (1981) and "Art and Neurosis (1945)" (1963) by Trilling; "Coriolanus-and the Delights of Faction" (1966a), "Kubla Khan, Proto-Surrealist Poem" (1966b), and "Shakespearean Persuasion-Antony and Cleopatra*"* (1966c) by Burke; *Psychoanalysis and Literary Process* (1970) by Crews; *The Unspoken Motive: A Guide to Psychoanalytic Criticism* (1973) by Kaplan and Kloss; *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973) by Bloom; *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) by Bodkin; *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) by Frye; *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (1964) by Fletcher; *Baudelaire and Freud* (1977) by Bersani; *Psychoanalysis and the Question of the Text* (1978) by Hartman; *The Fictional Father: Lacanian Readings of the Text* (1981) by Davis; and many others (Holland, 1990, pp. 35-47).

Among the various popular concepts in psychoanalytical literature is 'decomposition.' The Western literature of the Romantic ages consists of examples for employing 'decomposition' as a literary technique. However, in the post-modern era, it has been a less explored arena. Psychoanalyst Rogers has made an extensive analysis of the preoccupation of the theme of 'decomposition' in the Romantic literature using a

psychoanalytic perspective. Some of the popular names who mastered the portrayal of the theme of 'decomposition' during the Romantic ages include, Goethe, Tieck, Fouqué, Heinrich von Kleist, E.T.A.Hoffmann, and Jean Paul Richter (Rogers, 1970, p. 26). Rogers identifies that 'decomposition,' in the Romantic literature, is articulated either in the 'manifest' or 'latent' form (Rogers, 1970). Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (2014), Poe's "William Wilson" (2017), E.T.A. Hoffman's "Story of the Lost Reflection" and "The Sandman" (Dibbern, 2002); Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (2009) and Dostoevesky's *The Double* (1958) explored the theme of 'manifest decomposition.' The 'latent decomposition' is captured in works such as Hawthorne's "Alice Doane's Appeal" (1835), Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* (2014) and *The Heart of Darkness* (2016), Dostoevesky's *The Idiot* (2004)¸ Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Brooke, 2008), Kafka's *The Judgement* (1989), and "In the Penal Colony"(2011) (Rogers, 1970, pp. 18-59). This study employs a feminist psychoanalytic study of 'decomposition' of the 'female psyche' as traced in the select novels.

Another literary concept that presumes predominance in this study is 'doubling.' While 'doubling' is a fairly less explored phenomenon in feminist psychoanalysis and literature, its origin can be traced back to mythology. In the earliest Western classical literature, the technique of 'doubling' was glorified in the narratives through a depiction of an antagonism of characters. The expressions varied from "the physical image of the self, such as shadows and reflections, and in psychic projections of the self, such as gods and devils, guardian angels and familiar" (Eder, 1978, p. 580). Later on, in the nineteenth century, this theme of 'doubling' was popularized once again to depict the subjective and objective duality in narratives in the Romantic literature. In that context, Porter (1978) elucidates that in the Romantic literature, the 'double' appears in the form of a devil who "appears to them when they have become discontented with imaginary gratifications" (p. 320). Additionally the devil:

> Mocks their yearning to transcend the human conditions by implying that what they really want is money, sex and power, and by parroting their elevated intellectual structures in a debased form. He stimulates their self-doubts, and then

offers a remedy. Goethe's devil offers experience; Flaubert's, knowledge; Dostoevsky's, companionship. (p. 320)

Thus, the devil, as a 'double,' became the external 'projection' for the fulfillment of an individual's repressed (delayed or unsatisfied) desires. In a strange fashion, the devil also aided the normal psychic functioning and development of an individual. Goethe in *Faust* (Hittell, 2017), Dostoevsky in *Brother's Karmazov* (1990) and Flaubert in *Tentation de Saint Antoine* (1885) are the prominent literary personas of this era that popularized the technique (Porter, 1978, p. 320). Literary critic, Botting (1996) critiques the theme of 'doubling' in the Gothic narratives and avows that the nineteenth-century literature constituted, "mental deterioration from the inside…they are internally presented with the attention on doubles and mirrors, and externally objectified as cases of criminal or psychological degeneration" (p. 73). These lines imply that the psychological maladjustments could be a 'manifest' response to the internal state of psychic deterioration. Hence, the portrayal of devil in the nineteenth century connoted a strong correlation between an individual's psychological and the social world. Thus, the representation of devil in the nineteenth century literature could be symbolic of an external 'projection' of inner 'conflict.' This study critiques the female psychic 'doubling' as a response to the 'intra-psychic conflicts.'

The literary sphere, including critical interpretation, has been predominantly androcentric until the first half of the twentieth century. American literary critic, Ellmann (1968) comments that literary criticism is "phallic criticism" where women's writings "are treated as though they themselves were women, and criticism embarks, at its happiest upon an intellectual measuring of bust and hips" (p. 29). The earliest feminist critic to admonish a shift in the critical perspective from androcentric to gynocentric was Patricia Meyer Spacks in her work *The Female Imagination* (1975). On the same lines, psychoanalytic literary criticism was also male-centered until the emergence of the writings of feminist psychoanalysts. While the women writers strived to establish a niche under the canon of gynocentric narratives, feminist critics also strived to carve a niche for the gynocentric appreciation of women's writing. The earliest form of psychoanalytic

reading of women's writing germinated at the French academy among the stalwarts such as Cixous, Kristeva, and Irigaray (Gallop, 1987; Showalter, 1981). Feminist psychoanalytic literary criticism in the late twentieth century was dominated by critics such as Chodorow, Spacks, Ellmann, Showalter, Gallop, Pratt, Felman, Benjamin, and so on. Feminist literary criticism, using psychoanalytical methods assumed prominence due to the interrogation of gynocentric texts on subjects of mothering, compulsory heterosexual orientation, 'conscious'/'unconscious' interplay, female homosexuality as well as the intensity of female bonds (Sprengnether, 2007, pp. 242-244). The Lacanian reading of women's writing focuses on "repression" and the "unconscious" (Showalter, 1981, p. 186). Additionally, the feminist psychoanalytic literary criticism attempts an analysis of the 'female psyche' with a special focus on the female "body…development of language…sex-role socialization" (Showalter, 1981, p. 194). In all these genres, gynocentric criticism remains the focus area (Showalter, 1981). In a similar context, feminist psychoanalyst, Chodorow (1978a) in her work *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* revisits the phallic notion of psychosexual development and contrives the "pre-oedipal" phase that outlines the female psychosexual development (p. 95). Feminist critic, Gallop (1987) distinguishes the idea that the American psychoanalytic discourse focuses on the understanding of the "drama of the preoedipal relationship" while the French psychoanalytic discourse focuses on "another mode of discourse" (p. 321). The feminist critics urge that "it is time to learn, to begin to speak our mother tongue" (Garner, Kahane, & Sprengnether, 1985, p. 29). Feminist psychoanalytical literary interpretations, which has majorly contributed towards the 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' approaches, enables a gynocentric interpretation of "neglected aspects of women's writing" (Sprengnether, 2007, p. 244). Some of the less explored areas in feminist psychoanalytical literary criticism is 'psychic fragmentation,' in the context of, trauma, violence, and disorders among women. Feminist psychoanalytical readings assume prominence also because, "certain psychoanalytic literary readings – feminist, antiracialist, queer [are]…joined by a common, continuing desire: that of evading the already read, the already known…To engage with the

impossibility of reading, that is to say, to reread" (Weed, 2006, pp. 278-279). An analysis of 'female psychic fragmentation' in women can foster the understanding of female psychic process, its structural divisions, and the 'intra-psychic conflict.' Consequently, there exists immense scope in deciphering the 'female psyche' through apposition of 'object-relational,' 'intersubjective,' and 'relational' theories. To achieve this, this research explores 'female psyche' in select literatures by employing a gynocentric perspectives.

1.2   FEMINIST PSYCHOLOGY AS A FIELD OF STUDY

Feminist psychoanalysts, Horney and Kelman (1967) specifically express their concerns over the patriarchal control in the production of knowledge in psychology as they claim, "Our whole civilization is a masculine civilization…the sciences are the creation of men" (p. 55). Like various sciences, the annals of psychology too have been dominantly masculine in its character until the second half of the twentieth century. Women have been studied as "subjects, actors and agents in the history of psychology" (Unger, 2001, p. 3). Each perspective has served to suit the purpose of masculine dominance. Psychologist, Sir Francis Galton was among the earliest male psychologists who explicitly stated that "women tend in all their capacities to be inferior to men" (as cited in Lewin & Wild, 1991, p. 582). Feminist psychologist, Gordon (1905) has termed such an interpellation as the construction of "woman's sphere" which curtailed woman's intellectual, physical, and psychical potential to ensure the prevalence of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity (p. 789). This notion forced the woman to make a "cruel choice" between matrimony and motherhood or career; she could not have both (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986, p. 40). Consequently, the research theories and findings in psychology based on women-roles reflected a "male model of reality" (Worell, 2000, p. 185). In this context, Unger (2001) urges the need to reconstruct the "history of psychology about women" (p. 3) as it suffers from a weak theoretical framework, and is predominantly characterized by sexism (Gould, 1981; Lewin, 1984; Shields, 1975a; Unger, 2001). Unger (2001) also confirmed that "the history of women in psychology (e.g., women as the agents of psychological research)" together with the understanding of

"the history of organizations concerned with the psychology of women" will disseminate a profound knowledge on the historical growth of feminist psychology (p. 3).

Feminist research in psychology until the early twentieth century suffered from the notion of "women's sphere" (Gordon, 1905, p. 789) where fields such as clinical, counseling, school, and developmental psychology were branded as traditionally women-centered (Russo & Denmark, 1987, p. 283). Additionally, women's ingress into psychology as researchers/students and employees suffered from setbacks such as unemployment or underemployment, sex segregation in choice of research areas as well as workplace and mental harassment too. Feminist psychologist, Unger (2001) attributes this to "lack of structural analysis of the 'woman problem'" (p. 6). Another feminist psychologist, Shields (2015) describes that "it felt wrong to be outnumbered and to be constantly reminded of one's outsider-insider position. It felt natural because that was simply the way it was" (p. 2).Nevertheless, most women psychologists chose to critique the theories of women's inferiority in the early twentieth century (Unger, 2001, p. 4). Psychologists such as Hollingworth, Montagu (Shields, 1975b), and Wooley Thompson (Rosenberg, 1982; Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987) have refuted the dominant theories of male psychologists that deemed an inferior intellectual status to women. However, these studies that debunked the patriarchal theories were conveniently hidden from psychology's official history (Unger, 1979).

The earliest feminist researchers in psychology could be recorded majorly from the American continent owing to the suffrage movement of the period. The eminent names who were listed in the *American Men of Science* (1906) by J.M. Cattell (1906) include M.W.Calkins, M.F.Washburn, M.S.Case, E.A.McCullough Gamble, K.Gordon, J.H.Gulliver, A.H. Hinman, L.J.Martin, A.J. McKeag, V.F.Moore, N. Norsworthy, E.P. Howes, M.W.Shinn, M.K. Smith, T. Smith, H.B.Thompson, and many others. Following this, psychologist, R.I. Watson (1974) also catalogued another list of achievers in psychology between 1600-1967. This list enumerated a few more women psychologists including A. Bronner, L.S.Hollingworth, J.E.Downey, E.Frenkel-Brunswick,

F.Goddenough, and three psychoanalysts namely, F.Frommreichmann, K. Horney, and M. Klein (Russo & O'Connell, 1980). Zeigarnik, M. Rickers-Ovsiankina, T. Dembo, and M. Jahodaare were some of the earliest women psychologists from the European continent (Stevens & Gardner, 1982).Some prominent names among the early African-American women psychologists were M.J. Patterson, and Inez Prosser (Guthrie, 1976). Some of the early European Jewish women psychologists who migrated to United States include Therese Benedek, Hedda Bolgar, Else Frenkel-Brunswick, Eugenia Hanfmann, Marie Jaboda, and Margaret Mahler (Russo & Denmark, 1987). The earliest feminist psychoanalysts of the times include Anna Freud, and Susan Isaacs (Senn et al., 1975). In the context of other ethnic minority groups, the details of "Hispanic, Asian, and Native American women in psychology has received even less attention than that of blacks" (Russo & Denmark, 1987, p. 283).

1.3   ESTABLISHMENT OF FEMINIST PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is the scientific analysis of human behavior and mental processes. Etymologically, the term 'psychology' is derived from the two Greek words, 'psyche' meaning "mind" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, p. 1158) and 'logia' denoting "a subject of study" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, pp. 838-839). In its budding years, the subject matter of psychology was "divided between speculative philosophy and physiology" (Ben-David & Collins, 1966, pp. 452-453). It was the Wundtian study in 1862 that upgraded the focus of this discipline towards "'higher' psychological functions, the social aspect of human thought and behavior" (Mandler, 1996, p. 10). Thus, much to the credit of the German physiologist Wilhelm Wundt and his experiments on voluntary/involuntary actions, the year 1862 marks the commencement of psychology as a new science (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p.248). The institutionalization of psychology evolved gradually based on the rationale that psychology germinated from philosophy. The earliest traces of the tenets of psychology are seen in the teachings of Socrates, Aristotle, Democritus, and other philosophers (Rathus, 2012, p. 9). Following this, the eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers such as Rousseau, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Descartes, Locke, Hartley, Bain, Ward, Sully, Hume, Herbart,

and Lotzeare are regarded as the forerunners of psychology (Ben-David & Collins, 1966; Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009). Additionally, in the nineteenth century, psychophysicists such as Bell, Magendie, Müller, Helmholtz, Ladd-Franklin, Gall, Spurzheim, Weber, Broca, Wernicke, and Fechner influenced psychology (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009) with their practices of "experimentation, systematic observation and measurement"(Ben-David & Collins, 1966, p. 453).

The inception of American Psychological Association (APA) further helped the institutionalization of psychology in 1892 (Worell, 2000, p. 184). Social researcher, Ash (2005) recommends that psychology, as an institution, grew concomitantly with psychology as a scientific discipline in the twentieth century (p. 100). This growth started in Germany, extended into the United States, and eventually proliferated in the other nations too (Ben-David & Collins, 1966, p. 452). Experimental psychology was among the earliest disciplines in psychology. In the twentieth century, behaviorism, Gestaltianism, humanism and psychoanalysis dominated the domain of psychology. Among these, the school of thought, psychoanalysis emerged in the twentieth century with the work *Studies on Hysteria (1893-1895)* by Viennese psychoanalyst, Freud and his physicist friend, Breuer (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 497). Psychoanalysis "asserts that much of our behavior and mental processes are governed by unconscious ideas and impulses that have their origins in childhood conflicts" (Rathus, 2012, p. 14). Some of the popular names in the field of psychoanalysis include, C.G. Jung, E. Erikson, A. Freud, M. Klein, A. Adler and others. In the modern times, various perspectives have replaced the traditional schools of thought. These perspectives could vary from evolutionary, biological, cognitive, humanistic-existential, psychodynamic, and/or socio-cultural perspectives (Rathus, 2012, p. 16). Among these, psychodynamic perspective analyzes human behavior with a specific reference to the 'unconscious' (Rathus, 2012, p. 18) as well as to the conflicts among the "intra psychic forces" (Alloy, Riskind, & Manos, 2005, p. 108). This study attempts to decipher the 'female psyche' by applying feminist psychoanalytical literary criticism to analyze the female characters and their personality,

their 'intra-psychic conflicts,' socio-cultural imperatives and the behavioral peculiarities as depicted in select novels.

Feminist psychology, as an independent sub-discipline, was established due to the transformational moments at the individual and organizational level during the 1960's. At the individual level, women identified the structural constraints of the "women problem" (Unger, 2001, p. 6). Seward's *Sex and the Social Order* (1946) and Seward and Clark's "Race, Sex and Democratic Living" (1945) identified that the sexist nature of discrimination was a significant problem (Unger, 2001). This issue was resolved to a great extent with the establishment of Civil Rights Act of 1965 that prohibited sex-based discrimination at the workplace (Sexton, 1973/74). Following this, various works that enhanced the spirit of the feminist revolution triggered the establishment of feminist psychology as well. Some notable works by early feminist psychologists include, Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Weisstein's "Kinder, Kirche, Kuche as Scientific Law: Psychology Constructs the Female" (1968) and "Psychology Constructs the Female; or, the Fantasy Life of the Male Psychologist (With Some Attention to the Fantasies of his Friends, the Male Biologist and the Male Anthropologist)" (1971); Bem and Bem's "Training the Woman to Know Her Place: The Power of an Unconscious Ideology" (1970); and Henley's *Body Politics: Power, Sex and Non Verbal Communication* (1977) (Eagly, Eaton, Rose, Riger, & McHugh, 2012). Freidan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) blatantly stated "instead of destroying the old prejudices that restricted women's lives, social sciences in America merely gave them new authority" (p. 117). Weisstein's "Kinder, Kirche, Kuche as Scientific Law: Psychology Constructs the Female" (1968) is regarded as "widely read indictment of psychology's understanding of women as childlike, dependent, unassertive, and interested only in finding a husband and bearing children" (Eagly et al., 2012, p. 211). Feminist psychologist, Kaschak strongly asserts that feminist psychologists' work such as Chesler's *Women and Madness* (1972) and J.B. Miller's *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (1987) succeeded in discussing the sexist politics that was rampant in fields of clinical psychology (as cited in Shields, 2015). The twenty-first century began a trend of recalling the history of feminist

psychology and some prominent works towards this feat include, "Placing women in the history of psychology: The First Generation of American Women Psychologists" (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986); "Untold lives: The First Generation of American Women Psychologists" (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987), "The History of Psychology Revisited: Or up With our Foremothers" (Bernstein & Russo, 1974); "Functionalism, Darwinism, and the Psychology of Women: A Study in Social Myth" (Shields, 1975a); "Ms. Pilgrim's Progress:The Contribution of Leta Stetter Hollingworth to the Psychology of Women" (Shields, 1975b); "Contributions of Women to Psychology" (Russo & Denmark, 1987); "Searching for the Second Generation of American Women Psychologists" (Johnston & Johnson, 2008), Rutherford's *Psychology's Feminist Voices Multimedia Internet Archive* (2004) and "'We Would not Take no for an Answer': Women psychologists and Gender Politics During World War II" (Capshew & Lazlo, 1986); and "A Short History of the Future: Feminism and Clinical Psychology" (Marecek & Hare-Mustin, 1991), "A Restive Legacy: The History of Feminist Work in Experimental and Cognitive Psychology" (Morawski & Agronick, 1991), and "Women, Psychology, and Social Issues" (Katz, 1991).

Organizational activism both inside and outside of APA which were specifically designed for the welfare of women psychologists, have acted as cornerstones in the annals of feminist psychology. These developments ushered with the establishment and growth of organizations such as the Association for Women in Psychology (AWP) in 1969, a unit known as Task Force to study the Status of Women in Psychology (SWP) (which later came to be known as the Committee of Women in Psychology [CWP]) in 1972 (American Psychological Association [APA], Task Force on the Status of Women in Psychology, 1973; Russo & Dumont, 1997; Tiefer, 1991; Unger, 2001). The CWP played a key role in setting up the Division 35 by 1974 (Unger, 2001, p. 9). Division 35 has been the champion of women's rights in psychology since its inception (Unger, 2001). Thus AWP, CWP, and Division 35 are regarded as the cornerstones in the history of feminist psychology (Chrisler et al., 2013). An analysis of the global set-up suggests that in Great Britain, British Psychological Society (BPS) agreed to establish a separate division for

the Psychology of Women in 1985 due to the constant efforts of Sue Wilkinson (Wilkinson, 1990b). In the Australian continent, Australian division for the Women in Psychology was set up in 1984 (Wilkinson, 1990a). In Canada, the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) founded the Section on Women and Psychology (SWAP) which eventually came to be recognized as an official section of CPA in 1976 (Unger, 2001, p. 10). From "androcentric bias" in the 1970s (Worell, 2000) feminist psychology has begun to address the issues of "the diversity of perspectives among women that intersect with gender" (Worell, 2000, p. 187). The current challenge for feminist psychology is the formation of "an integrative feminist psychology...that embraces cultural, ethnic, and social class pluralism" (Comas-Diaz, 1991, p. 607).

1.4   UNDERSTANDING PSYCHE AND ITS TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE

Psychology studies the human 'psyche.' The root meaning of the term 'psyche' has a long history from being associated with an allegorical character Psyche, who is cupid's lover and a "maiden with the wings of a butterfly" (Bulfinch, 1993, p. 80), to being connoted as the English word 'mind.' Etymologically, the English word "Mind" is derived from the Latin word "Mens," which is in turn derived from the Greek word "Menos" to mean "life force" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 2). Additionally, the Latin word 'mens' has been the earliest Latin translation to mean the Greek word 'nous' which means "intellect" (MacDonald, 2003, p. 2). "Psyche" could also be regarded as the 'soul' since MacDonald records that the English word 'Soul' was used to translate the Latin 'Anima' or the Greek 'psyche' from the times of Geneva bible (1560-1650) and the King James Version (1611 onwards) (MacDonald, 2003, p. 2). The earliest usage of the term 'psyche' could be seen in Greek philosopher Homer's *Illiad* (2013) in 800 B.C. (Frampton, 1988, p. 266). Homeric 'psyche' seems to be loosely connected with either 'free-soul,' or to mean the 'head' and consequently the 'person' (MacDonald, 2003, pp. 13-14). This was followed by a physiological connotation by the pre-Socratic philosopher Anaximenes (sixth century B.C.) (Frampton, 1988, p. 267). Socrates, (469-399 B.C.), was first of the Greek philosophers to recognize 'psyche' as a result of the mental process or psychic process (Frampton, 1988, p. 271). In addition, French philosopher Descartes

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drew a clear distinction between 'mind' and matter (i.e., consciousness and matter respectively) which greatly influenced the understanding of "psyche" in psychological terms (MacDonald, 2003, pp. 281-284).The closest connotation to the Freudian notion of the 'psyche' was drawn by Plato in his work *Republic*. In Frampton's opinion, Plato believes that 'psyche' is a "unique incorporeal substance that obeys its own laws and can determine the behavior of physical substances, such as those of the body" (Frampton, 1988, p. 265). In the work *Republic*, Plato devises the 'intra-psychic' divisions and the functions of each division. The divisions include, rational, spirited, and appetitive elements. The rational element is characterized by rule, deliberation, and management (as described in stanzas 439d-443d) (Bloom, 1968, pp. 119-123). The spirited element is characterized by anger, aggression, and other affective elements (as described in stanzas 493a-548a) (Bloom, 1968, pp. 318-343). The appetitive element is characterized by desires for nutrition, food, and the like (as described in stanzas 403c-412b) (Bloom, 1968, pp. 172-225). This psychic distinction is homogenous to the Freudian tripartite structure of the 'psyche.' The 'psyche' can be defined as a, "property of the most highly organized forms of matter that emerged and was transformed in a long natural and cultural history. The 'psyche' constitutes of a specific kind of active reflection and orientation of the subjects in the world" (Dafermos, 2014, pp. 1529-1530). The modern psychology, from the Freudian times, translates the Greek word 'psyche' as 'mind' in English (Freud, 2001f, p. 5). Freud proposed a tripartite division of the 'psyche' consisting of 'id,' 'ego,' and 'super-ego' (Freud, 2001f, pp. 24-29). Freud believes that the 'intra-psychic' structures are smaller and interrelated units. Anthropologists, Bateson and Bateson (1987) define 'mind' ('psyche') as an "aggregate of interacting parts or components. The interaction between parts of mind is triggered by difference…Mental process requires circular (or more complex) chains of determination" (pp. 18-19). The mental phenomenon is a process involving a stimulus and a response; particularly it is the differentiation in the stimulus-response process. The functionality of each of the units helps to understand the 'psychic structure' better. The 'psychic structure,' is functionally a pivotal unit in psychology as, it is "a relatively stable organization of events that is said

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to underlie a meaningful sequence of actions or mental phenomena" and is associated with "the patterning and consistency of behavior" and "one cannot observe this organization directly, but rather only the patterning and consistency of behavior" (Schwartz, 1981, p. 61). The individual's behavior, in the social set-up, helps to decipher the psychic phenomena that are internal. Carl Jung, Freud's disciple, also believed that the "psyche is not an indivisible unity but a divisible or more or less divided whole" (Fordham, Adler, & Hull, 1953-1991d, p. 3263). However, according to Jung, the 'psyche' is divided into 'conscious' and 'collective unconscious.' He asserts that although they are separate and interconnected parts, they are "relatively independent, so much so that certain parts of the psyche never become associated with the ego at all, or very rarely" (Fordham et al., 1953-1991d, p.3263).Transpersonal psychologist, Washburn (1988) proposes a psychodynamic equivalent for the constitution of the 'psyche,' namely the dynamic-dialectical paradigm. This transpersonal theoretic paradigm is in agreement with the Freudian psychodynamic perspective (Washburn, 1988, p. 15). It proposes the bipolar constitution of the 'psyche' which involves two constitutional structures: non-egoic/physico-dynamic pole and the Egoic/mental egoic pole (Washburn, 1988, p. 11). These two structures are equal to the Freudian 'id' and the 'ego' respectively (Washburn, 1988). The 'psyche' will be more discernible when the functionalism of the structural units is comprehended.

1.4.1   The Id

When the child is born, it is dominantly constituted of 'id.' Freud coined the term "Id" which is known as "das Es" in German to mean "the it" (Freud, 2001f, p. 3). 'Id' is a, "psychical province that incorporates instinctual drive energies and everything else that is part of our phylogenetic inheritance…operates unconsciously, accords with primary process, and impels the organism to engage in need-satisfying, tension-reducing activities, which are experienced as 'pleasure'" (Lapsley & Stey, 2012, p. 396). It is the 'pleasure principle' that drives the 'id' to demand immediate gratification (Siegfried, 2014, p. 1). The psychodynamic theory believes that until the onset of 'socialization' or

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'internalization' the 'id' and the 'ego' are a single unit. The 'id' is known for its immediate indulgences. The needs of the 'id' are rooted in "instinctual drives and their vicissitudes…It's manifestations are condensation, displacement, and the use of special symbols" (Hartmann, Kris, & Loewenstein 1946, p. 15). The 'id' which is referred to as the non-egoic pole in purview of dynamic-dialectic paradigm is characterized by a "timeless experience" with no knowledge of "reality or duration" (Washburn, 1988, p. 12). In the Jungian perspective, Freudian 'id' could be equated to 'collective unconscious' which is the source of "psychic energy…instinctual life…timeless archetypal images" (as cited in Washburn, 1988, p. 13).

1.4.2 The Ego

The other structural unit of the 'psyche' is the 'ego.' Freud refers to 'ego' as "Das Ich" in German, and it is "that part of the id that has been modified by the direct influence of the external world" (Freud, 2001f, p. 25). Psychologists, Lapsley and Stey (2012) assert that the 'ego' submits to "the reality principle…[and] is the agent of reason, commonsense, and defense" (p. 396). The 'ego' is an "organ of adjustment. It controls…motility and perception…mediates between…the demands of the other psychic organizations" (Hartmann et al., 1946, p. 15). According to the dynamic-dialectic paradigm the 'ego' is similar to the "egoic pole" and it is "the seat of cultivated personality (as judged by the superego), it is an agency of self control and rational will…bound by time…forced to postpone gratification and to deliberate about future possibilities" (Washburn, 1988, p. 13). For Jung, 'ego' is harboured within the bigger structural unit known as 'self' (Fordham et al., 1953-1991b, p. 2485). Jungian distinction of the 'psyche' asserts that 'ego' resides in the 'conscious' part of the 'psyche.' The 'ego' upholds "the socially tailored personality (the persona)" (as cited in Washburn, 1988, p. 13). 'Ego' is:

> Not identical with the totality of my psyche, being merely one complex among other complexes…ego is only the subject of my consciousness, while the self is the subject of my total psyche, which also includes the unconscious. In the sense,

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the self would be an ideal entity which embraces the ego. (Fordham et al., 1953-1991b, p. 2485)

The 'ego' becomes the part of the 'psyche' that is connected to the external world. Thus, 'ego' is in the conscious mental space while the 'id' is in a deeper part of the psychic space. It acts as a control agent that forces the individual to act according to the social norms. In this view, psychoanalyst Fenichel (1946) describes that 'ego' "operates as an inhibiting apparatus which controls, by this inhibiting function, the position of the organism in the outside world" (p. 14).

1.4.3   The Super-ego

The third structural division of the Freudian 'psyche' is the 'super-ego.' Freud (2001f) also names it as 'ego-ideal' and adds that it is "a differentiation within the ego" which indicates that 'super-ego' is structurally a part of the 'ego' (p. 28). Freud (2001f) outlines the functions of the 'super-ego' stating that it is a:

Residue of the earliest object-choices of the id; it also represents an energetic reaction formation against those choices. Its relation to the ego is not exhausted by the precept: 'You *ought to be* like this (like your father).' It also comprises the prohibition: 'You *may not be* like this (like your father)'…form of conscience or perhaps of an unconscious sense of guilt…the heir of the Oedipal complex…expression of…the most important libidinal vicissitudes of the id. (pp. 34-36)

Freud hints that 'super-ego' is present within the structural constraints of the 'ego.' The 'super-ego' is present externally in the beginning of a child's life in the form of parents and then the child takes them into oneself (Freud, 2001f, p. 36). The 'super-ego' could thus be the conscience in the individual, which is implanted through the social agents such as parents. Ego-psychologists, Hartmann et al. (1946) explicitly state that "Self criticism…self-punishment, and the formation of ideals" are some of the varied manifestation of the prevalence of the 'super-ego' (p. 15). Psychologist, Washburn (1988) explains the formation of 'super-ego' in the dynamic-dialectic paradigm as a

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result of the 'socialization' process as well as resolution of the Oedipal conflict. 'Super-ego' is formed due to "identities within the parental authority and with the social prohibitions, norms, and values that the parental figures represent" (Washburn, 1988, p. 12). Therefore, the 'super-ego' is "a locus of developmental identification…not an inherent fixture in the psyche" (Washburn, 1988, p. 12).

1.4.4   The Intra-psychic Conflict

Often, there is an evident conflict of interest between the 'id' and the 'ego,' where the 'id' demands immediate gratification of socially unacceptable desires, and the 'ego' succumbs to the pressures of the 'super-ego' to avoid social punishments. This projects the 'ego' as "a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes and that it contains the history of those object choices" which it has tried to "fend off by the process of repression" (Freud, 2001f, p. 29). When the 'id' and 'ego' have conflicting or opposing desires, there erupts an 'intra-psychic conflict.' The 'ego' gets into a 'conflict' with the 'id' "in the service of the super-ego and of reality" (Freud, 2001f, p. 150). The 'id' desires that are delayed or denied satisfaction are pushed into the deeper part of the 'psyche' known as 'unconscious' through the process of 'repression.' Consequently, an individual's 'psyche' could be tapped the most, by unfolding the layers of the 'unconscious.' Thus, Fenichel (1946) aptly describes that the 'psyche' is, "the result of the interplay of forces pressing respectively toward and away from motility" (p. 14). He further describes the psychic process and states, "the organism is in contact with the outside world at the beginning and at the end of its reaction processes, which start with the perception of stimuli and end with motor or glandular discharge" (Fenichel, 1946, p. 14). The individual's 'psyche' suffers an interplay between three dominant forces, i.e., the 'id,''ego,' and 'super-ego.'

1.4.5   Unconscious and Repression

Psychoanalysis is "preeminently a psychology of the unconscious or as we should say of the Id" (Freud, 1936, p. 4). Tapping the individual's 'unconscious' is crucial in psychoanalysis. Freud (2001f) supports this argument stating, "the division of the

psychical into what is conscious and what is unconscious is the fundamental premiss of psycho-analysis; and it alone makes it possible for psycho-analysis to understand the pathological processes in mental life" (p. 13). The above lines suggest that mental life is also demarcated into 'conscious'and 'unconscious' by Freud (2001f). This topographical model of the 'mind' is made up of "Conscious (Cs), Preconscious (Pcs) and Unconscious (Ucs)" where the 'conscious' is the closest to reality, 'preconscious' is closest to the 'conscious,' and 'unconscious' is the mental element that is "capable of becoming conscious" (Freud, 2001f, pp. 14-15). Freud (2001f) presents a distinction between 'unconscious' and 'preconscious.' He states that the 'unconscious' resides on "some material which remains unknown, whereas preconscious is…brought into connection with word presentations" (Freud, 2001f, p. 20). The 'unconscious' is the deepest part of the 'psychic structure.' In the functional sense, Freud (2001f) explains that the 'unconscious' is the "latent" part of the 'psyche' (p. 15). Modern psychoanalyst, Lacan (1966b) denies that idea of the 'unconscious' (Ucs), "which does not have the attribute (or the virtue) of consciousness" (p. 703). Rather, Lacan (1966b) argues that the 'unconscious' is "the Other's discourse" (p. 436). Lacanian psychoanalysis believes that 'unconscious' is more of an "ethical, not a psychological discourse" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 681). Desire is "always shaped and moulded by language" (Homer, 2005, p. 70). Thus, the 'unconscious' desires are inflected through the 'internalization' of discourse and desires of the 'Others' around us (Homer, 2005, p. 70).

The 'unconscious' and 'conscious' part of the 'psychic structure' play a great role in the 'intra-psychic conflict.' When the desires that arise from the 'unconscious' are denied expression by the 'conscious,' it results in an 'intra-psychic conflict.' Lapsley and Stey (2012) suggest that 'unconscious' consists of "'instinctual representatives' or impulses that seek discharge. These impulses are illogical (not subject to contradiction) and timeless (not ordered temporally) and not oriented to reality" (p. 395). 'Conscious,' on the other hand, follows the antagonistic laws. The process by which the 'ego' resolves the 'intra-psychic conflict' by pushing the socially unacceptable desires ('unconscious' desires) into the 'unconscious' system of the 'mind' is known as "repression." The

'repression' mechanism is set in motion when the 'ego' enters into the 'socialization' process or enters the "Symbolic Order" (Lacan, 1966b, p.12). 'Repression,' according to Freud's (2001f) definition is "the state in which ideas existed before being made conscious…The repressed is the prototype of the unconscious for us" (pp. 14-15). Freud (2001f) also adds that, "All that is repressed is the Unconscious, but not all that is unconscious is repressed" (p.18). For Jung, the repressed material is pushed into the personal 'unconscious' and they become "complexes" (Fordham et al., 1953-1991a, p. 3052). The 'complexes' "can be suppressed with an effort of will, but not argued out of existence"; these 'complexes' are manifested in various forms such as dreams (Fordham et al., 1953-1991a, p.3052). 'Repression' is an ego-defense mechanism that enables the 'ego' to adjust to the social demands and to function normally in the society. The repressed desires "may be temporarily compressed, delayed, disguised, or otherwise deflected from their immediate and logical goal, they are not destroyed" (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939, pp. 1-2). 'Repressions' transform into pathogenic effects or symptoms in the 'unconscious' part of the 'psyche.' 'Repressions' that continue for longer duration could force the individual into developing psychic phenomena of either 'neurosis' or 'psychosis.'

These two phenomena differ in their intensity; however, they are triggered by common factors such as "frustration, a non-fulfillment, of one of those childhood wishes which are forever undefeated and which are so deeply rooted in our phylogenetically determined organization" and are a result of the 'conflict' due to an internal agency ('super-ego') (Freud, 2001f, p. 151). 'Psychosis' and 'neurosis' differ in the way an individual connects with the external world in each of these phenomena. 'Neurosis' is "the result of a conflict between the ego and the id, whereas psychosis is the analogous outcome of a similar disturbance in the relations between the ego and the external world" (Freud, 2001f, p. 149). *The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology* defines 'neurosis' as, "Any pervasive and enduring pattern of maladjustment that causes significant personal distress but does not involve psychotic features or stem from physiological problems" and it includes "anxiety disorders, personality disorders, somatoform disorders, dissociative

disorders, some sexual disorders, eating disorders, some sleep disorders, impulse control disorders, and adjustment disorders" (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 336). 'Psychosis' is "a symptom of mental illness characterized by a radical change in personality and a distorted or diminished sense of objective reality" (Strickland, 2001, p. 523). In a 'psychotic' state, the 'ego' develops a new/different internal and external world where the 'ego' allows itself to be carried away by the 'id' and thus "torn away from reality" and in this state, the frustration seems "intolerable" (Freud, 2001f, p. 151). In a 'neurotic' state, the 'ego' "remains true to its dependence on the external world and attempt(s) to silence the id" and maintains the reality intact (Freud, 2001f, p. 151).

1.4.6   Mental Illness: History and Modern Context

In the field of psychiatry, terms such as 'madness,' 'insanity,' and 'lunacy' have remained as the popular historical usages to connote psychological disorders. These terms were even regarded as a "polite discourse" (Scull, 2015, p. 12). The trend persisted until the nineteenth century with the term 'madness' being the most popular of all. 'Madness,' is defined as:

> Massive and lasting disturbances of reason, intellect and emotions – is a phenomenon to be found in all known societies, one that poses profound challenges of both a practical and symbolic sort to the social fabric, and to the very notion of a stable social order. (Scull, 2015, p. 11)

'Madness' or 'mental illness,' as a subject matter for study, can be traced back to the Graeko-Roman times. Since then, the discipline of 'mental illness' has been studied in varied perspectives including the biological, psychological, and mystical/supernatural. The rationale behind any pathological behavior was drawn from, "diversity of ideas derived from common sense, classical medicine and philosophy, folklore and religion. In medieval descriptions of mental illness there is most typically an interweaving of statements variously implying natural (biological and psychological) and supernatural causation" (Maher & Maher, 1985, p. 283). The credit to overturn the supernatural/mystical perspective with the naturalistic approach goes to the Greek

physicians including Hippocratus. Hippocratus studied 'mental illness' with a keen focus on the four humors in the 'body' namely "phlegm, black bile, red or yellow bile, and blood" (Pickren & Rutherford, 2010, p. 95). The naturalistic approach emphasized brain as the root cause of 'mental illness' and adopted natural therapies such as, vapor baths, massage, and herbal remedies to cure such ailments. Drawing on the association between the brain and 'mental illness,' historian W.H.S.Jones (1923) asserts that it is "from the brain, and from the brain only arise our pleasures…It is the same thing which makes us mad or delirious, inspires us with dread and fear" (p. 175). This humane treatment to 'mental illness' prevailed until the last of the Greek physicists, Galen (ca. A.D.130-200) (Freedheim & Weiner, 2003, p. 304).

'Mental illness' was stigmatized in the middle ages by subverting the naturalistic approaches to cure 'mental illness' to only re-establish pre-scientific demonology (Alexander & Selesnick, 1966, pp. 50-52). The mentally ill were confined to the lunatic asylums where they were "chained, beaten, fed only enough to remain alive, subjected to bloodletting, and put on public display for paying sight-seers" (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 473). By the eighteenth century, 'hysteria' emerged as one of the widespread 'mental illnesses.' 'Hysteria' is "a 'mimetic disorder' because it mimics culturally permissible expressions of distress - hysterical limps, paralyses and palsies were accepted symptoms of illness in the nineteenth century" (Ussher, 2011, p. 10). Hypnotism was slowly evolving as a scientific practice to tap the mystery of 'hysteria.' Some of the pioneers analyzing 'hysteria' included, Mesmer, de Puysegur, Elliotson, Esdaile, Braid, Liebeault, and Bernheim. French neurologist, Charcot investigated about 'hysteria' by combining "biology (the inherited potential for hysteria) and psychology (the pathogenic ideas caused by trauma or suggestion)" (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 486). Charcot's disciple, Pierre Janet probed further on 'hysteria' and hypnosis and identified that the "dissociated aspects of the personality could manifest themselves in hysteric symptoms or in hypnotic phenomena" (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 487). Both Charcot and Janet have anticipated Freudian psychoanalysis. The study of 'mental illness,' specifically 'hysteria'was extensively taken up in Freudian psychoanalysis. The text,

Studies on Hysteria by Sigmund Freud and his physicist friend, Joseph Breuer marked the "founding of the school of psychoanalysis" (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 497). Their tenets on the 'unconscious,' free association, dream analysis, ego-defense mechanisms allowed an in-depth probe into a critique of 'mental illness.' Eventually, 'schizophrenia,' 'mania,' 'phobia,' 'anxiety,' 'obsessions' were also studied as various forms of 'mental illnesses' in addition to 'hysteria.'

The earliest classification of 'mental illnesses' was proposed by the German psychiatrist, Kraeplin (Hergenhahn & Henley, 2009, p. 477). However, in the modern context, the organization, APA was established to study 'mental illnesses' in males, females, and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender). In the current times, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V)* of the APA since 1953 (APA, 2013), and *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10)*, a functional unit of the World Health Organization (WHO) since 1948 (WHO, 2004) are the two yardsticks for diagnosing 'mental illnesses.' Although both the texts have conducted an in-depth examination of 'mental disorders,' the *DSM* proposes a "better research classification" specifically for the classification and structuring of the "mental and behavioural disorders" than the *ICD* (Tyrer, 2014, p. 280). Studies and observations from *DSM* can be applied globally across gender, race, and ethnic differences. Hence, this research adopts *DSM-V* for probing into 'mental illnesses' in the select literary works.

'Mental illnesses' in men and women are referred to as 'mental disorders' in the modern context. The *DSM-V* (APA, 2013) defines 'mental disorders' as a syndrome characterized by, "clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning…significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities" (p. 20). Dysfunction seems correlated to maladjustment. An individual is labeled as mentally disordered when he/she reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes. Sociologist

Cockerham (2003) adds on to this idea and confirms that "an individual is determined to be mentally ill…not dependent on his or her symptoms, but on the rules for normal and abnormal behavior" (p. 121). It is therefore deemed pivotal that the individual internalizes the social norms and complies to them too. Thus, the terms 'madness'-'non-madness,' order-disorder, normality-abnormality, adjustment-maladjustment can be interpreted from the structuralism's lens as binary opposites. The presence of one condition in an individual automatically implies the absence of the other opposed feature or condition. An individual's level of social adjustment and functionalism decides his/her degree of mental hygiene.

1.4.7 Female Mental Illness

'Mental illness,' in women, has been extensively studied since the Graeko-Roman times. 'Hysteria' embodied the sphere of female 'mental illness' until the nineteenth century. All along the course of history, 'hysteria' was regarded as an exclusive female-disease with a demonological force. Greek philosopher, Plato is believed to have drawn the term meaning of "hysteria" as the disease of the "wandering womb" based on its etymological origin (Parkin-Gounelas, 2001, p. 134). This bias commenced by Plato was endured through the studies by physicists such as Syndenham, Williz, Anton Mesmer, Charcot, and Freud until the nineteenth century (Gilman, King, Porter, Rousseau, & Showalter, 1993, p. 104). The critical thinker, Foucault, in this view, asserts that the "hysterization of women's bodies" is a "threefold process" whereby the female 'body' was assessed and judged by the 'dominant order' so as to establish hegemony in the "order of power" as well as "order of knowledge" (Foucault & Hurley, 1978, p. 104).

Various feminist critics have objected to the fabrication of 'hysteria' and various other 'mental illnesses' for its gender-centered labeling and socio-political construction (Bronfen, 1998; Parkin-Gounelas, 2001; Ussher, 2011). Feminist critics and their works such as Smith-Rosenberg's "The Hysterical Woman: Sex Roles and Role Conflict in 19th-Century America" (1972), Showalter's *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture 1830-1940* (1987), Goldstein's *Console and Classify: The French*

Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century (1987), Grosz's *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction* (1990b) and *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminisms* (1989), C.J.Adams' *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (2010), Bernheimer and Kahane's *In Dora's Case: Freud-Hysteria-Feminism* (1990), and Fedikew "Marguerite Duras: Feminine Field of Hysteria" (1982), Gilman et al's *Hysteria Beyond Freud* (1993), Trillat's *Histoire de l'Hysterie* (1986) and Veith's *Hysteria: The History of a Disease* (1965) have strongly contested the gendered inscriptions of the psychiatric condition for 'hysteria.' Accordingly, 'hysteria' has been reduced to being a "female malady"; a malady where the female engages in an erratic behavior (Showalter, 1987, p. 148). The hysterical woman had a temperament that was yearning for "privacy and independence" (Ussher, 2011, p. 9) and was also "difficult, narcissistic, impressionable, suggestible, egocentric and labile…idle, self-indulgent and deceitful woman, craving for sympathy" (Smith-Rosenberg, 1989, pp. 202-205), "personally and morally repulsive, idle, intractable, and manipulative" (Showalter, 1987, p. 133). These behavioral symptoms, when carefully examined, reveal the deviance from the norms defined by the 'dominant order.' In due course 'hysteria' "has posed in direct and personal form the key questions of gender and mind/body relations" (Gilman et al., 1993, p. vii). Psychoanalyst and feminist, Juliet Mitchell (1984) claims that, "Hysteria is the woman's simultaneous acceptance and refusal of the organization of sexuality under patriarchal capitalism. It is simultaneously what a woman can do both to be feminine and to refuse femininity within patriarchal discourse" (pp. 289-290). The supreme position occupied by 'hysteria' as a 'mental illness' until the nineteenth century has been extended to other psychic disorders such as 'eating disorders,' 'mood disorders,' and so on in the twentieth century (Ussher, 2011, p.134).

1.4.8 The Female Self

Psychologists including Freud have used the terms 'self' and 'ego' synonymously (Hartmann et al., 1946, p. 16). However, the concept of 'self' was not explored until psychologists such as Kohut, Hartmann, Kris, Loewenstein, Rappaport, Erikson and

many others critiqued the 'self' concept (Berke & Schneider, 2006, p. 336). In comparison to the 'ego,' the 'self' is a broader psychological concept which may encompass the former. The ego-psychologist, Kohut (1971) was among the earliest to describe the concept of 'self' as a "psychic structure…a content of the mental apparatus" (p. xv). It is an "autonomous agent" in comparison to the 'ego' with regard to the amount of power and knowledge it beholds (Watson, 2014, pp. 5-7). 'Self' is "the way a person experiences himself as himself" and "felt centre of independent initiative" (Kohut, 1977, p. xv). Jung's definition of 'self' encompasses the 'ego' within, wherein he states 'self' is the "the totality of the psyche. The self is not only the centre, but also the whole circumference which embraces both conscious and unconscious; it is the centre of this totality, just as the ego is the centre of consciousness" (Fordham et al., 1953-1991c, p. 5566). Paediatrician and psychoanalyst, D.W. Winnicott has coined the terms, 'true self' and 'false self.' 'True self' is marked by "spontaneous gesture and the personal idea…whereas a True Self feels real, the existence of a False Self results in a feeling unreal or a sense of futility" (Winnicott, 1960, p. 148). The 'true self' and the 'false self' can be the Freudian equivalents for the 'ego' and the 'id' respectively. Among the feminist psychologists, Klein has extensively used the term 'self' in her theories. She defines 'self' as "a person/subject, as the initiator and container of own experience, phantasies and complicated inner interactions" (as cited in Hinshelwood, 1991, p. 285). The characteristics of the 'female self,' in the view of feminist psychologists, is not the same as the 'male self.' Until recently, feminist critics claim that most of the psychoanalytical theories reflect a "male model of reality" (Worell, 2000, p. 185). Chodorow (1978a) analyzes that in comparison to the male, the 'female self' has "more permeable ego boundaries" and are defined more "in relation to other" (p. 93). One of the predominant features of the 'female self' is her "relationality" (Toronto, 2005, p. 33) and "psycho-social" nature (Hollway, 2006, p. 467). Gender-theorist and philosopher, Benhabib (1992) describes the 'female self' and asserts:

> The self becomes an individual in that it becomes a 'social' being capable of language, interaction and cognition. The identity of the self is constituted by a

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narrative unity, which integrates what "I" can do, have done and will accomplish with what you expect of 'me.' (p. 5)

The 'relationality' of the 'female self' emphasizes the influence of various social agencies. The 'self' is constantly changing according to the 'Symbolic Order.' Thus, stability or fixedness is a rarity for the 'female self' and hence, pluralism is inescapable. This dimension of 'multiplicity' of the 'female self' has been discussed by various feminist psychologists. Feminist philosopher, Griffiths (1995) comments on another dimension and states, "the subjective experience of a fragmented, changing self or set of selves" also poses as a threat to the 'female identity' (p. 82).

1.4.9   Female Identity and Fragmentation

'Identity' is a subject-matter of concern for sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists too. For the psychologists, construing 'identity' would open the doors for analyzing the human behavior. Etymologically, 'identity' is derived from the Latin word 'idem' to mean 'same' (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, p. 707). One of the earliest psychologists to study 'identity' was, Erikson. Erikson has revolutionized the sphere of identity-studies and its relevance continues even in this century (Hoare, 2002; Kroger, 2007; Sokol, 2009). A review of the literature reveals that Erikson has not only discussed 'identity' from a 'psycho-social' perspective, he has also incorporated the terms 'crisis' of 'identity' in his studies extensively (Erikson, 1963, 1968, 1975). 'Identity' is an "all-pervasive and yet so hard to grasp: for we deal with a process 'located' in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture" (Erikson, 1968, p. 22). Here, 'identity' functions at two levels: personal and social. Identity-theorist, Oyserman (2009) explains that while personal identities "focus on traits, characteristics and goals" and is "decontextualised," social identities are "linked to a social role or social group" that the person belongs to and are "contextualized" (p. 251). Social and personal identities reside within an individual and they operate simultaneously. Erikson (1959) termed this feature of 'identity' as "psychosocial" wherein the "individual and society are intricately woven, dynamically related in continual change" (p.   114).   The   closest

definition for 'identity' by Erikson is in his description of 'identity formation' as, "an evolving configuration-a configuration which is gradually established by successive ego syntheses and resyntheses throughout childhood. It is a configuration gradually integrating constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favored capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful sublimations, and consistent roles" (Erikson, 1968, p. 163). An 'identity' is formed as an amalgamation of the 'socialization' and 'internalization' processes together with the psychic development of the individual. Erikson (1968) identified eight distinct psychosocial stages for 'identity formation.' This included trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, integrity versus despair (p. 94). Each stage is a hurdle for the child to overcome, which Erikson termed as "crisis" and the child is "always vulnerable," until he/she overcomes the 'crisis' (Erikson, 1968, p. 95). In the post-modern age, 'identity' has been conceptualized as a "problem that the individual must 'solve' through active negotiation" (Epstein, 1991, p. 832). The term "active negotiation" in the above definition also implies a dialogue between psychological and social forces. Thus, Erikson's definition for 'identity' is immensely relevant in the current context. Lacanian perspective asserts that 'mirror' stage is the formative period for 'identity' where the infant understands the reality of the "specular image" (Lacan, 1966b, pp. 76-81). When the "specular image" is exposed to the "dialectic of identification" the infant becomes a 'subject' (Lacan, 1966b, p. 76). For Lacan, the concept of 'identity' could thus be the "*I*-formation" which is a result of the transformation of the "specular image" that existed in the "primordial form" into the "*Ideal-I*" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 76). A social constructionist perspective defines 'identity' as a "problem that the individual must 'solve' through active negotiation" (Epstein, 1991, p. 832). The 'female identity,' like the 'female self,' is 'relational' and demands negotiation. Gender-theorist Sedgwick (2011) asserts:

> *Identification with/as* has a distinctive resonance for women in the oppressively
> tidy dovetailing between old ideologies of women's traditional "selflessness" and

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a new one of the feminist commitment that seems to begin with a self but is legitimated only by willfully obscuring most of the boundaries. (p. 377)

'Identity,' thus, is in a state of flux owing to the individual's changing outer and inner agencies.

Erikson's theory of 'identity' is limited to the male gender and the 'female identity' cannot be fully elucidated with that theory. This view is supported by gender critic, Gardiner (1981) who emphasizes that Erikson's stages of 'identity' reflects a biological model that is designed to analyze an individual's struggle towards the "achievement of a desired product, the autonomous individual, that paradigm for which is male" (p. 352). The androcentric-bias in the traditional theories of identity-studies has been criticized by other feminist critics too (Josselson, 1973). Hence, the traditional theories of 'identity' cannot be extrapolated for the 'female identity.' Thus, the study of 'female identity' necessitates a gynocentric angle. Chodorow (1978a) was among the earliest feminist critics who demanded the analysis of female personality based on "social structurally induced psychological processes" rather than biological one (p. 7). The past literature suggests that 'female identity' has been a neglected field until the end of twentieth century (Downing & Roush, 1985; Helms, 1990 in Ossana, Helms, & Leonard, 1992; Josselson, 1973). Some of the milestonic contributions to the feminist identity-studies are by psychologists such as Downing and Roush (1985), Josselson (1973), and Ossana et al. (1992). Clinical psychologist, Josselson (1973) defines 'female identity' as one that, "centers far more on what kind of a person to be on occupational or ideological choice" (p. 47). Josselson (1973) further describes:

Where identity in men is confirmed or denied by objective yardsticks such as degrees received or financial success, identity substantiation in women is dependent on the responses of important others. In order to feel giving, the woman must find someone willing to receive; to feel lovable, she must have someone to love her. (p. 47)

This definition upholds ideological influence and intimacy as the highpoints of a 'female identity.' Two of the acclaimed feminist-identity-models that are relevant even in the

current decade are: "Feminist Identity Development model" by Downing and Roush (1985) and Helms "Womanist Identity Development model" (Helms, 1990 in Ossana et al., 1992). Among these, "Womanist Identity Development model" is a gender-based identity-development model that tries to capture woman's "movement from an externally and socially based definition of womanhood to an internal definition in which the woman's own values, beliefs, and abilities determine the quality of her womanhood" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). Having borrowed the term "womanist" from the black-feminist writers (Brown, 1989), identity-theorist, Helms justifies that "the *process* (e.g., stage-wise progression) of self-definition among women is similar, regardless of race, social class, political orientation, and so forth" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). The model professes to be applicable to women across varied racial/ethnic, class and other groups (Moradi, 2005; Ossana et al., 1992; Poindexter-Cameron & Robinson, 1997). The current research utilizes Helms "Womanist Identity Development model" (Helms, 1990 in Ossana et al., 1992) as this model is apt in keeping with a gynocentric, gender-sensitized and intersectional critique on the female 'identity formation.' Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" is composed of four stages including the "preencounter," "encounter," "immersion-emersion" and "internalization" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). Each stage described in the Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" (Ossana et al., 1992) is underlined by a 'conflict' between fantasy and reality; external and internal, 'id' and 'super-ego.' Additionally, every stage depicts an overlap with the Downing and Roush (1985) "Feminist Identity Development model" (Moradi, 2005). The Helms' identity-development model outlines a path, which portrays the woman's strife towards the potential to intellectually discriminate, and negotiate the 'conflicts' between the external standards and the internal impulses. While the prevalence of each stage is not permanent, the stages can become regressive with the changing social circumstances for the woman. The above mentioned feminist-identity-model also considers that a woman's path towards 'identity' is a repetitive "process" (Gardiner, 1981, pp. 352-353). Downing and Roush (1985) in this regard argue that:

It is assumed that woman may recycle through these stages, each time experiencing the challenge of that stage more profoundly and using previously learned skills to work through the particular stage again. It is also assumed that women may stagnate in a specific stage...In addition women may revert to earlier stages when their skills are insufficient to respond to the demands of the current life stresses. (p. 702)

This idea applies to the Helms' model of female 'identity formation' as well. In the context of woman, her 'identity' is as complex and relational as her 'self.' Additionally, Benhabib (1992) demonstrates this in her work, *Situating the Self*, where she mentions:

Identity does not refer to my potential for choice alone, but to the actuality of my choices, namely to how I, as a finite, concrete, embodies individual, shape and fashion the circumstances of my birth and family, linguistics, cultural and gender identity into a coherent narrative that stands as my life's story. (p. 161)

'Fragmentation,' is a psychoanalytic term, often used in correlation with 'identity.' The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defines the process of 'fragmentation' as "a small part broken off or detached" component and it is derived from the Latin word "fragmentum" which is in turn derived from the word "frangere" to mean "to break" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, p. 563). In the current study, 'fragmentation' is traced within the 'psyche,' specifically in the 'female psyche.' 'Psychic fragmentation' could be the process of psychic breakdown of a woman's 'psyche' into two or multiple pieces which initially affects the psychic-structure at the rudimentary level and eventually affects the cognitions, emotions, affects, behavior, and personality of the woman.

1.5   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are, to:

- Decipher the 'female psyche' and the prevalent psychic disorders within the socio-cultural milieu in the female
- Analyze the existence of fragmented 'self' in the 'female psyche'
- Analyze 'fragmentation' as a key concept and its association with the 'female psyche'

- Explore the role of 'fragmentation' in the formation of 'identity' in a woman

1.6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

   Taking into account the "androcentric bias" of the prevalent psychoanalytical theories, this research explores the 'female psyche' in select literatures by employing a gynocentric perspective (Worell, 2000, p. 185). This study traces the possibilities of existence of 'female psychic fragmentation' in close correlation to the 'neurotic' and personality disorders in the 'female psyche,' through the select novels. Unlike other social-science studies, research studies in literature are done using methods such as, Oral History method, Visual analysis method, Auto/Biographies, Textual analysis, Discourse analysis, and others. Oral History method, Visual analysis method, Auto/Biographies will not be used for this research as they are used by researchers for extensively examining the account of realistic events and experiences of individuals. This research follows a literary analysis of select fictional works. Thus, for this research, Textual analysis, Ethnographic analysis, and Discourse analysis methods will be employed.

One of the important research methods employed to study the select works is Textual analysis. Literary critic, Barthes (1977) says: "a text is made of multiple writings" (p. 148). This open-ended analysis of a text will help produce a host of questions and contribution of knowledge by the researcher. Ethnographic analysis is another research method which will help to understand the growth of socio-cultural context of literary production. Discourse analysis produces multiple meanings as it analyzes the select work in a specific political-economic-socio-cultural context. Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates (2001, p. 6) identified six distinct research traditions in Discourse analysis. They include, Conversation analysis and Ethnomethodology, Interactional Sociolinguistics and the Ethnography of Communication, Discursive Psychology, Critical Discourse analysis and Critical Linguistics, Bakhtinian research, and Foucauldian research. Of these research traditions, this research is limited to Ethnomethodology and Discursive Psychology. This qualitative research confronts a few challenges during its course. They are: psychic disturbances are situational and not vividly depicted in the narratives, the instances of

'fragmentation' of 'psyche' and 'self' are not explicitly discerned in the narratives. Nonetheless, efforts were made for literary analysis and interpretation of various psychological elements that were concealed within the fictional accounts in the select narratives.

1.7   RESEARCH GAPS AND QUERIES

Based on an extensive review of literature, this research has identified certain gaps. They are: the 'female psyche' and feminist psychoanalytical theories until the last decade depict an androcentric-bias (Chodorow, 1978a; Chodorow, 1989; Toronto, 2005; Worell 2000). Hence, there is an abundant scope to examine the 'female psyche' in literature from a gynocentric perspective. Secondly, until recently the phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation' has been studied in a generic context (Fuchs, 2007; Mollon, 2002; Spiegel, 1994; Spiegel, 2008). However, 'psychic fragmentation,' specifically in the female, has been a relatively less explored area with an ample scope for study in literature. Although relations between 'psychic fragmentation' and trauma have been investigated (Scott, 1999; Spiegel, 2008), there has been limited research in the domain of 'female psychic fragmentation' and for understanding its impact on the 'female identity' and 'female self' in literature. Similarly, the concepts of 'self' and 'unconscious' have been extensively studied based on a gender bias (Toronto, 2005; Worell, 2000). The study on 'female self' and 'female unconscious' with a gynocentric perspective is an open field with huge scope for analysis. 'Mental disorders' in women have been studied in relation to specific geographies in the past. However, a transnational feminist analysis on 'mental disorders' has been insubstantial (Latzer, 2003; Rutherford, Capdevila, Undurti, & Palmary, 2011; Ussher, 2000). This study attempts to fill these gaps and explores 'female psyche,' and the aftermath of the 'intra-psychic conflict' alongside the understanding of the development of the 'female self.'

1.8   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As is evident in the literature reviews, critical literary studies on the 'female psyche' are negligible. On the other hand, the 'male psyche' is an area that is often

analyzed and critiqued in the field of psycho-literary studies. Thus, this study attempts to explore the 'female psyche' in detail. Moreover, fewer studies could be seen specifically in the area of 'fragmentation' and 'fragmentation' as a research area has ample scope for study. This research attempts to establish 'fragmentation' as a key concept with reference to the 'female psyche.' In this context, in-depth examination of the psychic disorders qualifies to be the focus of the study. To achieve this, the study adopts few qualitative literary research methodologies as mentioned above. The research predicts and analyzes the possibilities of psycho-literary theories in this emerging field.

1.9   SELECT AUTHORS AND THEIR WORKS

This research specifically focuses on female writers who captured the 'female experience' and presented it through their novels. The novels selected for this study are *The Golden Notebook* (1962) by Doris Lessing, *The Edible Woman* (1969) by Margaret Atwood, *The Binding Vine* (1993) by Shashi Deshpande, *The Household Guide to Dying* (2008) by Debra Adelaide, *Maya's Notebook* (2013) by Isabel Allende, and *Americanah* (2013) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. This research examines the possibilities of studying select English literature written by female authors from a psycho-literary perspective.

1.9.1   Doris Lessing (1919-2013)

Doris Lessing (Doris May Taylor) is a Nobel prize-winning British novelist who was born in Kermanshah, Persia (current Iran) on October 22, 1919. Her writings prove that she was much ahead of her time. Critics regarded her as one of the earliest realist writers of the time (Bloom, 2003). She endorses an autobiographical style with a socio-political concern. The Bildungsroman series *Children of Violence* which include *Martha Quest* (1952), *A Proper Marriage* (1954), *A Ripple From the Storm* (1958), *Landlocked* (1965), and *The Four-Gated City* (1969), as well as *The Golden Notebook* (1962) depicts the socio-political issues with an autobiographical undertone (Rowe, 1994). Her writing style took a turn from realism to non-realism (by sketching expressionism, fantasy,

science fiction, and allegory) in *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* (1971), *The Summer Before the Dark* (1973), and *The Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974) (Draine, 1979, p. 51). The tenets of Sufism, together with Jungian philosophy seems to be at the crux of the *Canopus in Argos* series which consisted of *Shikasta* (1979), *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four and Five* (1980a), *The Sirian Experiments* (1980b), *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8* (1982), and *Documents Relating to The Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire* (1983) (Bloom, 2003, p. 70). Her two autobiographical works were critically acclaimed and they include *Under My Skin: Volume One of My Autobiography, to 1949* (1994) and *Walking in the Shade, Volume Two of My Autobiography, 1949 to 1962* (1998) (Bloom, 2003, p. 259).

The Golden Notebook has been selected for analysis in this research. This work sketches the life of Anna Wulf, the lead protagonist of the novel. The book begins with Anna's confession to Molly stating "everything's cracking up" (Lessing, 1962, p. 1). This work is about "Women's Liberation, and with good cause" (Drabble, 1972, p. 52). The novel can be analyzed as a search of a woman towards her 'identity' and her 'real self.' Literary critic, McCrindle (1982) describes it as "the most courageous book…both in its structure - keeping the different parts separate and connected in order to express and avoid chaos - and in its honesty of content" (p. 44). The character Anna is portrayed as an eminent writer, a communist party activist, a mother, a friend, a wife, as well as a mistress. She plays multiple roles in real life and tries "to fit things together" (Lessing, 1962, p. 563). The novel could be seen as belonging to the social realism genre with a scope to analyze the themes of race, politics, and feminism. The writing style is unconventional as the novel is split into four parts. In an interview with critic, Rubens (1962), Lessing reveals that this style of writing allowed her to "express different kinds of people…to say things about time, about memory" (p. 32).

1.9.2   Margaret Atwood (1939-)

Margaret Eleanor Atwood is a Canadian novelist, poet, short story writer, essayist, critic, and author of children's books (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005, p. 93). She was

born on November 18, 1939 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Her literary contributions have earned her the prestigious Booker Prize for the novel *Blind Assassin* in 2000, Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1994; Trillium Award in 1991, 1993 and 1995; Arthur C. Clarke Award for Best Science Fiction in 1987; National Magazine Award for Environmental Journalism, and YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in 1988 and many more (Bloom, 2009, pp. 183-187). Atwood's popularity as a global literary figure becomes more pronounced when the second of the two volumes of the Cambridge Companions devoted to Canadian literature, *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood* (2006) was published (Domínguez, 2007, p. 173).

Atwood's career began as a poet. Her collections of poems *Double Persephone* in 1961 as well as *The Circle Game* in 1966 earned her the E. J. Pratt Medal for Poetry and the Governor-General's Award for Poetry respectively (Bloom, 2009, p. 184). She became a novelist with *The Edible Woman* in 1969. On the generic difference in the writing of novels and poems, Atwood responds that, "novels are about change, living in time. But poetry…is more likely to be about the out of time experience" (Ingersoll, 1990, p. 223). Her themes reflect a strong feminist and an immediate socio-political purpose. For instance, *The Edible Woman* (1969), *Surfacing* (1972), and *Lady Oracle* (1977) analyze the emerging capitalist and consumer culture (Palumbo, 2009, p. 22). *Life Before Man* (1979), *Bodily Harm* (1981), and *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) critically examine the politics of power at a personal and societal level (Palumbo, 2009, p. 22). Works including *Cat's Eye* (1988), *The Robber Bride* (1993), and *Alias Grace* (1996) presents the relations between the present, and the past in the individual (Palumbo, 2009, p. 22). For her dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, literary critic Larson (1989) mentions Atwood as the "most provocative writing prophets" (p. 27). Regarding Atwood's treatment to her characters, critic Goldblatt (2005) asserts that Atwood has, "reconstructed this [female] victim proving to her and to us that we all possess the talent and the strength to revitalize our lives and reject society's well-trodden paths that suppress the human spirit" (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005, pp. 107-108). She has been designated by *The Cambridge Introduction to Margaret Atwood* as "a *cultural commentator* and a *cultural export*" in

the context of bringing a visibility to the Canadian literary sphere (Macpherson, 2010, pp. 14-15, *authors's emphasis*).

Atwood's *The Edible Woman* has been selected for analysis in this research. This research focuses on the female protagonist, Marian McAlpin. She is an emerging independent woman who is in a quest for an 'identity' that is deemed modern for her era. Her love for Peter Wollander forces her to accept his proposal for marriage. This novel could be critiqued for the psychological 'conflict' due to the societal pressure to conform to the social norms, and the consequences of conformity in a woman. *The Edible Woman* provides ample scope for analysis of the 'female psyche' and the psychological disorders that women endure from a gynocentric psychoanalytical perspective.

1.9.3   Shashi Deshpande (1938-)

"I am a human being and I write about other human beings who happen to be women" (*Times of India*, 2001) comments the Sahitya Academy awardee, Shashi Deshpande. She is an Indian writer in English who was born in 1938, in Dharwad, Karnataka. She is the daughter of the famous Kannada playwright, Adya Rangachar Sriranga. She was schooled in Bombay (current Mumbai) and Bangalore. Deshpande confesses that her father, Sriranga played a key role in moulding her ideas and intellect for her writing career (Vishwanath, 1987, p. 8). Despite her woman-centric writings, Deshpande shuns being called a 'woman-writer.' In her essay "Dear Reader" Deshpande describes her writing process and mentions:

> When I begin writing, I leave a huge margin, a blank space which I know will soon fill up with alterations, corrections, new ideas...in time the margin is full, the words begin creeping into the centre of the page, the margin and the text merge and finally…the margin takes over, it becomes the real text. (Deshpande, 2003, p. 165).

Deshpande's writings have been vast. Some of her notable novels include *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980), *Roots and Shadows* (1983), *That Long Silence* (1988), *The*

Binding Vine (1992), *A Matter of Time* (1999), *Small Remedies* (2000), *Moving On* (2004), *In the Country of Deceit* (2008), and *Shadow Play* (2013).

Her novel *The Binding Vine* is selected for this research. *The Binding Vine* narrates the story of Urmi the protagonist, and also some other predominant female characters such as Kalpana, and Shakutai. Deshpande sketches her characters, who are mostly Indian middle-class women in a "detailed, sensitive, and realistic" manner that arrests critical attention towards her writing (Atrey & Kirpal, 2011, p.3). The novel provides ample scope to study the modern as well as conventional Indian women in the patriarchal society and their struggle towards finding their 'identity.' The novel realistically portrays the Indian households and opens up possibilities of analyzing women from a psychoanalytical lens.

1.9.4   Isabel Allende (1942-)

Regarded as the "first Latin American woman of letters to succeed in the international literary scene on such a grand scale" Isabel Allende was born on August 2, 1942 in Lima, Peru (Balderston & Gonzalez, 2004, pp. 10-11). Allende is a "Chilean novelist, essayist, journalist, short story writer, memorist, playwright, and Juvenile fiction writer" (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005, p. 39). Storytelling, as she confessed in many public platforms, has been her passion; her literature does not aim to transcend, or preach, rather she tries to "tell a story in the tone of an intimate conversation" (Allende, 2002, p. xv).

Allende is known for applying her 'magical realism' technique in writing (Martin, 1989). Autobiographical remnants are a trademark of most of her works (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005, p. 41). Her works are written in Spanish and most of them have been translated to various global languages including English. Allende (2005) deliberates on her novel writing and states:

> In a novel we can put out all the interrogations…register the most extravagant, evil, obscene, incredible or magnificent facts…give illusory order to chaos…find the labyrinth of history…make excursions into the past…understand the present

and dream the future…decode the mysteries of our world and discover our true identity. (p. 42)

Some of her prominent works include, *La casa de los espiritus* (*The House of the Spirits*) (1982), *De amor y sombras* (*Of Love and Shadows*) (1984), *Eva Luna* (1988), *El Plan Infinito* (*An Infinite Plan*) (1992), *Hija de la Fortuna (Daughter of Fortune)*(1999), *Retrato en Sepia* (*Portrait in Sepia*) (2000), *Island Beneath the Sea* (2010)*, Maya's Notebook* (2013) (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005, p. 41). Of these novels, *Maya's Notebook* centers on the protagonist Maya Vidal, who is brought up in a Chilean culture. In her childhood, she is deprived of parental love. In the adolescent years, her father-figure, Popo (her paternal grandfather) passes away. In the novel, Maya's rebellious adolescence, involvement in drug-abuse, and drug-peddling leaves sufficient scope for an in-depth analysis of her 'psyche.' The novel can be read as an adolescent woman's search for her 'identity.'

1.9.5   Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (1977-)

In "A Conversation with Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" interviewer, VanZanten (2010) describes her as "one of the new global voices in African Literature." Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a "Nigerian novelist, poet, playwright and a short story writer" (Krstovic, 2008, p.1). She was born in Enugu, Nigeria in the year 1977. She has won various prestigious awards including the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 2005 for *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), Orange Broadband Prize for fiction in 2007, and Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction in 2015 for *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2007), O. Henry Prize in 2003 for "The American Embassy" (2009), National Book Critics Circle Award in 2013 for the novel *Americanah* (2013), and the French Literary award, Le Grand Prix de l'héroïne Madame Figaro in 2017 for the essay turned into a text *Dear Ijeawele, or a Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions* (2017).

Most of Adichie's writings carry a "transnational intertextuality" and "heterogenous, diasporic dimension" (Hewett, 2008, p. 4). Her writings are Nigerian, feminist, political, social, diasporic, and realistic. Other than the prize-winning works, some of her notable

works include, the novels *Imitation* in 2015 and *The Shivering* in 2016. Among Adichie's works, *Americanah* is chosen for this research. The novel depicts the plight of African migrants and African-American citizens in America. The novel narrates the life of the protagonist, Ifemelu. In the novel, she is a blog-writer and maintains a race-related blog, for a living in America. Her blog discusses the African issues in a racially charged nation. The novel satirically discusses the African's "conflicted longing for WASP whiteness or, more accurately, for the privileges of WASP whiteness" (Adichie, 2013, p. 205). The novel provides scope for analyzing the African's strife for finding one's 'true self' amidst racial discriminations.

1.9.6   Debra Adelaide (1958-)

"Stories, creative work, can really speak to people. They can press your emotional buttons and that's what's important – not the facts, not the arguments – just that emotional connection" states Debra Adelaide, the Australian novelist in an interview for *The Saturday Paper* (Price, 2018). Adelaide was born in Sydney and brought up in Sutherland Shire. She is an honorary figure in the Australian literary field and an active member of Sydney PEN too. Her literary contributions create a visibility to the Australian women-writers. Her novels include, *The Hotel Albatross* (1995), *Serpent Dust* (1998), *The Household Guide to Dying* (2008) and *The Women's Pages* (2015).

The novel, *The Household Guide to Dying*, presents the life of the protagonist Delia Bennett. Bennett is diagnosed of breast cancer and is on the verge of her death. She is a homemaker, an advice columnist, a wife, and a mother of two. The novel could be interpreted from the lens of a dying mother who wishes to outlive her mortal disease in order to be an active part of her family. She isn't able to deal with this "like any normal person" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 231). This novel helps to understand the 'psyche' of a woman in trauma of a nearing death.

This study attempts to understand the sufferings of women and its impact on their 'psyche' through the select novels. The study assimilates a feminist psychoanalytic

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criticism to interpret the gynocentric issues presented in the novels. Accordingly, the analysis incorporates theories propounded by various feminist psychoanalysts such as, Nancy Chodorow, Jessica Benjamin, Betty Friedan, bell hooks, Carol Gilligan, Luce Irigaray, Aida Hurtado, and many others. This research is an attempt to psychoanalytically analyze the adjustment and/or maladjustment of the 'female psyche' in the society within the limits of 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' perspective. The female characters in the novels belong to an era after the emergence of industrialization and they hail from distinct socio-cultural backgrounds. This research acknowledges the multiple disadvantaged statuses that the female characters are positioned in due to their varied cultures, in the novels. Additionally, this research does not undertake an in-depth analysis of the characters from a social and cultural perspective; rather, the study broadens to deciphering the 'female psyche,' and their 'intra-psychic conflict' in varied social circumstances.

The second chapter "Dissociation and Other Psychic Disorders" analyzes various 'mental disorders' (specifically the 'neurotic disorders') based on the categorization offered by the *DSM V* (APA, 2013). Psychoanalytical theory articulates that, every human behavior is motive oriented and a product of the process of stimulus and response. The literary texts selected for this study, with the tropes, metaphors, metonymy, synecdoche, and other literary devices, are expected to provide ample scope for psychoanalytic analysis of the motives of the 'female psyche.' The upcoming chapter attempts to examine the presence of 'dissociation' and other psychic disorders in the context of 'normality,' 'abnormality,' 'norms,' and 'deviance' in a social perspective. This is followed by the third chapter "Formlessness as a Psychic Phenomenon," which attempts to investigate the socio-cultural and political dimensions of 'dysfunctionality' in women. The fourth chapter "Interpreting Facets of Fragmentation" attempts to trace the trajectory of 'psychic fragmentation' in the female using an 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' perspective. This is followed by fifth chapter "Nexus of the Female Psyche and the Fragmented Self" which attempts to fathom the evolution of the 'female psyche' and the 'fragmented female self' in the light of 'psychic fragmentation' and the consequent

pathological imbalances. The last chapter, "Conclusions" sums up the research findings and contributions of this study. The female characters are analyzed specifically for their non-conformative acts and the impact of these acts on their psychic well-being. This study would attempt to analyze the process of 'fragmentation' in the 'female psyche' and the correlated phenomena leading to dissociated feeling of the 'mind' /'psyche.'

CHAPTER 2

DISSOCIATION AND OTHER PSYCHIC DISORDERS

2.1   AN INTRODUCTION TO DISORDER

In the context of individuals, disorders could be classified as the disorder of the 'mind' (psychological disorder) and disorder of the 'body' (physiological disorder). This research streamlines psychological disorders in due course of an analysis of the 'female psyche.' Psychiatrists, Bolton and Hill (2003) define psychological disorder as an "apparent disruption at one or more stages in the intentional causal pathways linking stimulus, perception, thought, emotion, and behavior" (p. 279). Further, they add that, psychological disorder involves, "breakdown of intentionality" wherein intentionality is a "broad concept, concerning the representational (cognitive) capacities of mind" (Bolton & Hill, 2003, p. 280). An order, on the other hand, is the anotnym of disorder. The presence or absence of 'madness' in an individual is enormously determined by the depletion of reason conjoined with an incongruity from the shared human experience. However, according to the recent psychiatric glossary, terms such as 'madness,' 'lunacy,' or 'insanity' qualify as layman terminologies. Thus, these terms have been replaced by more acceptable terms such as 'mental disorder' or 'mental illness.' This chapter probes into 'mental illnesses' in women in accordance to the *DSM-V* (APA, 2013) criteria as traced in the select novels.

Psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, Szasz (1996) elaborates on the emotive and behavioral peculiarities associated with 'mental illness' and adds that it is, "expressed verbally or more often non-verbally, composed of…anger, aggression, fear, frustration, confusion, exhaustion, isolation, conceit megalomania, narcissism, self-dramatization), cowardliness, and difficulty getting on with others" (p. 12). These peculiarities are pertinent to all individuals, irrespective of their gender differences. One of the prominent features in mentally-ill individuals, irrespective of their gender, is that they "do not share

the common-sense reality most of us perceive and…act in ways that are profoundly at variance with the conventions and expectations of their culture" (Scull, 2015, pp. 11-12). These behavioral anomalies which are expressed in the social set-ups highlight the individual's aberration from the social norms. Consequently, the categorization into 'madness' or 'non-madness' is an obvious consequence. It is in the social domain and amidst the normal individuals that the abnormal is foregrounded. In this context, Foucault, in his work *Madness and Civilization*, mentions that the broad spectrum of 'madness' and 'non-madness' is existing "for each other, in relation to each other" (Foucault & Howard, 2001, p. 11). 'Madness' and 'non-madness' are the higher degree versions of normality and abnormality.

The tenets of normality and abnormality; 'madness' and 'non-madness' are affiliated and interrelated to the concepts of norms and conformity. Norms are the governing practices that categorize an individual as 'mad' or 'non-mad.' Norms are "rules of conduct that specify appropriate behavior in a given range of social situations. A norm either prescribes a given type of behavior or forbids it" (Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum, & Carr, 2009, p. 136). A domain-wise analysis of norms connote that norms can be categorized based on the varied spheres of application such as, "linguistic, epistemic, aesthetic, etiquette, legal, religious, moral, role-based, or particular game contexts" (O'Neill, 2017). Over the years, social norms have drawn a major impact in psychology and human behavior (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; O'Neill, 2017). Social norm is "a perception of where a social group is or where the social group ought to be on some dimension of attitude or behavior" (Paluck & Ball, 2010, p. 9). They are the most powerful deciding factors of behavior (Cialdini et al., 1990). Novelist Allende's character Maya, in *Maya's Notebook* asserts, "I wanted to be normal, nothing more" (Allende, 2013, p. 135). Similarly, Deshpande's protagonist Urmi remarks in *The Binding Vine*, "We are, all of us, groping our ways towards normality-whatever that normality is" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 28). Anna, the character from *The Golden Notebook* claims that "She [Janet] is my normality. I have to be, with her, simple, responsible, affectionate, and so she anchors me in what is normal in myself" (Lessing, 1962, p. 476). These lines connote that the

perceived normality differs from one woman to another and it seems to be dependent on socio-cultural variations among women. For the adolescent Maya, normality was a drug-free life in the Chicana community and abnormality was her previous life as a drug-peddler and drug-addict. Urmi, on the other hand, was seeking the meaning of normality, in the context of maternal instinct, after being grief-stricken with the death of her infant daughter, Anu. For Anna Wulf, her duties of motherhood towards her daughter Janet determined her normality. These women hail from different cultures; Maya belongs to the Chilean culture, Urmi hails from the Indian culture, and Anna belongs to the European culture. Yet, these women are seeking normality within the confines of their respective social and cultural parameters. Thus, normality is a social construct that differs across culture and time. Consequently, the social norms that instill this sense of normality can also vary from culture to culture, and from time to time (Giddens et al., 2009, p. 137).

Social scientists, Cialdini et al. (1990) outline two distinct forms of social norms and they are "descriptive norms (doing what others do) and an injunctive norm (doing what others think one should do)" (as cited in Mackie, Moneti, Shakya, & Denny, 2015, p. 8). An 'injunctive norm' can also be interchangeably used with "prescriptive" norm (Brauer & Chaurand, 2010, p. 491). In the novel *The Edible Woman*, the character Marian exhibits an instance of formation of a 'descriptive norm' as she states, "Of course I'd always assumed through high school and college that I was going to marry someone eventually and have children, everyone does" (Atwood, 2009, pp. 123-124). In the same instance, Marian progresses to display an example of a 'prescriptive norm' or 'injunctive norm' which acts as a warning for Marian as she states, "As Peter says…people who aren't married get funny in middle age, embittered or addled or something, I've seen enough of them around the office to realize that" (Atwood, 2009, p. 124). In both the examples social consensus plays a crucial role where the 'Significant Other' is the determinant of any social norm. However, in the first instance, it implies a "perceived consensus about a descriptive pattern of behavior" and thus, it could be categorized as a 'descriptive norm' (Paluck & Ball, 2010, p. 9). In the second instance, since it implies a "perceived consensus about a prescribed or proscribed behavior" it is an 'injunctive norm' (Paluck &

Ball, 2010, p. 9). As is evident in the observation, norms intend to "guide, regulate or control behavior in a fashion that is acceptable to those who are concerned" (Cockerham, 2003, p. 96). A social norm is regulated through "the reciprocal expectations of the people within a reference group" (Mackie et al., 2015, p. 7). Social researchers, Mackie et al. (2015) further add that a social norm is determined by social influence and it includes "approval, including positive sanctions, or disapproval, including negative sanctions; or by one's belief in the legitimacy of others' expectations; among enough members of the reference group" (p. 10). Social norms are disseminated in many ways, "such as socialization (through parents, teachers, etc.)…appeals from officials (politicians, priests, etc.), observational learning…and social control" (Brauer & Chaurand, 2010, p. 490). This process of socialization and norm indoctrination is also explained in the novel *Americanah.* Ifemelu's African-American friend, Mwombeki who usually proposes the 'welcome talk' to the newly migrated Africans mocks at the American culture and states:

> You are now in America: do not expect to have hot food for lunch. That African taste must be abolished. When…[Americans] will offer to show you their house. Forget that in your house back home, your father would throw a fit if anyone came close to his bedroom. We all know that the living room was where it stopped and, if absolutely necessary, then the toilet. But please smile and follow the American and see the house and make sure you say you like everything. (Adichie, 2013, p. 139-140).

In these lines, Mwombeki explicitly describes the differences in American and African culture. These lines also indicate the differences in norms and the consequent socialization process in the two cultures. When a norm is violated, it is termed as 'deviance.' Sociologists, Giddens et al. (2009) define 'deviance' as a, "mode of action that do not conform to the norms or values held by most members of a group or society" (p. 136). In *Americanah*, Adichie's character Ifemelu begins to internalize and assimilate new set of norms after migrating from Africa to America. Her newly internalized norms are in sharp contradiction with her older norms. This antagonism is depicted in the below lines:

Back home, she would wash her underwear every night and hang it in a discreet corner of the bathroom. Now that she piled them up in a basket and threw them into the washing machine on Friday evenings, she had come to see this, the heaping of dirty underwear, as normal. (Adichie, 2013, p. 136)

For Ifemelu, washing all her underwear on Friday evenings was an acceptable norm in America; but this is labeled as a deviant behavior in Africa. What is not a norm, automatically belongs to the 'category' of deviance. Cockerham (2003) adds that, a behavior is deemed as deviant when it is "different, breaks rules or violates norms and is exceedingly offensive" (p. 95). In the novel *The Edible Woman* Ainsley, the character whose conviction relies on anti-marriage, expresses deviance when she confesses to Marian, "I'm going to get pregnant…No, I'm not going to get married" (Atwood, 2009, p. 41). In the 1950's being a single mother was a deviant act just as the act of homosexuality was deviant until the end of twentieth century. In this purview, anthropologist, Benedict's (1934) work, "Anthropology and the Abnormal" elaborates that, "Most individuals are plastic to the moulding force of the society into which they are born…In a society that institutionalizes homosexuality, they will be homosexual" (p. 74). Like the norms, the notion of deviance too is not a "universally agreed-upon category" (Goode, 1993, p. 88). Time also transforms the rules of norms and deviance. Sociologist Lemert (1972) comments in this regard that some specific actions are "likely to be judged deleterious in any context…it is not so much that they violate rules as it is that they destroy, downgrade, or jeopardize values universal in nature" (p. 22). The deviant behavior is "loaded with moral predisposal" (Nisbet, 1970, p. 282). It is "likely to generate negative reactions from audiences" (Owens, 2007, p. 1116). In the novel *The Binding Vine¸* Shakutai illustrates the process of norm inculcation in the Indian set-up and states, "Cover your self decently, I kept telling her, men are like animals…we have to keep to our places, we can never step out" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 147-148). Shakutai recollects these conversations that she had with her daughter, Kalpana during her norm inculcation years. Through these lines, Shakutai also displays an urgency for conforming to the normative behaviour, lest Kalpana would be punished. The society regulates and

moderates women's behavior by punishing the deviant behavior and rewarding the normative. This technique of rewarding and punishing the behavior has been termed as "sanctions" (Giddens et al., 2009, p. 137). Thus, in order to avoid being labeled as deviant, it is necessary that the individual conforms to the norms.

2.2 THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PSYCHIC DISORDERS AND THE PERSONALITY TRAITS

An individual's psychic functioning corresponds to his/her personality (Mayer, 2015). In the opinion of Wilhelm Wundt, 'personality' is a system (as cited in Mayer, 2015). A 'system' is defined as "a set of things working together as a mechanism or interconnecting network" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, p. 1462). Therefore, personality as a system consists of a 'structure.' 'Personality structure' is described as the "relatively long term and stable aspects of a person's mental functioning" (Mayer, 2015, pp. 14-24). One of the earliest functional divisions of personality was propounded by Freud and it consisted of the agentic entities 'id,' 'ego,' and 'super-ego' (as cited in Mayer, 2015). Personality is, "the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring and that influence his or her interactions with, and adaptations to, the intrapsychic, physical, and social environments" (Larsen & Buss, 2005, p. 4). The long-standing personality traits and mechanisms adopted by the individual encompass his/her personality. The *DSM-III*, in the year 1987, defines personality traits as, "enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to and thinking about the environment and oneself" which are "exhibited in a wide range of important social and personal contexts" (APA, 1987, p. 335). The character Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying* identifies herself as Archie's wife, a mother to Estelle and Daisy, and also as a column writer. Being a writer is one of her significant personality traits. Her conviction that, "This *is* my idea of enjoyment…I love my work. And I'm the perfect person to write this book," (Adelaide, 2008, p. 84) even as she is suffering from a life-threatening cancer, further demonstrates her personality trait as a writer. Personality and personality traits emphasize an individual's adaptation to the 'intra-psychic' and social environments. Thus, traits and personality also change owing to the variations in the 'Significant Others'

and the social institutions to ensure adaptation and normativity. Personality is gauged by the product of the human experience and expressions on the reception of varied stimulus from the environment that affect the emotive and cognitive impulses. In the novel *The Edible Woman*, Marian demonstrates the inter-personal nature of her personality as she states:

> The way I went about doing things may have been a little inconsistent with my true personality, but are the results that inconsistent?…Of course I'd always assumed through highschool and college that I was going to marry someone eventually and have children, everyone does…I've never been silly about marriage the way Ainsley is. She's against it on principle, and life isn't run by principles but by adjustments. As Peter says, you can't continue to run around indefinitely; people who aren't married get funny in middle age, embittered or addled or something. (Atwood, 2009, p.123)

Marian's personality, in the above lines, is a testimony to multiple matrixes influencing her personality. She reveals her changing personality traits in the above lines. Although she views marriage as a promising milestone in the near future, her environmental stimulus [Peter Wollander, her fiancé] influences her ideas on marriage. Marian has no choice but to adapt to the stimulus. In the light of normative social functioning, psychologists, Revelle and Condon (2015) infer that "to not change in response to a situation is maladaptive" (p. 70). Psychologist Magnavita (2004) also clarifies that personality should be viewed in the context of "intrapsychic…familial, sociopolitical, cultural, and ecological matrix" (p. 5). In *The Household Guide to Dying*, Delia is affected by breast cancer and undergoes therapy. Cancer is a new matrix added to her personality and she professes that "waiting here for hours, surrounded by strangers, attached to machines, holding a half eaten banana, represented a level of reality [she] could accept" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 126). Delia's intrapsychic matrix may be at loggerheads with the other matrices over the new biological development. Hence, the above lines suggest the struggle with her 'ego' to adjust to the new reality and accept the terminal illness as a part of her personality. The 'intra-psychic conflict' could impact the

personality structure adversely too. Cockerham (2003) in his definition of personality, identifies the correlation between 'intra-psychic conflict' and its impact on personality. He defines personality as:

> A system of psychic energy consisting of the id striving for pleasure in order to satisfy fundamental instincts and the superego striving for perfection while leaving the ego to balance the two drives with a sense of reality. Obviously the personality would be maladjusted should the ego fail and either the id or the superego become dominant. (Cockerham, 2003, pp. 68-69)

The failure to adapt to the environmental demands could categorize the individual as having a disordered personality. If the maladaptive response to the environmental stimulus recur persistently it could lead to a personality disorder.

In the purview of the Freudian 'psychic structure,' amongst the triadic structures, the 'super-ego' is the moral agency that inculcates social norms in the individual. This 'super-ego' dwells in the egoic-structure. 'Super-ego,' as the moral agency, is initially located outside the infant's 'ego.' Gender-theorist, Mahler (1967), for instance, affirms that the mother is the child's 'external ego' ("auxiliary ego") who mediates the social order into the child (p. 748). Eventually, the 'super-ego' grows within the 'ego' through the processes of 'socialization,' 'internalization,' 'assimilation,' and 'accommodation.' The common denominator and agent in these processes is the 'Significant Others.' Thus, one of the significant factors to analyze the 'psychic structure' rests in these social processes and the 'Significant Others.' 'Significant Others' are those "who are of sufficient importance in an individual's life to affect the individual's emotions, behavior, and sense of self" (Owens, 2007, p. 4328). The 'Significant Others' include family, school, and members of other social institutions who inculcate the social norms in the individual. Psychiatrist and psychologist, Sullivan (1940) coined the term "Significant Other" and used it in the context of 'socialization.' In Lacanian terminology a 'Significant Other' is the "Other with a capital O" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 436). This 'Other with a capital O' is the locus of the "speech's deployment" i.e., they play a crucial role in the infant's initiation into 'language' and eventually into the 'Symbolic Order' (Lacan,

1966b, p. 525). In *The Edible Woman,* the character Marian presumes, "their [her parents] approving eyes said, she was turning out all right after all" (Atwood, 2009, p. 213). These lines reveal the importance of Marian's parents in her life as 'Significant Others.' The woman resorts to 'socialization,' 'internalization,' 'accommodation,' or 'assimilation' out of the fear of losing her 'Significant Others.' Freud (2001d), in the work "Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety (1926 [1925])" establishes that "loss of love from the object becomes…determinant of anxiety" (p.170). For a 'relational' female, the fear of losing 'Significant Others' forces her to submit to the social norms. In *The Golden Notebook*, the character Anna explicitly expresses her fear of loss of the 'Significant Other.' She claims, "He made love to me, out of fear. Fear of being alone…Anna who was afraid responded; we were two frightened creatures, loving through terror" (Lessing, 1962, p. 493). This demonstrates that the 'relational' female consistently attempts to conform to norms from the fear of loss of 'Significant Others.' The failure to conform to the 'Symbolic Order' could cost the woman rejection or punishment from 'Significant Others.' Thus, her response depends on her degree of deviance. When the character Ainsley expresses her desire to have a child, Marian instantly reacts asking, "You mean you're going to get married?"(Atwood, 2009, p. 41). For this, Ainsley responds, "I knew you'd say that...No, I'm not going to get married" (Atwood, 2009, p. 41). In this case, the character Marian has assimilated and accommodated the idea that a woman can bear a child only after marriage; but Ainsley does not seem to have assimilated this norm. While the former may be lauded by the 'Significant Others,' the latter may be punished for deviance.

Social psychologist, Fromm (1973) asserts that family is the "psychological agency of the society" (p. 152). For the 'relational' and 'interpersonal' female, family consequently becomes a priority. Lacanian psychoanalysis asserts that, the infants' 'socialization' process begins with his/her entry into the 'Symbolic Order' (Lacan, 1966b, p. 525). 'Socialization' is a process by which the female "learns and internalizes the rules and patterns of behavior of her/his culture, particularly in childhood but continuing through adulthood" (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 502). The process is carried out by various social

agencies that could be "primary" (family) or "secondary" (school, workplace, recreational organizations, cultural communities and the like) (Lahire, 2017, pp. 2-3). In the past, sociologists such as Weber and Durkheim extensively studied 'socialization' process. Weber's notion of 'socialization' rests on the ethical evaluation of human behavior (Weber & Fishchoff, 1963). Durkheim's study, which focuses on family and school, postulates that education is "a methodical socialization of the younger generation" (1922, p. 3). In the novel *The Edible Woman,* the character Clara questions, "I don't see how anyone can love their children till they start to be human beings." (Atwood, 2009, p. 33). Clara's 'socialization' has trained her to develop strong maternal instinct towards her new-born infants. However, she naturally fails to resonate the same maternal feelings towards her children. Every social organization that the woman relates to trains her to follow certain rules and the process of training could be termed as 'socialization.' 'Socialization' can be a three-fold process which ends in the production of an internal level of consciousness (Asmolov, 1984, pp. 32-33). 'Socialization' is deemed as complete when there is a transfer of norms from "the external into the internal" (Asmolov, 1984, pp. 32-33). The character Marian depicts an instance of 'socialization' as she states, "in the high heels expected by the office I have to go down sideways" (Atwood, 2009, p. 5). Marian's training has taught her to don high heels to office. This could demonstrate an internally formed conscience as a result of 'socialization.' Another social process that impacts the female psychosexual development is 'internalization.' 'Internalization' is a learning mechanism that the individual adopts while interacting with the societal forces/'Significant Others.' In *Americanah,* Ifemelu provides an instance of 'internalization' process of the Americans, in general, as she states, "They were conditioned to fill silences" (Adichie, 2013, p. 4). Ifemelu notices that it is an American trait to fill silences with words and this trait could be established as a result of social learning. According to psychologist, Asmolov (1984) it is "the mechanism for assimilating socio-historical experience" (p. 33). In the novel, *The Edible Woman*, Atwood uses the analog "cage" to describe the after-math of 'internalization' process in woman. The character Duncan, states, "all caged animals get that way when they're

caged…and even if you set the animals free after they go like that they'll just run around in the same pattern" (Atwood, 2009, p. 115). Duncan, in these lines, refers to the 'internalization' of the social norms by a minority group based on the dictates of the 'dominant order.' Ifemelu, the character in *Americanah*, portrays her internalized state as she states, "Perhaps she was being too American about it" (Adichie, 2013, p. 406). In this context, Ifemelu displays her newly internalized norm based on her life in America. Consequently, she hesitates to discuss her personal life to Aunt Onenu, her employee in Africa.

Other than 'socialization' and 'internalization,' 'assimilation' and 'accommodation' are the two other social processes that inculcate moral values in the woman. Behavioral psychologist, Piaget (1970) explains these two processes as components of the bigger process namely, "adaptation" (p. 708). 'Assimilation' is the "integration of external elements into evolving or completed structures…assimilation is necessary in that it assures the continuity of structures and the integration of new elements to these structures" (Piaget, 1970, pp. 706-707). 'Accommodation' is "any modification of an assimilatory scheme or structure by the elements it assimilates" (Piaget, 1970, p. 708). In *Americanah,* Ifemelu notices that "There were codes Ginika knew, ways of being that she had mastered" (Adichie, 2013, p. 125). The character Ginika exhibits an 'assimilation' of American cultural norms into an African 'body.' 'Assimilation,' is necessary to ensure a sense of "continuity" in the person's psychological structure (Block, 1982, p. 282). 'Assimilation' is followed by 'accommodation.' Social science researchers, Zolberg and Woon (1999) assert that these social processes that integrate the external structures within the 'psyche' could result in boundary-blurring in the 'female psyche.' Boundary-blurring implies that, "the clarity of the social distinction involved has become clouded, and individuals' location with respect to the boundary may appear indeterminate" (Alba & Nee, 2007, p.195). Ifemelu, in the novel *Americanah*, demonstrates an example of boundary-blurring after assimilating and accommodating into the American culture. She "had not noticed and it piqued her. This was what a true Lagosian should have noticed: the generator house, the generator size" (Adichie, 2013, p. 393). Ifemelu understands her

degree of 'assimilations' into the American culture only on her return to Lagos. She shows clear signs of a boundary-blurring.

"Conflict" is a significant concept in sociology and psychology. In sociology, 'conflict' is an 'interpersonal' act; it ensues between two or more people at the conscious level. However, in psychology, 'conflict' breaks out within the 'unconscious,' thus it is commonly referred to as an 'intra-psychic conflict.' 'Intra-psychic conflict' is "the inferred unconscious conflict between a patient's wishes, defenses, and self punitive trends" (Smith, 2003, p. 50). 'Conflict' has been discussed by various psychoanalysts such as Freud, Brenner in *The Mind in Conflict* (1982) and "Conflict, Compromise Formation, and Structural Theory" (2002); Kris in "The Conflicts of Ambivalence" (1984) and "Resistance in Convergent and in Divergent Conflicts" (1985), as well as by relational psychoanalysts such as Bromberg, Mitchell, Greenberg and Cooper. A 'conflict,' therefore, is constituted of the individual's wishes or desires (which are located in the 'id'), his/her defenses (which are located in the 'ego'); and the self-punitive trends or punishments (which are located in the 'super-ego'). The 'ego' emerges into a 'conflict' with the 'id' "in the service of the super-ego and of reality" (Freud, 2001f, p.150). The character Maya, in *Maya's Notebook,* displays her 'intra-psychic conflict' as she struggles through her drug-addiction. She confesses, "I felt trapped, and I could no longer keep kidding myself about addiction; I depended on alcohol, pills, marijuana, cocaine, and other drugs to get through the day" (Allende, 2013, p. 193). Maya's desires rest in pleasurable activities such as drug-abuse. However, this pleasurable act was in 'conflict' with her social norms. Thus, a Freudian psychoanalytical approach proffers that her 'id,' 'ego,' and 'super-ego' seem to be in a state of 'conflict.' In a typical instance of the 'intra-psychic conflict,' the 'ego,' which is under the influence of 'super-ego' mediates with the 'id' and strives to resolve the 'conflict' through psychic 'repression' of the 'id' desires. The conflict-theorist, Brenner (2002) terms this balancing act of 'ego' as "compromise formation" (p. 405). Thus, "conflict and compromise formation characterize all of mental life" and they are "ubiquitous and normal, not exceptional and pathological" (Brenner, 2002, p. 405).

'Intra-psychic conflict' is closely related to egoic-defenses and psychic 'repression' (Freud, 2001u, pp. 163-164). An 'object-relational' perspective reckons that the woman forms her defenses due to the "relational experiences and its interaction with the caretakers" and thus the "id becomes patterned and constructed" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 50). Women achieve this end through the social processes such as 'internalization,' 'socialization,' 'assimilation,' and 'accommodation' inculcated by the 'Significant Others.' For women, their 'intra-psychic conflicts' are plenty and relentless due to the relational nature of their 'identity' and 'self.' 'Conflict' between the 'id' and the 'ego' can be traced abundantly in the novels and these 'conflicts' also lead to various defense mechanisms and psychic 'repressions' in women. In the purview of 'repressions,' theorists affirm that the 'id' desires "may be temporarily compressed, delayed, disguised, or otherwise deflected from their immediate and logical goal, they are not destroyed" (Dollard et al., 1939, pp. 1-2). When the character Mira, from *The Binding Vine*, seems disconcerted as she states, "Mother, I am now your shadow" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 26), she seems to be undergoing a severe 'intra-psychic conflict' accompanied by psychic 'repressions.' Her 'Symbolic Order' has overpowered her defenses as well as her 'id' desires and she seems to have become a 'doppelgänger' or 'double' of her mother. This could also indicate that 'conflict' is the result of "internalized relational patterning" (Smith, 2003, p. 89). On the other hand, Ifemelu in the novel *Americanah,* defends her psychic-conflict due to racial inferiority with a defense mechanism. She affirms that, "whiteness is the thing to aspire to…many minorities have a conflicted longing for WASP whiteness or, more accurately, for the privileges of WASP whiteness" (Adichie, 2013, p. 205). This could be an example of 'idealization,' which involves a, "direct manifestation of a primitive, protective fantasy structure in which there is no real regard for the ideal object, but a simple need for it as a protection against a surrounding world of dangerous objects" (Kernberg, 2004, p. 30). The character Ifemelu is an African native who suffers racial victimization. Thus, she portrays devotion towards the 'White' community and a desire to be like the 'Other' as is seen from the above lines.

Psychic-conflict and 'neurotic' ailments have a strong connection. The seminal text on 'hysteria' by Breuer and Freud (2001), highlights that the root cause of the 'neurotic' condition, 'hysteria' "is always conflict" (p. 154). Further, Freud (2001d) adds, that there exists "an intimate connection between social forms of defense and particular illnesses, as for instance between repression and hysteria" (p. 164). When the displeasure associated with 'repression' of pleasurable gratification is beyond a tolerable limit, it could induce women into pathological conditions such as "anxiety and/or depressive affect" (Brenner, 2002, p. 404). This research exhibits various instances that could trace correlations between 'intra-psychic conflict' and the 'neurotic' ailments in women. Delia, the character in *The Household Guide to Dying*, is undergoing an intense 'intra-psychic conflict' between her desire to nurture her family and her inability to do so, due to her malignant cancer. In due course, it could be observed that she develops an 'obsession' and 'compulsion' with making lists and cleaning. In this regard, she states, "Lists were not essential to my life…But this particular morning's list was not for me, and I'd written it late the night before" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 7). Delia could be displacing her inability to nurture into an obsessive and compulsive act. In *The Golden Notebook,* the character Anna also seems to be battling an 'intra-psychic conflict.' Her battle is between the norms of the androcentric society and her desire for liberation. Her battle rests in her struggle to balance her varied roles. This conflict could have led to Anna's disorder in behavior. In one instance, "Anna's voice continued calm and detached. She listened to it" (Lessing, 1962, p. 451); in the next instance, "Anna had begun to cry. She sat crying, watching herself cry" (Lessing, 1962, p. 452). Not long after her emotional meltdown:

> Anna's voice cracked again. She was thinking: Good Lord, if I were sitting here watching myself I'd feel quite sick at all this sentimentality. Anna laughed. The laughter was over-loud and uncontrolled. (Lessing, 1962, p. 453)

In these lines, it could be observed that Anna's emotional response is temporary and contradictory. It could be seen that Anna has developed an 'intra-psychic conflict' that compartmentalizes her 'real self' into multiple contradictory selves. Eventually she develops a form of 'dissociation' too. Fenichel (1946) labels such 'conflicts' as 'neurotic

conflict.' "Neurotic conflict" germinates "between a tendency striving for discharge and another tendency that tries to prevent this discharge... *the neurotic conflict takes place between drives, that is, the id and the ego*" (p. 115, *author's emphasis*). Delia's and Anna's 'conflict' could be a 'neurotic' one. Delia may be aware that her 'obsession' and 'compulsion' behavior is not normal. Similarly, Anna also understands that her behavior is disordered. Additionally, they also seem to understand that their behavior is a displaced response to an irresolvable 'psychic-conflict.' In this context, Foucault's observation on people's behavior is noteworthy, where he states that people often "know what they do; frequently they know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does" (Foucault & Howard, 2001, p.187). Similarly, a woman, who is caught up in the web of 'intra-psychic conflicts,' fails to comprehend that her behavioral pattern, which is most often a displaced control, could soon turn into an uncontrollable force too. Relational psychoanalysts confirm that a "dissociated state" is an immediate 'neurotic' reverberation of 'intra-psychic conflict' (Bromberg, 1998, p.216). In this state, women suffer from "shifting and competing configurations composed of relations between the self and others, real and imagined" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p. 80). When the character Mira, in *The Binding Vine,* looks at her 'mirror' image and states, "Whose face is this I see in the mirror" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 126), she seems to be affected by 'dissociation' after the 'intra-psychic conflict.' She fails to recognize her "specular image" as the 'mirror' image is not her 'real self.' Therefore, 'intra-psychic conflicts' can affect the woman's psychological balance through constant 'repressions' and defence mechanisms.

2.3   UNDERSTANDING PSYCHIC DISORDERS

Psychic disorders are of two kinds - 'psychosis' and 'neurosis.' The inception of these disorders can be traced back to formation of frustration and 'anxiety,' which in turn are generated due to 'intra-psychic conflict.' A common factor in the onset of 'neurosis' and 'psychosis' is:

> A frustration, non-fulfillment, of one of those childhood wishes which are forever
> undefeated and which are so deeply rooted in our phylogenetically determined

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organization…it may proceed from the internal agency (in the super-ego) which

has taken over the representation of the demands of reality. (Freud, 2001f, p. 151)

A 'neurotic' condition, which is most often a result of 'neurotic conflict,' naturally harbors frustration and 'anxiety' tendencies. Frustration ensues as a result of the 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Frustration arises due to "the blocking of or preventing the success of attempts to obtain something desirable" (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 212). 'Anxiety' is a simultaneous condition that could trigger the onset of psychic disorders. For the socially conforming 'subject,' 'anxiety' becomes an indefinite condition (Freud, 2001f, p. 57). 'Anxiety' is defined as "a particular state of expecting the danger or preparing for it, even though it may be an unknown one" (Freud, 2001s, p. 6). The narcissistic split from the mother could be the earliest experience of 'anxiety' in an infant. Gender and race critic, Ahmed (2004) supports this argument and states that 'anxiety' evolves "in part from love (for the (m)other), as a love that can be taken away, as the taking away of that which secures the subject's relation to the world" (p. 67). A socially conforming woman, is likely to experience frustration and 'anxiety' perpetually. Anna, in the *The Golden Notebook*, exclaims "I couldn't think, because the man who was being so gentle was the same man who made me ill" (Lessing, 1962, p. 498). Anna, in these lines, refers to her partner, Saul Green. She could be both frustrated and anxious. Her frustration could be the inability to securely relate to her 'love-object,' Saul Green. Her 'anxiety' rests in the 'unconscious' fear of rejection, detachment, or even loneliness due to the loss of the same 'love-object.' Ahmed (2004) confirms that the 'anxiety' about "the possibility of loss becomes displaced onto objects of fear, which seem to present themselves from the outside as dangers…and as obstacles to the fulfillment of love itself" (p. 67). Anna's 'love-object' had also become her 'object' of fear. This 'anxiety' and frustrations seems to lead to a dissociated state and multiple realities which are revealed as she addresses herself in the third person as, "Anna, the frightened little animal" (Lessing, 1962, p. 513). In another instance she mentions, "I…tried to get back to myself by seeing Anna, a tiny unimportant figure in the ugly old flat…I was desperately ashamed, being locked in Anna's" (Lessing, 1962, p. 513). Anna's condition of 'dissociation,' in the

psychoanalytic sense, is a defense adopted by the frustrated and anxious 'ego' (Freud, 2001t, pp. 57-151). It is "a substitutive representations (which forces itself upon the ego)…[called as] the symptom" (Freud, 2001t, p. 150). Freud maintains that the formation of a symptom denotes "the presence of some pathological process" (Freud, 2001d, p. 87). 'Dissociation,' 'phobias,' 'regression,' and similar conditions are some pivotal defenses of the 'ego' or symptoms (Freud, 2001t, pp. 57-151). In states of emotional upheaval, such as 'anxiety,' the woman:

> Develops a personality disorder (displaces conflicts towards the external world), becomes neurotic (develops excessive ego defenses), develops a psychophysiologic disorder (tension is experienced within the body and eventually produces an organic pathology), becomes psychotic (the ego disintegrates with a loss of the ability to cope with reality). (Cockerham, 2003, p. 73)

Thus, 'intra-psychic conflicts,' adoption of defense mechanisms, or maladjustments to the social reality result in the formation of symptoms and consequently 'neurotic disorders.' The diagnosis of disorders rely on "how well the [personality] system can handle conflict, anxiety and emotional experience before becoming overloaded and symptomatic - called *ego-adaptive* capacity" (Magnavita, 2004, p. 8).

2.3.1 Understanding Dissociation as a Psychic Disorder

'Dissociation' is a form of psychic disorder that has drawn the interest of dynamic and cognitive psychologists since Freud. In "The Neuro-psychoses of Defense (1894)" Freud (2001l) describes the phenomenon of 'egoic-splitting' (pp. 49-50). Drawing on the same lines, 'dissociation' is believed to be a "structured separation of mental processes (e.g. thoughts, emotions, conation, memory and identity) that are ordinarily integrated" (Spiegal & Cardeña, 1991, p. 367). 'Dissociation' splits the 'body' and 'mind' as a defensive response to the 'intra-psychic conflicts.' In these conditions, the 'self' could result in multiplication of 'self' into 'real self' and 'false self.' 'Dissociation' is a 'neurotic disorder' that compartmentalizes and fragments the 'psyche.' It is also

characterized by a sense of 'depersonalization.' 'Multiple Personality Disorder' (MPD) (which is lately known as 'Dissociative Identity Disorder' [DID]), 'Dissociative Fugue,' and 'Dissociative Amnesia' (APA, 2013, pp. 291-292) are the types of 'dissociation.' Several instances from the select novels depict the women suffering from 'dissociation' in varied forms and patterns. The character Anna, in *The Golden Notebook*, metaphorically depicts her condition of 'dissociation' as she maintains four notebooks to record her varied life events. Justifying the act, Anna claims, "Obviously, because it's been necessary to split myself up" (Lessing, 1962, p. 521). These lines portray Anna's 'dissociation'; Anna is playing Janet's mother, Michael's mistress, Saul Green's mistress, a novelist, a communist party member, and other such roles. Although the roles are enacted on parallel platforms, they could be contradictory to one another. This contradictory nature may have instigated Anna to compartmentalize each role into different notebooks. Accordingly, the red notebook records her political life experiences specifically with the Communist Party. The black notebook discusses her African-life experience before and during the World War II. The yellow notebook contains the manuscript of her upcoming novel, "The Shadow of the Third," which is the story of a married man, Paul and his mistress, Ella. The blue notebook records her personal life experiences including her dreams, and memories. This compartmentalization of notebooks has encroached into her life too. Anna, who plays multiple roles in her life, foresees the confusion that lingers with the varied role diffusions. The character, Anna depicts signs of 'dissociation' within her 'psyche.' These 'dissociations' could be a response to the egoic-defenses or deficiency (Erdelyi, 1994, p. 10). Defenses emerge as a result of suppression or 'repression' and deficiencies emanate due to "hereditary factors, life stresses, traumas, or an interaction among them" (Erdelyi, 1994, p. 9).

'Dissociation' is the split between the 'body' and 'mind' or sometimes the split ensues within the 'psyche.' 'Dissociation' is described as the "compartmentalization of experience, identity, memory, perception and motor function" (Spiegal, 1994, p. ix). The significant features of 'dissociation' include "disruption of and/or discontinuity in the normal integration of consciousness, memory, identity or perception, body

representation, motor control, and behavior" (APA, 2013, p. 291). Feminist-theorist, Gilligan (2010), in this regard adds, "Girls… signal the onset of dissociation: the splitting of mind from body, thought from emotion and self from relationships, leading to a loss of voice and signs of psychological distress" (p. xii). Additionally, the compartmentalization in a dissociated state could lead to an 'unconscious' 'psychic fragmentation.' In the novel *The Binding* Vine, the character Urmi, begins to observe the character Shakutai, and notes that, "The woman's [Shakutai's] personality seems to change when we enter her room; she becomes confident, authoritative" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 61). Shakutai could be undergoing 'dissociation' of experience or of 'identity.' Urmi, in this context, compares Shakutai's behavior at the hospital and at her home. At the hospital, Shakutai seems traumatized and helpless on learning about her daughter, Kalpana's rape. But, Shakutai is a different person at her home. There seems to be a clear disconnect between the two personalities: Shakutai at the hospital, and Shakutai at her home. Shakutai also exhibits signs of compartmentalization of 'identity,' and consequently 'dissociation.'

'Dissociation' is also characterized by splitting off of personality into mini-personalities or clusters or even as alter-personalities. In a state of 'dissociation,' the 'self' burgeons into multiple 'selves' where "subselves lose cohesion and act in an independent or contradictory fashion" (Erdelyi, 1994, p. 16). The character Anna confesses that she "stood, in a dream, to one side and saw Anna sleeping, watching other personalities bend over to invade her…there was a personality apart from the Anna who lay asleep" (Lessing, 1962, p. 534). In these lines, Anna experiences a state of non-being or strangeness towards her own corporeal. She watches her 'self' develop into different and unfamiliar personalities. The 'real' Anna who could not express herself in the patriarchal society walks out of the 'socially acceptable' Anna and attempts to study her. However, the disconnect that is identified as seeping into her social roles is ephemeral. Once she reunites with the socially acceptable Anna's personality, she becomes the epitome of femininity for Michael, a doting mother to Janet, a dutiful guardian to Tommy, and a sincere friend to Molly. Psychiatrists and psychologists define this condition as 'dissociative depersonalization.' 'Depersonalization' is "a sense of detachment from the

self…a sense of physical fragmentation or separation from part of one's body and disturbances in affect" (Steinberg, 1994, p. 62). Studies have found that 'depersonalization' is the third most common concern among the psychiatric patients suffering from 'dissociation' and it is mostly preceded by 'anxiety' and 'depression' (Cattell, 1975, pp. 766-799). 'Depersonalization' in 'dissociation' is marked by a "curious state of non-being" (Fewtrell, 1986, p. 264). Anna, in *The Golden Notebook* could be suffering from symptoms of 'depersonalization' in 'dissociation' as could be seen evidently from her behavioral traits. Anna's condition of 'depersonalization' could have originated with her feelings of 'anxiety' regarding the loss of her 'Siginificant Other,' Saul Green. To vindicate this notion further, Anna confirms her feelings of 'depersonalization' in the lines:

> The walls seemed to bulge inwards… For a moment I stood in space, the walls gone, as if I stood above ruined buildings. I knew I had to get to the bed, so I walked carefully over the heaving floor towards it, and lay down. But I, Anna, was not there. Then I fell asleep…I could see Anna's body lying on the bed. (Lessing, 1962, pp. 523-524)

Like any other depersonalized woman, the character, Anna also feels "a sense of detachment from the self…a sense that one is observing the self from outside" (Steinberg, 1994, p. 62). Anna also shows symptoms of "a sense of physical fragmentation or separation from part of one's body" (Steinberg, 1994, p. 62). 'Dissociation' adversely affects the memory wherein the woman fails to establish a continuity between her past, present, and future experiences. This form of 'dissociation' is known as 'dissociative amnesia' (Steinberg, 1994, pp. 60-61). In the novel *The Binding Vine*, Urmi remarks, "Perhaps it is another time, or another day, I don't know. The days merge into one another. Vanaa is once again with me" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 13). The character Urmi could be seen as exhibiting signs of 'dissociative amnesia' (APA, 2013, p. 298). 'Amnesia' is an "absence from memory a specific or significant segment of time" (Steinberg, 1995, p. 65). She seems oblivious to the transition from one day to another. Additionally, she is also unmindful of the presence of the 'Significant Others' such as her

friend, Vanaa around her. She suffers from a partial loss of memory. Urmi suffered the trauma of her daughter, Anu's sudden demise. Studies have proven that unexpected death of a loved one could induce stress that could in turn result in development of psychiatric disorders in adults as well as children (Keyes et al., 2014, p. 864). The *DSM-V* identifies that 'dissociative amnesia' is of three types, including 'selective amnesia,' 'localized amnesia,' or 'generalized amnesia' (APA, 2013, p. 291). Urmi could be possibly suffering from one of the forms of 'amnesia.' The daughter's sudden departure could be the cause for Urmi's disconnect from her reality.

2.3.2   Examining Anxiety Disorder

'Anxiety' has been extensively discussed as a precursor to any 'neurotic' condition in Freudian psychoanalysis. 'Neurotic anxiety' is an 'anxiety' about an "unknown danger" (Freud, 2001d, p. 165). Theologist, Morris (1973) further explains that 'neurotic anxiety' consists of "a dread…and has its origin in undischarged libido" (pp.192-193). 'Anxiety' is closely correlated to the 'intra-psychic conflicts' and 'repression' mechanisms. It is triggered by any stressful or traumatic event. The term 'anxiety' is derived from the German word 'Angst' which means "dread" or "anguish" (Ritter, 1990, p. 52). The clinical psychologist, May affirms that the term 'anxiety' means "to narrow" or "to choke" (May, 1983, p. 11). 'Anxiety' can be of several degrees and several types. The *DSM-V* identifies 'anxiety' divisions as 'Separation Anxiety Disorder' (SAD), 'Generalized Anxiety Disorder' (GAD), 'selective mutism,' 'specific phobia,' 'social phobia' (also known as 'social anxiety disorder'), 'panic disorder,' and 'agoraphobia' (APA, 2013, pp.189-190). As revealed in this research, the female characters in the select novels could be seen as suffering from different forms and degrees of 'anxiety.' 'Anxiety' is a constant emotion in every individual and it could be constructive or destructive. 'Constructive anxiety,' as the name suggests, works positively on an individual by providing "a zest for living and stimulates energy" (Ritter, 1990, p. 52). But, 'destructive anxiety' could work otherwise. For the character Delia, her 'anxiety' was adversely affecting her normative functioning. She may be hinting at an

onset of a 'destructive anxiety.' She expresses her 'anxiety' over her looming death and states:

> My body would be starting on its gradual ascent into death. Or perhaps that was *descent*, since the process was more like the preparation for a landing, the pilot switching off instruments, shutting down systems, pulling back on the throttle, dimming then killing the cabin lights…I suspected that death would bring its own new smells, none of them welcome. (Adelaide, 2008, p. 127, *author's emphasis*)

This form of 'anxiety' engenders a "psychological panic or psychosomatic illness" (May, 1981, pp. 186-187). The 'destructive anxiety' could be triggered off due to various kinds of trauma. In Delia's case, the chronic and life-threatening illness, cancer was the root of this 'anxiety.' 'Anxiety' could be one of the responses of the terminally-ill cancer patients (Kolva, Rosenfeld, Pessin, Breitbart, & Brescia, 2011, p. 691). Cancer, heart diseases, paralysis, and similar diseases are categorized as "trauma relating to acute and chronic health conditions" (Carll, 2007, pp. xii-xiii). The trauma, in a cancer-stricken patient, seems "complex and heterogeneous" depending on the type of disease and the method of treatment (Else-Quest & Jackson, 2014, p. 165). One of the predominant trauma for patients suffering from advanced cancer is 'death-anxiety' (Engelmann et al., 2016). Living with the fear of dying could induce 'anxiety.' In a salient study on mothers with cancer, health psychologists Kayser and Sormanti (2002) have identified that living with cancer acts as "a significant stressor that raises the potential for numerous losses, including death, and can evoke an array of emotions ranging from anxiety to increased feelings of love and closeness" (p. 11). Delia agitatedly confesses to her mother, "I want to leave little parts of myself so they'll remember I was here, so they'll always know how much I loved them" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 232). Delia could be undergoing an 'acute anxiety' owing to her continued state of restlessness due to 'repression' of care-giving desires.

'Anxiety' is directly relational to 'intra-psychic conflict' and 'repression' mechanism. Psychiatrist, Hiltner (1963) in the chapter, "Some Theories of Anxiety: Psychiatric" recalls the Freudian notion of 'anxiety' and states that 'anxiety' is the "frustrated

excitation" that develops as a result of the 'repression' of the pleasurable desires (p. 49). Shakutai professes Sulu's anxiety-ridden state and observes that after marriage Sulu was "always frightened. What if he [Sulu's husband, Prabhakar] doesn't like this, what if he wants that, what if he is angry with me, what if he throws me out?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 195). In this case, Sulu manifests intense 'anxiety' over an unidentifiable cause. 'Anxiety' signals the presence of an unsolvable inner 'conflict' (Ritter, 1990, p. 53). Sulu could be subjected to relentless 'repressions' and 'intra-psychic conflict.' 'Anxiety' is "the tense anticipation of a threatening but vague event" or a sense of "uneasy suspense" (Rachman, 1998, pp. 2-3). For Sulu, the vagueness and suspense rested in her husband, Prabhakar's response over her behavior. Freud (2001d) describes 'anxiety' as a, "reaction to danger. It is obviated by the ego's doing something to avoid that situation or to withdraw from it…symptoms are created so as to avoid *danger-situation* whose presence has been signaled by the generation of anxiety" (pp. 128-129). 'Anxiety,' therefore, stems in the egoic-structure with 'repressions' and could result in formation of symptoms or pathological conditions. In the novel, *The Golden Notebook*, Anna divulges that "the fear, the terror, the anxiety were not inside me…but some force from outside which chose its moments to come and go" (Lessing, 1962, p. 531). Anna seems to exhibit signs of 'anxiety' over an uncertain reason. The characters, Sulu and Anna have their 'objects'of fear outside their egoic-structure and they are unidentifiable. These unidentifiable 'objects'could be the 'Significant Others' who impose the social norms which in turn enforce 'repressions.'

Two distinct forms of 'anxiety' that share several common features are 'acute anxiety' and 'GAD.' 'Anxiety' that precipitates due to trauma or a stressor is likely to engender several physiological dysfunctions too which further serves the diagnosis of the 'neurotic' ailment. In the novel *The Binding Vine*, the character Vanaa is:

> Holding the woman's body in a tight grip, as if she can stop the woman's cries by the sheer force of her hold. Suddenly the muscles on the woman's neck, which have been standing out like cords, seem to dissolve, the faces become smooth, the body goes limp. 'She's fainted.' (Deshpande, 1992, p. 56)

Here, the character, Shakutai has fainted. Shakutai, who has just been informed of her daughter's rape, could possibly be displaying symptoms of 'acute anxiety.' The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999) has singled out the symptoms of 'acute anxiety' and they include "trembling, restlessness and muscle tension; rapid heart rate; lightheadedness or dizziness, perspiration; cold hands/feet, shortness of breath" (p. 40). On that account, Shakutai feels restless, dizzy, and shortness of breath. If Shakutai's conditions prevail for a period of six months, it could lead to 'GAD.' In a 'GAD,' a woman exhibits "excessive anxiety and worry," an inability "to control the worry," as well as "restlessness or feeling keyed up or on the edge, being easily fatigued, difficulty concentrating or mind going blank, irritability, muscle tension, sleep disturbance" for a minimum span of six months (APA, 2013, p. 222). Further, studies prove that 'acute anxiety' is concurrent with "obsessive-compulsive disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder" (U.S.Department of Health and Human Services, 1999, p. 40). When 'anxiety' eventually transforms into trauma, it could simultaneously activate a 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' (PTSD) (APA, 2013, p. 280). A trauma is a "physical or psychological shock resulting from an injury or violent incident" (Statt, 1981, p. 133). The diagnostic differentiation prevails in the cause and duration of the symptoms/suffering. When the symptoms are predominantly due to a trauma and they prolong for about six months, Shakutai is likely to have developed a 'PTSD' (APA, 2013, pp. 271-272). The character, Shakutai seems to feel dreadful and traumatized of her daughter's rape and she also depicts the reminder of the traumatic events or episodes of "flashbacks" (APA, 2013, p. 275) which could possibly connote the presence of 'PTSD.'

One of the other forms of 'anxiety' that could be traced in the select novels is 'SAD.' Children and adolescents can also be affected by 'anxiety' wherein they develop an irrational fear over the loss of dear ones. Most often, children and adolescents, suffer from 'separation anxiety' when they are separated from their attachment figures such as mother, father, grandparents, or caretakers. Freud (2001d) defines 'separation anxiety' as the feeling of "missing someone who is loved and longed for" (p. 136). In *Maya's Notebook,* the character Maya confesses, "I have the year my Popo died tattooed on my

left wrist: 2005. In February we found out he was ill, in August we said good-bye, In September I turned sixteen and my family crumbled away" (Allende, 2013, p. 61). For the adolescent character Maya, her grandfather, Paul Ditson II, whom she dearly addressed as 'Popo' was the pivotal attachment figure. Maya could be suffering from a 'separation anxiety.' The *DSM-V* defines "separation anxiety" as being characterized by "developmentally inappropriate and excessive anxiety concerning separation from home or from those to whom the individual is attached" (APA, 2013, p. 190). Repeatedly, Maya seems to be drawing a causal relationship between the two life instances; they include her Popo's death and her behavioral transformation. The above lines reveal her unconditional love for her grandfather and the simultaneous 'anxiety' on his sudden demise. In this context, the character Maya seems to exhibit symptoms such as, "persistent and excessive distress when anticipating or experiencing separation from home or from major attachment figure…persistent and excessive fear of or reluctance about being alone or without major attachment figures at home or in some settings" (APA, 2013, pp.190-191). In Maya's case, 'anxiety' and worry, along with the behavioral transformations, persisted between the ages of sixteen and nineteen. In these years, she had changed from being a dutiful child into becoming a drug-addict and a drug-peddlar for the drug-mafia, Brandon Leenon. Since the records prove that her fear has lasted beyond six months and it has adversely affected her functioning in her school and personal set up, she could be a victim of 'SAD.'

Psychologists, Bowlby and Ainsworth have proposed the theory of attachment based on an exhaustive analysis of 'separation anxiety' in infants. Accordingly, attachment with the Mother (Mother-substitute) consummates the infant's need for belongingness and the consecutive personality development. This theory suggests that the child grows as mentally healthy when he/she experiences "a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with [his] mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find enjoyment and satisfaction" (Bowlby, 1969, pp. xxvii-xxviii). When Maya discloses that, "The last three years of my life…have been so explosive…If my Popo were still in this world I would not have become what I am" (Allende, 2013, p. 99) she reveals her attachment behavior

towards her grandfather that "is activated but cannot be shut off or terminated" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 19). Maya seems to have developed an "affectional bond" towards her grandfather that is preventing her from letting go of or terminating that attachment (Ainsworth, 1985, p. 799). An "affectional bond" is a "relatively long-lived tie in which the partner is important as a unique individual, interchangeable with none other, from whom inexplicable, involuntary separation would cause distress" (Ainsworth, 1985, p. 799). Maya's bond with her grandfather was irreplaceable by anyone. Invariably, in no time after the death of her attachment figure, Maya engages in substance-abuse. Maya confesses that she "depended on alcohol, pills, marijuana, cocaine, and other drugs to get through the day" (Allende, 2013, p. 193). There could be a correlation between Maya's 'separation anxiety' and her substance-abuse. Studies have proven that "Substance use disorders comorbid with anxiety disorders are common in the population," especially among adolescents (Wu et al., 2010, p. 177). Social researchers, Wu et al. (2010) further identify that girls who were suffering from 'agoraphobia,' 'separation anxiety,' and 'OCD,' showed significant associations with drug-abuse (p. 182). Thus, the character Maya's substance-abuse could be a co-morbid factor with her 'separation anxiety.'

'Separation anxiety' isn't restricted to adolescents alone. Attachment figures can be plenty across one's life span. Bowlby (1979), in this regard, highlights that although an attachment behavior "is most frequently and intensely displayed by infants and young children, it continues to be manifested throughout life, especially when distressed, ill, or afraid" (p. 129). Thus, adults can also suffer from a 'separation anxiety' when they experience death/loss/separation from a 'Significant Other.' Like Maya, the character Urmi in *The Binding Vine* too suffers from a 'separation anxiety.' Urmi confesses that "This is one battle. I have to win if I am to go on living. And yet my victory will carry with it taint of betrayal. To forget is to betray" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 21). Here, Urmi seems to refer to the battle of separation from her daughter, Anu. Additionally, it could also refer to Urmi's various attachment figures across her childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. She suffered from pangs of parental separation in her childhood, and then experienced 'separation anxiety' with the death of her grandfather during her

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adolescence. In adulthood, her daughter's unforeseen death again induces a sense of loss and separation. All these individuals were her predominant attachment figures. Like the character Maya, Urmi's attachment behavior is also "activated but cannot be shut off or terminated" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 19). The lines, "Once again I can feel the softness of her body in my arms, the heaviness of her head flopping over my shoulder; I can feel her toes" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 21) seem to support this argument. Urmi's pangs of separation are aggravated due to Anu's sudden demise and she seems to develop a sensory 'hallucinations' about the attachment figure.

2.3.3 Analyzing Trauma-and-Stressor-Related Disorders

Traumatic experiences can have a profound effect on human 'psyche.' Trauma can be defined as:

> Any event which inflicts physical damage on the body or severe shock on the mind or both. Being the victim of a serious car accident, assault, rape, or false prosecution is likely to produce shock in an individual with lasting mental consequences just as being injured in some way inflicts damage to the body. (Matsumoto, 2009, p. 552)

Thus, trauma can be broadly categorized into physiological (such as cancer, heart disease, and other physical ailments) or psychological (such as rape, sexual assault, incest, workplace violence, and so on). These traumatic events could lead to the development of "Trauma-and-Stressor-Related Disorders." Some of the 'trauma-and-stressor-related disorders' include 'PTSD,' 'Acute Stress Disorder' (ASD), 'adjustment disorder,' and 'reactive attachment disorder' (APA, 2013, p. 265). Sexual assault, rape (inside and outside marriage), childhood sexual abuse, incest, rape as a "secondary stressor," and death of a loved one, are some of the traumas that could be traced in the select novels that the female characters succumb to.

In a gynocentric sense, sexual assault or rape is a violation of woman's bodily right. Mira, the character in *The Binding Vine* composes, "Fearing the coming/ Of the dark-clouded, engulfing night?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 56). This poem seems to disclose Mira's

experience of rape within her marriage. Night and darkness bring with it, a fear of somebody violating her bodily right. She seems helpless to retaliate or stop this violation. "Rape within marriage or dating relationships" qualifies to be one of the types of sexual violence (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002, p. 149). Further, Mira records in her diary that she underwent, "A strong, clear thread of an intense dislike of the sexual act with her husband, a physical repulsion from the man she married" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 63). These lines clearly indicate repulsion from the sexual act and consequently violence within marriage. Violence is any "actions that inflict, threaten, or cause injury. Actions may be corporal, written, or verbal. Injuries may be corporal, psychological, material, or social" (Jackman, 2002, p. 389). Accordingly, non-consensual sex is a form of violence on the woman's 'body' that could inflict psychological impairments on her. Studies have proven that "marital rape results in serious medical, emotional, and mental health consequences for its victims" (Bennice & Resick, 2003, p. 230). Psychiatrist, Dietrich (2007), in this regard, further substantiates that "violence against women and girls can have a wide range of adverse effects including…depression, anxiety disorder (including Posttraumatic Stress Disorder), substance-related disorders, dissociative disorders and somatoform disorders" (p. 266). If the duration of violence has prolonged beyond six months, Mira could possibly be undergoing a 'PTSD' owing to the continuous sexual violence she underwent in her marriage. To begin with, the direct experience of a traumatic event (physical assault) becomes a qualifier for Mira's 'trauma-and stressor-related disorder.' Further, 'PTSD' involves symptoms such as:

> Difficulties in managing affective arousal (e.g., not able to calm oneself down, engaging in self harm or high risk behaviors in order to feel better), memory disturbances and dissociation, impaired identity or sense of self, impaired relationships with others, somatic symptoms (physical symptoms with no known medical cause), and altered belief system (e.g., intense despair and hopelessness) (Dietrich, 2007, pp. 267-268).

Mira, in a poem exclaims, "Huddled in my cocoon, a somnolent silkworm, Will I emerge a beauteous being? Or will I, suffocating, cease to exist" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 65). In her

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writings she proffers that the "utter futility of living overwhelms me" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 203). These lines seem to prove Mira's feelings of hopelessness, dissociation, impaired sense of 'self,' and intense despair. Social scientists, Krug et al. (2002) suggest that higher levels of "patriarchal relationship or family environment" increase the chances of men committing rape (p. 159). Mira states, "I have learnt to say 'no' at last, but it makes no difference, no difference at all" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 67). These lines seem to connote that while in the marriage, Mira may have undergone repeated instances of sexual violence which has culminated in a state of "intense dislike" and "repulsion" from the husband (Deshpande, 1992, p. 63). The complexity of rape within marriage is preposterous. Critics affirm that despite the severity of the issue "the literature in this area remains sparse" (Bennice & Resick, 2003, p. 228). The predominant prejudice rests in the idea that marriage entitles consent for sexual relations between the husband and wife. Feminist activist, Russell (1990), who probes into marital rape, in America, reinstates this idea that, in cases of marital rape, the husband is not guilty of the rape upon his lawful wife "for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband, which she cannot retract" (p. 17). Studies demonstrate that a rape survivor who discloses the sexual assault is silenced in various ways. Silencing is carried out by expressing, "negative reactions from friends and family" which reinforces "feelings of self-blame" (Ahrens, 2006, p. 263). Mira confesses that she could only "tremble, fearing the coming, of the dark-clouded, engulfing night?" (Deshpande,1992, p. 56). These factors may have heightened her chances of developing a 'trauma-and-stressor related disorder.'

In the novel *Maya's Notebook*, the character Azucena Corrales suffers repeated rape from her father until he impregnates her. It can be categorized as childhood sexual abuse or even as incest. Feminist psychologist, Carll (2007) confirms that incest and sexual abuse are trauma (p. xiii). Incest is "sexual relations between persons to whom marriage is prohibited by custom or law because of their close kinship" (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010, p. 1023). The character Maya notes that "Azucena (Corrales) was a good student, like her sister, but she suddenly turned shy and started avoiding people" (Allende, 2013, p. 146).

The repeated acts of incest may have lead to the development of a 'trauma-and-stressor related disorder' in Azucena. Research shows ample evidences of a close correlation between incest victims and the prevalence of 'PTSD' (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010, p. 1023). Azucena's trauma could induce her in a state of 'PTSD.' With the limited textual resources, it is clear that Azucena was an adolescent who performed well in her academics. However, her academic performance plummets suddenly and she also suffers from a hemorrhage, together with pregnancy. She could have been abused by her father since her childhood. A child is said to be sexually abused when "a perpetrator touches a child sexually or has the child touch him or her sexually, and may include oral-genital contact and penetration…physical contact frequently begins in the form of 'games,' such as tickling the child, progresses to sexual contact" (Dietrich, 2007, p. 264). When the perpetrator is a member of the family, it is a case of incest. Russell (1986) validates that approximately one out of twenty households by 1986 in America had documented father-daughter incestuous activity, and the activity ranged from being minimal to brutal or aggressive. The scenario and perspective remains unchanged even after two decades. Several studies across the globe on incest cases by biological fathers and/or stepfathers' ratified that father (biological and/or stepfathers) as the perpetrators are a cause for concern for the girl child (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010; Greenberg, Firestone, Nunes, Bradford, & Curry, 2005; Langevin & Watson, 1991). In Azucena's case, the incestuous rape by her father could have forced her in a state of "relational trauma" (Sheinberg & Fraenkel, 2001, p. 197). In a 'relational trauma' the incestuous victim faces a, "significant loss of trust in others and increased anger, hurt, and confusion about their family relationships, changes in beliefs about the safety of close relationships in general, and negative views of the self in relation to others" (Sheinberg & Fraenkel, 2001, p. 197). This could be the reason for Azucena's bad academic performance and sudden shy behavior. An incestuous rape involves breach of trust from a 'Significant Other' and a host of other feelings. The victim's voice is silenced too. Having a voice implies, "having the ability, the means, and the right to express oneself, one's mind, and one's will" (Reinharz, 1994, p. 180). In these conditions, social withdrawal could be an obvious response. Ample evidences

prove that incest victims could exhibit symptoms of grief and profound passive behavior (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010, p. 1025). Psychologists, German, Habenicht, and Futcher (1990) established that incest victims displayed a "personality profile of withdrawal, shame, guilt and aggression" (as cited in Ahmad & Nasir, 2010, p. 1025). These studies could explain why Azucena Corrales suddenly turned "shy and started avoiding people" (Allende, 2013, p. 146).

'PTSD,' which anticipates a trauma, is a debilitating experience for the woman. The event that induces 'PTSD' is usually "outside the range of usual human experience" (APA, 1987, p. 247). As much as the direct experience of rape can be a psychologically crippling experience for the victim, learning about her child's rape can be equally traumatizing to the mother, a "secondary traumatic stressor" at that (Figley & Kleber, 1995, p. 78). Research, in the recent past, has identified that "there has been relatively little primary research and supporting literature focused on the impact of sexual assault on these 'secondary victims'" (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2007). "Secondary traumatic stressor" is "the knowledge of a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other" (Figley & Kleber, 1995, p. 78). This traumatic stressor could lead to severe pathological adversities in the secondary victims, with 'PTSD' being one of them. *DSM-V* (APA, 2013) supports this idea through the diagnostic criteria stating 'PTSD' is the result of "directly experiencing the traumatic event(s) (OR) witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others, learning that the traumatic event occurred to a close family member or close friend" (p. 271). For the character Shakutai, in *The Binding Vine*, her trauma was induced on learning about her daughter, Kalpana's rape. In the following lines, Shakutai could be inferred as suffering from an 'acute anxiety' inflicted by the 'secondary traumatic stressor':

> She begins sobbing for the first time, a horribly agonized sobbing…after a while she falls asleep, her mouth open…suddenly she wakes up with a start…Shakutai clutches the child in a frantic grip. Her eyes roll about as if she is searching for something, then rest on my face. There is a desperate plea in them....Shakutai is hysterical; she pushes the child away from her so violently that she falls in a

frightened heap…her eyes keep moving to Sandhya-there is something fearful in

that look. (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 189-192)

These behavioral specifications implies that Shakutai could be suffering from a 'trauma-and-stressor-related disorder' because Shakutai exhibits dissociative and arousal symptoms such as "an altered sense of reality of one's surroundings or oneself…sleep disturbance (restless sleep), irritable behavior and angry outbursts (with little or no provocation), typically expressed as verbal or physical aggression towards people or objects, hypervigilance…exaggerated startle response" (APA, 2013, p. 281). But, is this condition an 'ASD' or 'PTSD' could be decided based on the duration of its symptoms. In this regard, Carll (2007) points that "Essentially they are a set of similar symptoms. However, ASD describes the experiencing of symptoms of up to a month's duration. If the symptom continues past one month, the diagnostic label of PTSD applies" (p. xiv). For Shakutai, the news of the trauma and the 'anxiety' about the possible social consequences of her daughter's rape is bothering her simultaneously. The lines, "She's [Kalpana] shamed us, we can never wipe off this blot...It's all her fault…she dressed up, she painted her lips and nails and so this happened to her" confirm this idea (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 147-148). Here, Shakutai's outrageous response could be a natural and obvious result of her 'socialization.' Rape, in the Indian context, is perceived as a consequence of a woman's disregard towards the feminine norms drawn by the patriarchal society. Studies, in the global context, have proven that the rape convicts justify their criminal act by blaming the victim (Scully & Marolla, 1993). Some of the popular justifications are "women as seductresses, women mean 'yes' when they say 'no,' most women eventually relax and enjoy it, nice girls don't get raped and guilty of a minor wrongdoing" (Scully & Marolla, 1993, p. 267). Therefore, even though Shakutai may understand that her daughter is the helpless victim, the fear of social forces coerces her to blame her daughter for being raped. Thus, Shakutai internalizes the blame and experiences feelings of "sense of devaluation and guilt" (White & Rollins, 1981, p. 105) or "devaluation and shame" (Silverman, 1978, p. 168) over the rape of her daughter. These forms of trauma induce

the condition of "depression, stress and debilitating anxiety" (Mather & Marsden, 2004, p. 206).

Another significant factor that could induce 'trauma-and-stressor-related disorder' is the loss of a loved one. Researchers, Keyes et al. (2014) further predict that an unexpected demise of a loved one "is a stressful life event for both children and adults that are associated with the development of psychiatric disorders" (p. 864). The *DSM-V* specifies that "violent or accidental" death of a family member or friend can trigger the onset of 'PTSD' or 'ASD' (APA, 2013, p. 271). The character Urmi, in *The Binding Vine* was devastated and traumatized with the sudden demise of her infant daughter Anu and she states, "I wake up to hear the soft snuffling sounds of her breathing by my side; I can smell her sweet baby flesh…I can feel the softness of her body in my arms…I can feel her toes, scrabbling at my midriff" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 21). In the above lines, Urmi evinces 'hallucinations' and dissociative symptoms. Urmi's 'hallucinations' to confirm Anu's existence prevails in different patterns. Urmi suffers from auditory and sensory 'hallucinations' as she hears her "soft snuffling sounds," and feels her "breathing by [her] side" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 21). The sudden death has intensified her 'anxiety' and grief. Sudden death is reckoned as "one of the more difficult forms of bereavement" (Keyes et al., 2014, p. 868). Urmi could be undergoing a trauma which could lead to either a 'PTSD' or an 'ASD' depending on the duration of prevalance of symptoms. Additionally, an unexpected death of a loved one could increase the likelihood of "onset of PTSD, panic disorder and depressive episodes at all stages of the life course" (Keyes et al., 2014, p. 869). The accidental death parts Urmi from Anu permanently. This separation could bring about an array of emotional responses such as "an altered sense of reality of one's surroundings or oneself…sleep disturbance (restless sleep), irritable behavior…hypervigilance…exaggerated startle response" which could lead to the development of 'ASD' or 'PTSD' (APA, 2013, p. 281). Urmi, in the above lines, portrays that death of a loved one can be traumatic with a high potential for 'trauma-and-stressor-related disorder.'

2.3.4 Understanding Depressive Disorder

'Depression' is a serious psychological disorder that affects the mental functioning in cases of prolonged prevalence. Trauma exposure can also lead to bouts of 'depression' in the individual. Therefore, the condition of 'depression' and 'PTSD' share a strong comorbidity (Alim et al., 2006). The National Comorbidity Survey (NCS) reveals that "48% of men and 49% of women with 'PTSD' also had a 'Major Depressive Episode' (MDE)" (as cited in Alim et al., 2006, p. 1631). The African-American woman, Ifemelu from *Americanah* seems to exhibit a depressive episode which is evident in the below lines:

> She woke up torpid each morning, slowed by sadness, frightened by the endless stretch of day that lay ahead…She was…shrouded in a soup of nothingness...Sometimes she forgot to eat and other times she waited until midnight, her roommates in their rooms, before heating up her food, and she left the dirty plates under her bed, until greenish mould fluffed up around the oily remnants of rice and beans. Often, in the middle of eating or reading, she would feel a crushing urge to cry and the tears would come, the sobs hurting her throat. She had turned off the ringer of her phone. She no longer went to class. Her days were stilled by silence and snow. (Adichie, 2013, p. 156)

These lines suggest that Ifemelu could be suffering from a variant of a 'depressive disorder.' Her behavior displays marked signs of "diminished interest or pleasure in all activities…fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day…feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt" (APA, 2013, p. 133). The *DSM-V* (2013) categorizes these symptoms as 'depression.' The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2017) declares that in 2016, "6.7 percent of adults aged 18 or older (16.2 million adults) had at least one MDE in the past year" in the United States (p.34). Studies have proven that women, specifically the African-American women outnumber men in the context of 'depression' (Holden, Hernandez, Wrenn, & Belton, 2016-17, p. 14). In the novel *Americanah*, Ifemelu is an African residing in America. African-American women are often identified as a group at a greater risk for developing 'depression' (Bailey, Patel,

Barker, Ali, & Jabeen, 2011; Dwight-Johnson, Sherbourne, Liao, & Wells, 2000; Holden et al., 2016-17; Willams et al., 2007). In the study, "Major Depressive Disorder in the African American Population," researchers, Bailey et al. (2011) have identified that stress and traumatic experiences are precursors to 'depression' in women. Ifemelu's trauma could have been due to her financial crisis owing to her ethnic origin. The immediate trigger, however, that induced her into 'depression' was the unwanted sexual experience. Studies revealed that lower socio-economic conditions such as, "the presence of financial problems, issues of unemployment or underemployment, discrimination, lack of education" could trigger the onset of 'depression' (Bailey et al., 2011, p. 549). Additionally "unwanted sexual experiences" are likely to trigger bouts of 'depression' (Alim et al., 2006, p. 1633). Ifemelu's feelings of sadness, guilt, and nothingness multiplied after the unwanted sexual encounter. Bailey et al. (2011) reinstate the findings of *DSM-V* (APA, 2013) and specify that in diagnosing African-American women with 'depression,' at least four of the following symptoms should be present and they include:

> Depressed or irritable mood throughout the day (often everyday), lack of pleasure in life activities, Significant (more than 5%) weight loss or gain over a month, sleep disruptions (increased or decreased sleeping), unusual, increased, agitated or decreased physical activity (generally everyday), daily fatigue or lack of energy, daily feelings of worthlessness or guilt, Inability to concentrate or make decisions, recurring thoughts of death or suicidal thoughts. (pp. 549-550)

Ifemelu exhibited symptoms such as a depressed mood for many days, disinterest in everyday life activities, excess fatigue, decreased physical activity, lack of a zest and the like. Thus, she could be suffering from or be on the verge of developing a variant of 'depressive disorder.'

2.3.5   Exploring Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder

'Obsessions' are "persistent thoughts, urges or images that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and unwanted" which cause "marked anxiety and distress" (APA, 2013, p. 237). 'Compulsions' are behaviors or mental acts

that are "aimed at preventing or reducing anxiety or distress, or preventing some dreaded event or situation" (APA, 2013, p. 237). When 'obsessions' lead to 'compulsions' and they affect the personality it is known as 'Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder' ('OCPD'). English historian and the "mad doctor," Arnold (1782), referred to 'obsessives' as exhibiting a "pathetic insanity" (p. 237). This was followed by the categorization of obsessives under "*manie sans delire or folie raisonnante* (which means 'monomania with reason')" (Prichard, 1837, p. 30). The modern definition of 'obsession' could be a derivative from the late-eighteenth century French psychologists, specifically Pinel, Esquirol, and Janet who originated the term "*folie de doute* ('doubting disease') to describe obsessive tendencies" (Cefalu, 2009, p. 45). "*Zwangsvorstellung*" is the German word for 'obsessions' popularized by Freud and he also went on to describe the term "obsessional neurosis" in the early decades of the twentieth century (Freud, 2001o, pp. 168-174). About 'obsessions,' Freud (2001o) states, "whenever a neurotic obsession emerges in the psychical sphere, it comes from repression" (p. 171). In *The Household Guide to Dying* Delia confirms:

> I'd started another list. I should have been concentrating on the real work, but I felt an irrational urgency about this. I would finish it then put it in one of the boxes I was preparing for the girls. Guests (needs separate list-obviously can't be done now); Invitations: suggest professional printers; Cake: refer to recipe …Musicians: string trio (students from college?). (Adelaide, 2008, pp. 35-36)

Delia may be performing the compulsive act of list-making after being obsessed by thoughts of nurturance and care-giving. Delia clearly understands that her list-making act is "irrational" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 35). She is also aware that she had "real work" to do yet, she finds the compulsive act extremely ritualistic and gratifying (Adelaide, 2008, p. 35). She even justifies her compulsive act of list-making by stating, "I had only been writing this sort of list for the last year or so, since it became clear that certain tasks would need to be delegated. Until things were *sorted out*" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 8). By "sort out" Delia refers to the uncontrollable, life threatening disease and her consequent absence in the family. Delia could be showing symptoms of an 'OCPD.' The significant

features of 'OCPD' are "a preoccupation with orderliness, perfectionism and mental and interpersonal control, at the expense of flexibility, openness and efficiency" (APA, 2013, p. 679). Delia qualifies the criterion-one specified for 'OCPD' in *DSM-V* which includes "to maintain a sense of control through painstaking attention to rules, trivial details, procedures, lists, schedules, or form to the extent that the major point of the activity is lost" (APA, 2013, p. 679). Delia's desire to control could be a mechanism to displace her loss of control over life due to her threatening disease. The thought of dying due to cancer could possibly induce obsessed thoughts of care-giving in Delia, which in turn transforms into compulsive acts such as, making lists for her family's smooth functioning. In the novel *The Binding Vine* the character Urmi observes Vanaa and states that Vanaa, "can't relax. The moment we're home, she begins harrying the children. 'Put those dirty shoes away, I don't want sand, for God's sake, all over the house. And have your baths and change before you come into the kitchen'" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 107). Vanaa's preoccupation with "orderliness, perfectionism and mental and interpersonal control, at the expense of flexibility, openness and efficiency" could suggest that she too suffers from an 'OCPD' (APA, 2013, p. 679). Vanaa's sense of order is derived from her husband, Harish's preferences. Vanaa who is aware of her 'obsessions' with perfection and orderliness responds that "it's a reaction" to her husband's desires (Deshpande, 1992, p. 107).

Literary critic, Cefalu (2009) highlights that the 'OCPD' is "ego-syntonic" which means that obsessive and compulsive acts are a response to the egoic-desires (p. 46). Here, "gratification" is a significant feature on realization of the desires (Cefalu, 2009, p. 46). The obsessed or compulsive victims are aware that their act is "ridiculous" and time consuming yet they "get(s) caught in a ritualistic loop" (p. 47). In *The Golden Notebook*, the character Anna understands that:

> She was spending her time in a curious way…she would sit on the floor of the big room, surrounded by half a dozen daily newspapers, a dozen weekly journals, reading them, slowly, over and over again. She was trying to fit things together…It seemed as if her mind had become an area of differing balances, she

was balancing facts, events, against each other. So that she was spending hours sitting on the floor, all her attention focused on selected fragments of print. Soon a new activity began. She carefully cut out the patches of print from newspapers and journals and stuck them on the walls with drawing-pins. The white walls of the big room were covered all over with large and small cuttings from papers. She walked carefully around the walls, looking at the statements pinned there. When she ran out of drawing-pins, she told herself it was stupid to go on with a meaningless occupation; yet she put on a coat, went down to the street, and bought two boxes of drawing-pins and methodically attached the still unanchored fragments of print to the walls. But the newspapers piled up, landing on her door-mat every morning in a great thick pack of print, and every morning she sat, fighting to order this new supply of material-and going out to buy more drawing-pins. (Lessing, 1962, pp. 563-564)

Anna develops a compulsive act of saving bits of newspaper prints. On similar lines, American writer Welinsky (1999) in her memoir *Passing for Normal* depicts her 'obsession' with accumulating every bit of paper she receives. Anna's obsessive thought to "make sense out of bits of print" and the desire to maintain "order" (Lessing, 1962, pp. 563-565) drives her into this compulsive act. Her compulsive act of hoarding newspaper clips seems to consume her entire day. Thus, Anna could be suffering from either an 'OCPD' which is typically "ego-syntonic" (Cefalu, 2009, p. 46) or a 'Hoarding disorder' (APA, 2013, p. 681). *DSM-V* (2013) highlights that 'OCPD' can share a differential diagnosis with 'Hoarding disorder.' An individual is said to be suffering from a 'hoarding disorder' when "hoarding is extreme (e.g. accumulated stacks of worthless objects present a fire hazard and make it difficult for others to walk through the house)" (APA, 2013, p. 681). Anna soon:

Found herself standing in the middle of the kitchen, her hands full of bits of newspaper and drawing-pins…but there's no sensible reason why I should be shocked by starting on a second room, when I wasn't shocked by covering the

whole of the first room-or at least, not shocked enough to stop.(Lessing, 1962, p. 566)

These lines suggest that Anna could be suffering from a 'hoarding disorder' too. Studies support that 'obsessions' and 'compulsions' have become a rampant 'neurotic' phenomena among the masses since the twentieth century (Fleissner, 2007; Pato & Zohar, 2001; Tallis, 1995). In both the cases, one understands that the loss of control is the predominant factor for the displaced control mechanism. Fleissner (2007) supports this argument and asserts that this "hyperbolic quest for control" shows "just how *out of control* they really are" (pp. 111-112).

2.3.6   Analyzing Eating Disorder

'Eating disorder' is one of the forms of psychic disorders. *DSM-V* classifies 'eating disorders' into "pica, rumination disorder, avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating disorder" (APA, 2013, p. 329). Among these, 'anorexia nervosa' is a condition characterized by restricted eating and could be life threatening if it persists longer. An individual is said to be diagnosed of an 'anorexia nervosa' when he/she has "persistent energy intake restriction; intense fear of gaining weight, or of becoming fat; or persistent behavior that interferes with weight gain; and a disturbance in self perceived weight or shape" (APA, 2013, p. 339). In the novel *The Edible Woman,* while eating a beef-steak at a restaurant, the character Marian notices, "part of a real cow that once moved and ate and was killed, knocked in the head as it stood in a queue like someone waiting for a streetcar" (Atwood, 2009, p. 185) and she doesn't "seem to be hungry any more" (Atwood, 2009, p. 186). Her restricted energy intake could be suggestive of her developing 'anorexia nervosa.' 'Anorexia nervosa' or 'bulimia nervosa' has been diagnosed as a "female" disorder by various feminist critics and psychologists. Gender critic, Wolf (2002) mentions that about "90 to 95 percent of anorexics and bulimics are women" (p. 181). The instances of women suffering from 'eating disorders' are rampant since the twentieth century. Bordo (1992), a popular feminist philosopher, known for her works in "body studies" affirms that:

The continuum between female disorder and "normal" feminine practice is sharply revealed through a close reading of those disorders to which women have been particularly vulnerable. These, of course, have varied historically: neurasthenia and hysteria in the second half of the nineteenth century; agoraphobia and, most dramatically, anorexia nervosa and bulimia in the second half of the twentieth century. (p. 168)

The pandemic presence of 'anorexia nervosa' in modern women could be intended to maintain an ideal body-weight. No matter how the character Marian persuades her 'body' to eat, it seems too stubborn to budge in to her demands. Marian confesses that, "the loaded tables made her feel gluttonous: all that abundance, all those meringues and icings and glazes, those coagulations of fats and sweets, that proliferation of rich glossy food" (Atwood, 2009, p. 203). Marian has begun associating food in a negative light. Her hunger is curtailed and food does not satiate her anymore. She associates food with adjectives such as "gluttonous" and "coagulations" (Atwood, 2009, p. 203). Orbach (2005), an eminent British psychotherapist, defines 'Anorexia' as a condition of the individuals who are "invested in not eating and have become scared of food and what it can do to them" (p. xi). On analyzing the fat women in the office, Marian is phobic of developing an "identical" 'body' and becoming like "one of them" (Atwood, 2009, p. 206). She does not want to get enmeshed in the "Sargasso-sea of femininity" (Atwood, 2009, p. 206). In the work *"You Look Delicious" Food, Eating and Hunger in Margaret Atwood's Novels*, researcher Lahikainen (2007) documents her analysis and states, "In Anorexia the true self is filled with hatred, which it directs to her body. In women this split between mind and body is often a usual and culturally approved of thing" (p. 64). Marian's aversion to food could be a displaced control of an 'unconscious' 'intra-psychic conflict.' Her 'unconscious' 'conflict' is evident when Marian states that she, "never knew what she wanted to have. But Peter could make up their minds right away" (Atwood, 2009, p. 180). Here, Marian depicts self-hatred which she directs onto her 'body' by starving. Additionally, her 'mind' and 'body' seem to be 'split' as she turns

amnesic of her food preferences. Her 'mind' too has been consumed and what remains is "their mind" (Atwood, 2009, p. 180).

The psychic dilemma and psychic disorders could be interpreted as prevalent in most of the female characters; the character Urmi from *The Binding Vine* seems to be suffering from 'dissociative amnesia,' Shakutai could be seen as suffering from 'PTSD' or 'ASD,' Anna from *The Golden Notebook* and Delia from *The Household Guide to Dying* could be interpreted as undergoing an 'OCPD,' Marian McAlpin from *The Edible Woman* could be suffering from an 'anorexia nervosa,' Adichie's character Ifemelu could possibly be suffering from 'depression' related disorder, Maya from *Maya's Notebook* could be traced as suffering from 'SAD.' The annals of studies on 'insanity' infer that women have been pivotal subjects of study since the earliest era. The sphere of 'mental illness' for women has travelled a long way from 'hysteria' to the other 'mental illnesses' such as 'anxiety disorder,' 'depressive disorder,' 'OCPD,' 'eating disorder,' 'trauma-and-stressor-related disorders,' and so on. Ussher (2011), in this regard, claims:

> Women outnumber men in diagnoses of madness, from the 'hysteria' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to 'neurotic' and mood disorders in the twentieth and twenty-first…if we examine the roots of this distress, in the context of women's lives, it can be conceptualized as a reasonable response, not a reaction of pathology within. (pp.1-2)

Psychological suffering, which arises from an 'intra-psychic conflict,' seem to exist among men, women, LGBT equally. However, this study has inferred that disorders which are determined based on the tenets of deviance-conformity, and normality-abnormality are diagnosed more among women than men. These categorizations of the normal and abnormal behavior poses a "great pressure on the unconscious mind to produce only legitimate symptoms" (Shorter, 1992, p. x). When a woman disregards the social norms, she is regarded as abnormal or mentally disordered. These inferences further affirm the predominant presence of various forms of psychic disorders in women based on the tenets of *DSM-V* (APA, 2013). Drawing on these lines, the feminist psychologist Caplan's question "should we be calling [women] the mentally ill…or

society's wounded? (1995, p. 6) becomes relevant for this research. It could be further inferred that psychic disorders rest on the "social norms," "culturally sanctioned symptoms," and "the subjective judgment" (Ussher, 2011, pp. 4-10). At a subliminal level several socio-cultural and political factors influence the behavioral manifestations comprising of, gender differences, ethnic and minority idiosyncrasies, personal displeasures such as health ailments, loss of loved ones, and financial losses also trigger the 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Social norms could be seen as the base of the 'intra-psychic conflicts' that women suffer. The upcoming chapter, "Formlessness as a Psychic Phenomenon" examines 'mental illnesses' or disorders in the female characters, focusing on the 'intra-psychic conflicts' from a female psychoanalytical perspective. The chapter would trace female psychosexual development from a gynocentric perspective. The chapter would further lead to a structural analysis of the 'psyche' from an 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' perspective to probe into the presence of the phenomenon of 'formlessness' and its relevance in understanding the 'female psyche.'

CHAPTER 3

FORMLESSNESS AS A PSYCHIC PHENOMENON

3.1   TRADITIONAL PSYCHOSEXUAL DEVELOPMENT REVISITED

The disordered state of 'female psyche' has been discussed extensively in the previous chapter. Psychic disorders have been speculated to be the consequence of relentless 'intra-psychic conflicts.' The continuance of these 'conflicts' could result in 'neurotic' symptoms or disorders. Fenichel (1946) analyzes the prevalence of neuroticism in an individual and suggests that, "The neurotic conflict, by definition, is one between a tendency striving for discharge and another tendency that tries to prevent this discharge... *the neurotic conflict takes place between drives, that is, the id and the ego*"(p. 115, *author's emphasis*). The previous chapter had examined the presence of psychic disorders such as 'OCPD,' 'anxiety disorder,' 'eating disorder,' 'depressive disorder,' 'PTSD,' and 'dissociative disorder' in the characters present in the select novels, based on psychoanalytic notions of 'neurotic conflict' in women. The fundamental issue for psychic disorders lies in the 'intra-psychic conflict,' which in turn germinates out of the need to ward off and/or defend some impulsive desires (Fenichel, 1946). The impulsive desires that demand instant gratification are harbored in the 'id.' The 'ego' becomes the control agent that wards off or represses the 'id' desires. These 'id' desires further take shelter in the 'unconscious' and transforms into symptoms. Therefore, the 'unconscious' becomes a premiss of psychoanalysis. This balancing act between the 'id' and the 'ego' determines the normative functioning of an individual. The existing literary reviews showcase that the 'female psyche' is subject to interminable 'repressions' and concomitant 'intra-psychic conflicts' (Chodorow, 1978a; Elise, 2005; Toronto, 2005). Moreover, a gender-specific analysis of the characters in the select novels reveal that the 'female unconscious' is less examined from a gynocentric perspective (Chodorow, 1978a; Chodorow, 1978b; Chodorow, 1989; Toronto, 2005). Thus, a gynocentric

understanding of 'intra-psychic conflict' and the 'female unconscious' could throw light on a better understanding of the presence of 'mental illness' in the context of the female characters. When a man/woman/LGBT shows "a clinically significant disturbance in…cognition, emotional regulation or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological or developmental processes underlying mental functioning," such a state is regarded as 'mental disorder' (APA, 2013, p. 20). Based on this premise, the previous chapter probed in detail into the oddities of the psychic disorders as could be inferred in female characters in select novels.

Gynocentric studies, until recently, have examined that the feminist studies in psychoanalysis reflect a "male model of reality" (Worell, 2000, p.185). The knowledge on "psychology about women" shares a weak theoretical framework, and is predominantly characterized by sexism (Gould, 1981; Lewin, 1984; Shields, 1975a; Unger, 2001). Even in the sphere of 'mental illnesses,' feminist critics from various arenas have criticized the prevalence of gender politics in the production of knowledge on the pretext of scientific analysis. The hegemonic hysterization of the woman's mental health have been shunned by various feminist psychoanalysts (Bondi & Burman, 2001; Gosselin, 2013; Pilgrim & Bentall, 1999; Ussher, 2000). Critics assert this knowledge as a political construction which suffers from a substantial bias (Caplan & Cosgrove, 2004; Szasz, 1996; Ussher, 2011). Ussher (2011) recommends that various diagnostic canons with regard to 'mental disorders' "simply construct and support particular 'truths' that serve the interest of those in power" (p. 5). Clinical psychologists, Caplan and Cosgrove (2004) echo a similar perspective and define mental dysfunctions as "constructs" and "culturally sanctioned response" wherein, "the power to make a definition stick resides usually in groups that have the most social, political, and/or economic power" (p. xx). The discernment of the condition of 'mental disorders' will be incomplete without applying the tenets of diagnosing authorities such as *ICD-10* (WHO, 2004) or *DSM-V* (APA, 2013). Nonetheless, in the case of women, their experiences which are "affected by the operation (and abuse) of power in interpersonal and institutional settings" are not considered (Caplan & Cosgrove, 2004, p. xv). Feminist psychoanalysts have emphasized

the need to examine psychic disorders in women inclusive of the socio-cultural milieu (Bondi & Burman, 2001; Gosselin, 2013; Pilgrim & Bentall, 1999; Scott, 1999; Ussher, 2010). Thus, the socio-cultural and political dimensions of 'dysfunctionality' play a crucial role in the diagnosis of 'mental illnesses' in women.

The character Anna, from *The Golden Notebook* could be seen as possibly suffering from an 'OCPD' and 'dissociative depersonalization' as could be inferred based on the *DSM-V* classification (APA, 2013). However, Anna signals at various social agencies that construct the yardstick of normative behavior in the lines:

> I suffer torments of dissatisfaction and incompletion because of my inability to enter those areas of life my way of living, education, sex, politics, class bar me from. It is the malady of some of the best people of this time; some can stand the pressure of it; others crack under it. (Lessing, 1962, p. 76)

Anna, in the above lines, includes discursive agents such as education, gender, politics, and class. This reinstates Foucault's idea that the "judges of normality are present everywhere" (Foucault, 1995, p. 304). It's more so in the case of women. Anna mentions that the 'female psyche' suffers from "torments of dissatisfaction and incompletion" (Lessing, 1962, p. 76). Anna believes that this is the "malady of some of the best people of her time" (Lessing, 1962, p. 76). The malady that Anna discusses could be something that is drawn inwards from outside; it could be drawn from the 'ego' (which relates to reality) towards 'id' (which relates to fantasy) and it could be closely related to the 'intra-psychic conflict.' Thus, the woman could be outwardly 'functional' and inwardly 'dysfunctional.' Otherwise, this relentless inward psychic disturbance could eventually affect the outward behavior too.

When the child is born, it is all 'id,' and the 'ego' eventually evolves from the 'id.' Freud (2001d) asserts that at birth the "ego remains bound up with the id and [is] indistinguishable from it…the two are merged" (p. 97). At a time when the 'id' is predominant, the infant desires to "be loved and satisfied, without being under any obligation to give anything in return" (Balint, 1985, pp. 98-99). But, in due course, the

child develops a distinct egoic-structure within the 'psyche' through 'socialization' and the other social processes offered by the social agencies. Moreover, until then the infant's primary 'love-object,' the mother becomes the 'external ego' ("auxiliary ego") (Mahler, 1967, p. 748). Also, the child presumes this 'love-object' or Mother, as an "undifferentiated" part of the 'self' (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 100). 'Socialization' transforms the infant from a "state of undifferentiation between the 'I' and 'not-I' and between inside and outside" to a clear boundary between the "I" and "not-I" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 61). The moment of realization of this differentiation is deemed as the point of formation of the 'ego.' With an internal ego-formation, there emerges a clear boundary between the fantasy ('id') and reality ('ego'), between the inside and outside. The 'ego' that evolves into a "cultivated personality" inculcates "self-control and rational will…[sense of] time…[delayed] gratification and [a deliberation] about future possibilities" in the infant (Washburn, 1988, p. 13). Moreover, this is also the phase when the third psychic dimension, 'super-ego' is formed within the 'ego' as a developmental structure that guides and monitors the 'ego' constantly.

The genesis of an internal 'ego' ushers the commencement of 'intra-psychic conflicts.' 'Id' and 'ego' are distinguished from each other "when there is a tension or conflict between them" (Freud, 2001d, p. 97). The feelings of 'anxiety' and frustration which accompany 'conflict,' are "an infantile reaction to disruptions and discomforts in its relation with its mother" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 70). They also constitute the "ego boundaries" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 70). In *The Edible Woman*, the character Marian confesses that "Their [Her parents'] reaction though…was less elated glee than a quiet, rather smug satisfaction…their approving eyes said, she was turning out all right after all" (Atwood, 2009, p. 213). These lines subliminally highlight the 'intra-psychic conflict' as well as the 'anxiety' that Marian is experiencing. Her 'socialization' has forced her to conform. This conformity only caters to suit "their reaction" and "their approving eyes" (Atwood, 2009, p. 213). However, Marian may be having an antagonistic desire. In *The Golden Notebook*, the character Molly retaliates at a strawberry-seller on a hand-cart very rudely. When Anna points to her rudeness, Molly

claims, "I feel like breaking out and shouting and screaming whenever I set foot on this frozen soil. I feel locked up the moment I breathe our sacred air" (Lessing, 1962, p. 33). Molly hints at her grave "intra-psychic conflict" as she ushers her need to "break out," "shout," and "scream" on breathing the "sacred air" (Lessing, 1962, p. 33). These lines, by the characters Marian and Molly from the respective novels, depict the shift in the power structure from the 'id' to the 'ego.' Moreover, it also shows the control of the 'ego' by the 'super-ego.' Literary critic, Rennison (2002) restates Freud's ideas that the 'super-ego' demands, "perfection of the ego, that it meets impossible ideal of thought and behavior. In essence, the superego is the internalized voice of the parents, carers, and society which provide the individual with rules and regulations" (p.40). Consecutively, the 'socialization,' 'internalization,' 'assimilation,' and 'accommodation' play a role in the formation of the 'ego' and the 'super-ego' in the infant.

In classical psychoanalysis, Freud postulated that the 'psychosexual stages' of development are divided into 'oral,' 'anal,' 'phallic,' 'latency,' and 'genital' phases. Each of these stages is marked by an 'intra-psychic conflict' which demands a resolution for successfully emerging through that 'psychosexual stage.' One of the primal preoccupations of the psychosexual development is the "attainment of heterosexual orientation" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 113). This is decided in the 'phallic stage' with the resolution of 'Oedipus complex' and Freud's analysis of the process of conflict-resolution in this stage calls attention to gender stereotyping. Thus, an analysis of the 'phallic stage' becomes crucial. The term "Oedipus" refers to the character *Oedipus Rex* in the classic Greek play by Sophocles (Strickland, 2001). This work narrates the story of Oedipus, who is, "abandoned at birth by his parents, King Lauis and Queen Jocasta. He later comes back and, as foretold by prophecy, kills his father and marries his mother before finding out his true identity" (Strickland, 2001, p. 464). Similarly, in the 'phallic stage' the boy/girl suffer from an "Oedipus complex" and resolve it by accepting the other-sex parent as the role model (Freud, 2001p). Here, "children are torn between feelings of love for one parent while feeling a sense of competition with the other" (Strickland, 2001, p. 464). Until then, the boy and the girl have taken on the mother as the

primary 'love-object.' In the 'phallic stage,' the infants understand 'Penis' or 'Phallus' as a 'symbol of power.' The girl understands that the boy has a 'penis' but she has none. She also presumes that her lack of 'phallus' is probably a punishment for some wrong-doing. She accepts the castration; develops feelings of 'lack' and forms a 'penis-envy.' She understands that she could never have a 'phallus' (symbol of power); however, she could possess one by taking on the father as the 'love-object' because father possesses a 'phallus.' On the contrary, the boy, who also fathoms the girl's castration, fears such a castration for himself, takes on the father as the role-model and resolves his 'Oedipus complex.' In this manner, Freud and his androcentric descendents postulate that the lack of phallic-power induces a sense of inferiority and lack in the woman during the 'Oedipal' phase of development. This lack, they believe, remains indefinitely in the 'female psyche' in order to overcome the feelings of genital castration, the girl desires the 'penis' (in the form of father or a male child) for the accredited power it possesses. However, most of the notions on psychosexual development have been disregarded by the feminist theorists on the grounds of a significant gender-bias.

3.2 INTERPRETING FEMALE INTRA-PSYCHIC CONFLICT

A detailed analysis of the 'ego' helps to not only explore the peculiarities of the 'ego,' but also to:

> Trace the history of its dependence on the outside worlds, the id, and the superego; and in relation to the id, to give an account of the instincts, i.e., of the id contents, and to follow them through the transformation which they undergo. (Freud, 1936, p. 5)

These attributes hold true for the woman only when her 'psyche' is analyzed from a gynocentric perspective.

3.2.1 Underlying Issues in the Female Psychosexual Development

Critics have emphasized that the trajectory of the psychosexual development is predominantly male (Toronto, 2005; Worell, 2000). Many feminist psychoanalysts have

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argued that "male psychosexual development has traditionally been the standard by which all individual development has been interpreted" (Toronto, 2005, p. 29). Thus, the understanding of female psychosexual development is flawed. The bias is established on the grounds of supremacy of the 'phallus' as well as by assigning an inferior status to natural processes of anatomy and procreation. The girl is postulated as having a "penis envy," the "feminine form of the castration complex," as it serves to institute the male power (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 114). In *The Edible Woman*, when Marian's fiancé Peter claims, "Ainsley behaved herself properly, why couldn't you? The trouble with you is…you're just rejecting your femininity" (Atwood, 2009, p. 95), it demonstrates that, for women, her norms of femininity are defined and propagated by the patriarchy. Here, Peter is the powerful one who decides how Marian is expected to behave in a social situation. Similarly, in *The Golden Notebook*, Anna displays her vulnerability in the power play as she states, Saul Green "was looking for this wise, kind, all-mother figure, who is also sexual playmate and sister" (Lessing, 1962, p. 512). She further articulates, "I wanted to become her. I understood I could no longer separate myself from Saul, and that frightened me more than I have been frightened" (Lessing, 1962, p. 512). These lines clearly depict man as the stronger person in the power play. The traditional psychosexual theories reinstate woman as a symbol of "frailty, mortality and insignificance" (Toronto, 2005, p. 25). The conventional psychosexual analysis has succeeded in defining the woman as 'castrated' and 'feminine'; as well as 'inferior' and 'subordinate.' As traced in the instances from the novels, the characters, Anna and Marian are clearly the weaker individuals who seem to be reduced to being the "object of [his] desire" (Toronto, 2005, p. 29). Thus, the 'female psyche' is not exclusively a bi-product of the 'intra-psychic conflicts'; there is a social undercurrent at the grass-root level that triggers these 'conflicts' too. Drawing on these lines, feminist psychoanalysts have refuted these 'phallocentric' suppositions and also the traditional theories of psychosexual developments. Hence, the query "what does a woman want?" could be a potentially "perplexing question" (Elise, 2005, p. 194). Feminist psychologist, Toronto (2005)

describes this theoretical predicament over the female psychosexual development and comments:

> Traditionally…we have described a tortuous and uncertain route in which she [woman] must first give up her mother, then her longings to be a man, and then at long last find her femininity only when it is benevolently given to her by a man…If we postulate a feminine unconscious…neither defined nor limited by his needs, we are still faced with many puzzling questions. (p. 22)

Thus, there is ample scope for examining the 'female unconscious' and female psychosexual development in an unbiased manner. To achieve this, deciphering the primary 'female experience' becomes a requisite. Accordingly, this study adopts feminist psychoanalyst, Chodorow's 'object-relational' perspective to uncover the female psychosexual development (Chodorow, 1978a, 1978b, 1989). Chodorow (1978a) presumes the 'Oedipal' phase as the point of departure and clearly divides the female psychosexual development as 'pre-Oedipal' and 'Oedipal' phase. The 'Oedipal' stage becomes the cornerstone of analyzing gender development in psychoanalytical theory. This period originates in the 'phallic stage' in Freudian terminology. Meanwhile, all the 'conflicts' and 'complexes' that the boy/girl confronts prior to the 'Oedipal' period are termed as 'pre-Oedipal' in Chodorow's terminology. Based on the 'object-relational' approach, the characteristics of 'pre-Oedipal' and 'Oedipal' phase are examined, that would improve the understanding of female psychosexual development. To achieve this, psychoanalysts strongly affirm that 'language' presumes a crucial role. However, feminist critics argue that 'language' is "a linear, goal-oriented mode, representative of the symbolic, the superior, the law of the father" (Toronto, 2005, p. 31). 'Language,' as the mode of articulation of human experience, is masculine. In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna unconsciously acknowledges the dominant male intervention in the 'female language' as she asserts:

> It seems to me this fact is another expression of the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked with what I feel to be true

about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience. (Lessing, 1962, p. 273)

The 'female language' is subjected to recurrent changes based on the female experience. The female experience, in turn, is subjected to repeated changes due to flexible 'female ego.' Nevertheless, it cannot be deciphered on the same law as that of the 'male language.' Therefore, there seems to be a need to critique the 'female language.' This would in turn enable to tap the 'female unconscious.'

3.2.2   Feminine Pre-Oedipal Phase

'Identification' with the primary 'love-object' is one of the pronounced experiences for a boy/girl in the 'pre-Oedipal' phase. For all infants, irrespective of gender, the primary 'love-object' is the mother. Nevertheless, this process transpires differently for the girl and boy. Fuss (1995) delineates "identification" as, "the psychical mechanism that produces self-recognition. Identification inhabits, organizes, instantiates identity. It operates as a mark of self-difference, opening up a space for the self to relate to itself as a self, a self that is perpetually other" (p. 2). The boy and girl, identify with the mother. The mother becomes the "object cathexis" for the boy/ girl i.e., they invest their energy into the mother; however, for the boy, it is more sexual in nature and in the girl's case it is experienced as "an extension or double of a mother herself" (Chodorow, 1978a, pp. 109-110). Urmi, the character in *The Binding Vine*, explicitly suggests the 'pre-oedipal' connect between her grandmother (i.e., Baiajji) and herself. She confesses, "I was happy there, I was very happy with Baiajji…It was Baiajji who made me feel privileged; I realize that now. I was loved and wanted" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 112). For Urmi, Baiajji was her mother-figure or primary 'love-object' because she raised her in her early years. These lines depict the positive feelings and abundant love that Urmi has for her Baiajji. The sexuality is forsaken between the mother-daughter and thus 'identification' process is instilled with positive feelings for the girl, unlike the boy. In *The Binding Vine*, three female characters depict the strength of 'identification' between a mother and daughter. Urmi, as a mother also, blatantly confesses, "We dream so much

for our daughters than we do for our sons, we want to give them the world we dreamt of for ourselves" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 124). Even as Urmi says this, she remembers her dead daughter Anu. The character Shakutai wishes "I wanted Kalpana to have all that I didn't" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 124). In these lines, Shakutai resonates Urmi's desires of making her daughter a replica of herself, so as to fulfill all her repressed desires that remained in her 'unconscious.' Mira, however, is the daughter who is shocked that "To make myself in your image/ Was never the goal I sought" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 124). Mira has unconsciously identified with her mother. With this 'identification,' she emotes feelings of "delight, fascinate, puzzle, confuse, unnerve, and sometimes terrify" (Fuss, 1995, p. 2). The three examples suggest that the 'identification' between a mother-daughter is unique in several ways. The 'pre-Oedipal' period for the girl "is exclusive" and is marked by a strong sense of "primary identification, lack of separateness or differentiation, [blurred] ego and body-ego boundary" and these developments aren't under any fear of the "reality principle" (in other words any castration anxiety) (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 110). They feel "alike in fundamental ways" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 110). Additionally, there are no profound feelings of separateness in comparison to the mother-son relations. The primary 'identification' for the girl is more "stronger and cathexis of daughters is more likely to retain and emphasize narcissistic elements" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 109). The male theorists do not emphasize on these aspects of 'relationality' and positive emotions which encompasses the girl's 'pre-Oedipal' resolutions unlike the boys' who are burdened by the negative feelings of 'anxiety.'

3.2.3   Feminine Oedipal Phase

The 'Oedipal' stage assumes vitality for the woman not only for the "genesis of sexual object choice" but also for the "composition of the feminine relational ego" (Chodorow, 1978b, p. 137). In the context of "sexual object choice," unlike Freudian promulgations of "castration anxiety" and a "stunted penis" theory, a gynocentric analysis of woman's heterosexuality is explained as "part of a more general understanding of women's internal and external relational position" (Chodorow, 1978a,

p. 114). Owing to the fundamental 'relationality' that the girl experiences with her mother during 'identification' process, the girl retains the mother as the primary 'love-object.' Simultaneously, she extends her love for her father as a secondary 'love-object.' Unlike the boy, the girl never experiences an absolute "change of object" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 39). Moreover, the new attachments "do not replace, her intense and exclusive preoedipal attachment to her mother and its internalized counterpart" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 127). Chodorow (1978a) proclaims that, "The girl's internal Oedipus situation is multilayered. Her relationship of dependence, attachment, and symbiosis to her mother continues, and her oedipal (triangular, sexualized) attachments to her mother and then her father are simply added" (p. 129). Thus, the woman resolves her 'Oedipus complex' in a unique pattern which fosters the development of the "feminine relational ego" (Chodorow, 1978b, p. 137). In the lines from *The Binding Vine*, Kalpana confronts her mother, Shakutai and says, "you drove him away…you're always angry, always quarrelling, that's why he's gone" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 93). By "him" Kalpana refers to her father in these lines. These lines exhibit Kalpana as a heterosexual girl with a strong concern for the secondary 'love-object,' her father. However, her confrontation with the mother could also indicate her continued 'relationality' and concern for her mother's better life. Thus, she may have succeeded in forming a "relational ego" in the 'Oedipal' phase (Chodorow, 1978b, p. 137). The 'relationality' that was established in the 'pre-Oedipal' phase in the woman continues in the 'Oedipal' phase and the adulthood too. The 'female ego' demands a divergent exegesis from the 'male ego.' Chodorow (1978a) argues that "separate(ness) and distinct(ion)" as well as a "greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation" typifies the 'male ego' (p. 169). In contrast, the 'female ego' has "more flexible or permeable ego boundaries" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 169) due to the retention of 'pre-Oedipal' attachments to the mother. Thus, 'relationality' and connection to the 'Significant Others' encompass the 'female ego.' The character Nidia Vidal, from the novel, *Maya's Notebook* is described as an "invincible warrior" (Allende, 2013, p. 62). But, at a certain point she was "broken, her eyes swollen from crying" on knowing about her husband's illness (Allende, 2013, p. 62). Further, she "abandoned

everything to take care of her husband" (Allende, 2013, p. 62). Most often, woman's 'relationality' traits blurs her 'ego-boundaries' and ignites an 'intra-psychic conflict.' These lines demonstrate that care-giving quality is exclusively a prerogative of woman. Her 'pre-Oedipal' traits to relate and care may thwart the woman's desire for autonomy. Feminist psychoanalysts urge that "the female maternal capacity" which encompasses the "capacity [of the woman] to nurture within one's own body another human life" should be the prime focus of one's "understanding of the feminine unconscious" (Toronto, 2005, p. 38). This is the "psychic reality" of the woman (Toronto, 2005, p. 38). Additionally, the desire for the father is not due to the phallic superiority. Feminists refute the traditional 'phallocentric' theories of lack and inferiority in the girl. Chasseguet-Smirgel (1985) reinterprets 'penis-envy' as "symbolic expression of another desire. Women do not wish to become men, but want to detach themselves from the mother and become complete, autonomous women" (p. 118). It could be the desire for autonomy that transforms them into heterosexual individuals. Ifemelu, the protagonist of Adichie's *Americanah*, desires to "begin a life in which she [Ifemelu] alone determined the margins" (Adichie, 2013, p. 120). In the above lines, Ifemelu could be revealing the impulsive desires to attain freedom and liberty without being thwarted by the moral and social agents. However, the state of autonomy is an onerous task for the woman because her 'ego' is characterized by 'relationality' and 'connectedness' to the world. Anna, the protagonist of *The Golden Notebook* sketches the dilemma of her character Ella in her new novel and notes:

> As far as [Ella] was concerned, this man [Cy Maitland], was a healthy savage; and the discovery that she wanted to be in bed with him split her. She felt irritation and annoyance; she remembered feeling precisely like this when her husband attempted to rouse her by physical manipulation against her emotions. (Lessing, 1962, p. 288)

These lines demonstrate the commotion in Ella's desire where she simultaneously wants to connect with the intimate partner (i.e., 'Significant Other') and also wants to disconnect from them for the potential "savage" that they could be. Taking into account

the man's destructive power over woman, Toronto (2005) additionally comments on the notion of female sexuality where "vaginal awareness" can be a new focus of study (p. 39). Contrary to the claims by male theorists, the vaginal awareness is nowhere related to the sexual desire for the 'penis,' rather it is associated with "fear of rape and penetration…dread of male penis" (Toronto, 2005, p. 39). With these arguements, the notion of phallic superiority can be overturned.

3.2.4   Feminine Language

A detailed critique on 'language' assumes prominence in the light of evolution of the theories of 'phallocentric' psychosexual development within the realm of 'language' that is also 'phallocentric.' This bias in 'language' is described as "linguistic" by feminist psychoanalysts i.e., it reflects the masculine and glorifies the masculine power (Toronto, 2005, p. 31). 'Language' is best articulated in the Lacanian psychosexual development which traces the infant's trajectory into three distinct stages: 'real' or 'imaginary,' 'mirror,' and 'Symbolic Order.' Among these, 'language' is internalized in the 'Symbolic Order' stage (Lacan, 1966b, p. 525). The 'female language' is characterized by individuation and 'relationality' and is also "symbolic and sensory" (Toronto, 2005, p. 33). This 'language' can be extracted from the 'female experience.' But, the 'female experience' which constitutes "heavily relational, contextual and sensory mainstream of human thought" has been misinterpreted and consequently, the woman enters 'language' "alienated and objectified, already in submission to the law" (Toronto, 2005, pp. 29-30). Irigaray (1985) affirms that the woman's desire (wants) would not be "to speak the same language as man's" (p. 25). When her desires are repressed, it results in the creation of an androcentric-sphere where women had little or no voice. Consequently, women may adorn two different voices, one that is 'ideal' and the other 'real.' Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying*, articulates her 'ideal' and her 'real' 'language' in these lines, "How much I love them and yet how much I desire to be free. How I can now adore every single particle of them and yet for the first time want to leave, without a single stab of guilt" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 306). Here, Delia's 'language' expresses her dilemma

between her 'ideal' and 'real' 'self.' Her 'ideal' voice seems to suggest that she is the caretaker for her family and her absence should leave her feeling guilty. Her 'real' voice is expressed when she confesses her desire to be free. The application of traditional psychosexual development on the woman highlights the "pervasiveness of the patriarchal assumptions" (Toronto, 2005, p. 31). When women traverse in unacceptable spheres by articulating their experience into a 'language,' they are likely to be viewed as deviants. Feminist writer, Woolf (2001) exemplifies that woman (in the context of the protagonist Rachael from her novel *The Voyage Out*) became "less desirable [to the men] as her brain began to work" (p. 199). The 'female language' with its new modalities of 'language' such as "smell, touch and other non-verbal modalities" are peculiar to women and are less explored (Toronto, 2005, p. 32). In the select novels, the female characters express a host of non-verbal modalities through their behavioral peculiarities. For example, the character Delia had developed an 'obsession' with various thoughts and 'compulsion' with behavior. Her obsessional thoughts even tried to register and store the seasonal smells. Delia states, "For I would no longer smell these flowers, and it seemed important to define accurately what the scent mean" (Adeliade, 2008, p. 41). The need to define the smell could be one of Delia's ways of articulating her 'female experience.'

3.2.5   The Gynocentric Intricacies of the Female Subject

The paramount function of the 'psychic structure' is "the patterning and consistency of behavior" (Schwartz, 1981, p. 61). This structure can be deciphered as a mass of energy; wherein, the energy is channelized bi-directionally. The individual infuses a definite amount of energy into an external element (usually termed as an "object") and draws an equal or more amount of energy within the 'self' in this process. Freud has termed this phenomenon as "cathexis" (Freud, 2001l, p. 63) in his work "The Neuro-psychoses of Defence (1894)." An 'object' is "a person, place, thing, idea, fantasy, or memory invested with emotional energy (love or hate or more modulated combinations of love and hate)" (Hamilton, 2004, p. 7). 'Objects' can be external or internal. An external 'object' is "a person, place, or thing invested with emotional

energy" (Hamilton, 2004, p. 7). On the contrary, an internal 'object' is "an idea, fantasy, or memory pertaining to a person, place, or thing" (Hamilton, 2004, p. 7). The external 'object' could include the 'mother' and the 'Significant Others.' The internal 'object' is the internal agency, 'super-ego' which constitutes the internalized external agents. The psychic structural unit, 'ego' which is readily in contact with the external world engages in the task of 'object cathexis' during the 'socialization' process. That being the case, the mother is the infant's 'external ego' until 'socialization' (Mahler, 1967) as well as the "first love-object" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 94). In the process of 'socialization,' the infant invests a huge amount of emotional energy onto the primary 'love-object,' the 'mother.' Delia's daughter Estelle, in the novel *The Household Guide to Dying*, in a mode of retaliation states, "I hate you because you're going to die. I hate it, I hate it, I hate it." (Adelaide, 2008, p. 248). By "you" she refers to her mother, Delia. These lines express Estelle's immense love for her dying mother and her dread/fear of the loss of her 'love-object,' 'mother.' For a woman, her primary 'identification' with the 'mother' continues even after the heterosexual orientation. Contingent upon this idea, the woman is a part of the mother's "narcissistically defined self" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 122) and her 'identity' is highly relational, connected, emotional, and empathic unlike the male. Mira, in *The Binding Vine*, gravely examines her reflection in the mirror and confesses, "Mother, I am now your shadow" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 126). She also understands that she has internalized the qualities of her mother only to become "unsmiling, grave, bedewed with fear" (Deshpande, 1992, p.126). Mira demonstrates that she has unconsciously become the 'mirror' image of her mother. The above lines confirm the conviction that mother-daughter relationship is characterized by the growth of "the patterns of fusion, projection, narcissistic extension, and denial of separateness" through the 'psychosexual stages' of development (Chodorow, 1978a, p.103). The character Mira seems unhappy with these character developments in herself. Thus, the girls' "internalized object-relational structure becomes more complex, with more ongoing issues" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 93). Nonetheless, the 'female psyche' is strongly characterized by 'relationality' with her 'objects' ('Significant Others').

When the 'Significant Others' are deemed as an "object," the opponent automatically qualifies to be a 'subject.' In the purview of the 'psychic structure,' a 'subject' is not a fixed entity, but is "dialectically constituted" (Ogden, 1992a, 1992b). Researcher, Watson (2014) reinstates Ogden's view and claims that the 'subject' is dialectically "constituted out of interplay" between the 'id,' 'ego,' and 'super-ego' (p. 12). Based on these definitions, one can deduce that the 'subject' is larger than the 'ego' or 'id' in its constitution, and either equal to or smaller than 'identity.' However, it was Lacan (1966b) who popularized the theory of the "subject" in psychoanalysis in the context of "Symbolic Order" and "language" (p. 525). The Lacanian notion of a "subject" refers to the "bearer of the symbolic Other or more precisely, for the bearer of a set of signifiers" (de Kesel & Jöttkandt, 2009, p. 24). Extending the same idea, the French communist philosopher, Althusser (1971) defined the "subject" as the effect of an "ideology" (p. 170). Lacan's "Symbolic Order" could be a close equivalent to Althusser's "ideology." From a feminist psychoanalytical perspective, the 'female subject,' as the bearer of the 'Symbolic Other,' suffers from a gender-bias. Gender critic, Belsey (2011) affirms that the 'female subject' is a "subjected being who submits to the authority of social formation represented in 'ideology' as the 'Absolute Subject' (God, the king, the boss, Man, Conscience)" (p. 342). In this view, literary critic McNay (1999b) reinstates Butler's ideas (1997a, 1997b), that woman's entry into the 'Symbolic Order' is defined in terms of "a double negativity or a 'masquerade' in which the imposition of patriarchal dominance appears to be an inescapable cost of identity constitution…power is always already patriarchal" (p. 183). Marian, the character in *The Edible Woman*, could be seen as resonating the idea of being a 'subject' who is doubly disguised or alienated from her 'real' in order to endorse the norms of the 'Symbolic Other,' i.e., Peter who asserts, "I love you especially in that red dress. You should wear red more often" (Atwood, 2009, p. 290). Marian, who is committed to marry Peter, is gradually seen as "interpellated" into a new "Ideology" (Althusser, 1971, p. 170) or "Symbolic Order" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 525). This 'ideology' is not so much in favor of her 'real' desires. This is evident when Marian confesses, "I choose clothes as though they're a camouflage or a protective

colouration…She [Ainsley] herself goes in for neon pink" (Atwood, 2009, p. 6). These lines validate that patriarchy is the arbiter of the 'Symbolic Order' for the woman who abides by the norm. Consequently, the closely associated element 'language,' which reveals the 'unconscious,' also becomes flawed or biased for women. In turn, the woman's 'identity' is also defined "in relation to a phallocentric system of signification" (McNay, 1999b, p. 183). In this sense, Foucault's definition of a 'subject,' focusing on the "agency," delineates the 'female subject' appropriately (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). He defines, 'subject' is "subject to another by control and dependence, and tied to one's own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 212). The 'female subject' and in turn the 'female unconscious,' that abide by the norms of 'Symbolic Order' are alienated from their 'real self.'

'Socialization' and 'internalization' processes by the representatives of 'Symbolic Orders,' play a pivotal role in the production of 'female subjects.' The 'subjects' are subjected through "Subjectification" process which is "the constitution of the subject *as an object for himself or herself*" (Stewart & Roy, 2014, p.1877, *author's emphasis*). In this process, the 'subject' is led to "observe herself, analyze herself, interpret herself, and recognize herself as a domain of possible knowledge" (Stewart & Roy, 2014, p.1877). A woman begins to observe, analyze, and interpret herself based on the norms enforced by various external agents ('Significant Others') through the dominant ideological discourses. Thus, an 'ideology' "construct(s) people as subjects" (Belsey, 2011, p. 340). Specifically, feminist psychoanalyst and literary critic, Kristeva (2011) affirms that woman is always a "subject-in-process" (p. 333). Clarifying the reason for qualifying woman as a "subject-in-process," Kristeva (2011) adds that a 'female subject' is "committed to trial, because…identities in life are constantly called into question, brought to trial, over-ruled" (p. 333). The character Ifemelu in *Americanah* asserts her subjectification process as she wandered around, "For weeks…trying to remember the person she was before Curt…she no longer knew who she had been then, what she had enjoyed, disliked, wanted" (Adichie, 2013, p. 299). In yet another instance, Ifemelu confesses that she "began to do other things that he [Blaine] did" (Adichie, 2013, p. 311).

These lines reveal Ifemelu as an exemplar for "subject-in-process" (Kristeva, 2011, p. 333). Ifemelu's social 'identity' includes two dimensions: being a 'racially-oppressed-migrant-subject' and being a 'female subject.' She is 'racially-oppressed' on the grounds of her migration to the Eurocentric limits. Any 'racially-oppressed-migrant-subject' (male or female) is defined "relationally, provisionally and based on location or position" (Boyce-Davies, 1994, p. 6). She is a 'female subject' in the gender-relational view. Any 'female subject' adorns a 'relational ego.' With this in background, Ifemelu seems to be engaged in "multiple performances of gender and race and sexuality based on the particular cultural, historical, geopolitical, class communities" in which she exists (Boyce-Davies, 1994, p. 6). As a 'racially-oppressed-migrant-female-subject' she has had scores of 'Significant Others.' Blaine and Curt were two of her predominant 'Significant Others' in America. While the former was an African-American, the latter was an American. In each relationship, her 'relational' 'self' is subjected to incessant 'socializations' and 'internalizations.' These processes, on the grounds of race and gender, could induce a host of 'intra-psychic conflicts' in the woman. In the 'female subject,' "the symbolic order and the process of internalization which enforces the reality from outside…could induce conflicting feelings. Internalization which involves a constant exchange between the intra-psychic and the external world, can result in psyche developing the feelings of difference" (Benjamin, 2013, p. 54). Thus, it can be inferred that 'intra-psychic conflicts' and feelings of 'differences' could be a constant in women, who are succumbed to subjectification. Also, 'internalizations' for the woman, are unidirectional rather than bi-directional. Subjectification, when encompassed of gender and racial dimensions seems to locate the 'subject' in a state of double marginalization and heightened 'relationality' in the 'Symbolic Order.' To validate this in the context of this study, Ifemelu could be seen as failing to recall "what she had enjoyed, disliked, wanted" (Adichie, 2013, p. 299). In these lines, Ifemelu seems too uncertain and too eager to become all that her 'Significant Others' wanted her to become. Gilligan (2010), in this regard, has validated that the initiation into the patriarchal codes can lead to traumatic consequences such as "loss of voice, loss of memory, and consequently loss of

the ability to tell one's story accurately" (p. xii). Thus, subjectification in the woman could always be in a state of process. In the purview of psychosexual intricacies, the 'female subject' could express her 'pre-Oedipal' traits such as being "uncertain…process…connected…intuitive…visceral…unknowable" (Toronto, 2005, p. 35) in such conflicting situations. Thus, woman's subjectification can be an infinite process that soars the 'intra-psychic conflicts' and also adversely affects the woman's psychic development.

3.3   THE FEMININE EXPERIENCE AND THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The construction of the 'female subject' takes place amidst the pervasiveness of patriarchal womanhood. Drawing on the lines of the woman's subjectification, feminist literary critic Felman (2011) believes that woman's life is "not entirely under their own possession" (p. 343). As a result, a psychoanalytical reading of the woman's 'psychic structure' would possibly reveal a perpetually repressed 'psyche' with a host of unfulfilled desires. Perpetual 'repression' connotes "unpleasure (anxiety)" and simultaneous formation of "symptoms" (Freud, 2001d, pp. 93-94) which could eventually culminate into the development of 'neurotic' or 'psychotic' illnesses. The 'female subject' that has internalized her 'object-relational' norms strongly articulates the pandemic influence of the 'phallocentric' discourses. Silencing is one of the forms of articulation for a woman. The "dominant ideals of moral autonomy in our culture, as well as the privileged definition of the moral sphere, continue to silence women's voices" (Benhabib, 1987, p. 95). Accordingly, the dominant ideals specify that the woman should be "emotional, dependent and gentle - a born follower…protective, an efficient caretaker in relation to children and home" (Smith-Rosenberg, 1972, p. 656). 'Non-conformity' to these ideals results in punishments ranging from rejection to dishonor. In consequence, the 'real' 'female experience' remains concealed within the 'unconscious.' In *The Binding Vine*, Shakutai underscores the consequence for a woman's 'non-conformity' as she states, "She [Kalpana] was stubborn, she was self willed, she dressed up, she painted her lips and nails and so this happened to her. 'You should have seen her walking out, head erect, caring for nobody'" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 148). These lines by Shakutai

underline the idea that 'female experience' should always be in conformity with 'Symbolic Order' failing which punishments are an expected denouement. Her daughter, Kalpana may have responded to her 'id' impulses by disregarding the moral norms. Shakutai rationalizes Kalpana's rape as a punishment to 'non-conformity.' In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna's intimate partner Paul is displeased when Anna laughs heartily. He is annoyed because he believes "that a woman…needed extra dignity of behavior" (Lessing, 1962, p. 122). In yet another instance in *The Edible Woman*, Peter retaliates at Marian's behavior stating "you're just rejecting your femininity" (Atwood, 2009, p. 95). The characters Kalpana, Anna, and Marian have defied the moral (social) norms defined by their concerned law-makers ('Symbolic Others') for which they have been punished in various ways. These instances prove that the behavioral reinforcements for femininity is "based on the needs and values of the dominant group and dictated by what its members cherish in themselves and find convenient in subordinates" (Millett, 1977, p. 26). Thus, woman's subjectification adversely affects the embodiment of 'real' 'female experience.' In most situations, the woman succumbs to the social norms from the fear of punishments.

The fear of punishments is infused in the woman, inclusive of the "desire for parental approval" (Cockerham, 2003, p. 68). The desire for parental approval eventually expands into desire to be loved by the 'Significant Others.' This desire also influences the 'socializations' and 'internalizations' of the woman. Consequently, the woman constructs her responses in such a way that she unconsciously, "participates in her own subjugation" (Toronto, 2005, p. 25). An inquiry into her 'female experience,' therefore, conveys a passiveness, a silence, and a gap between the 'real female self' and the 'ideal female self.' It is necessary to bridge the gap by finding the root cause of her passiveness and her silence in order to understand the 'female psyche.' This could be achieved by deciphering the woman's dialogue between the psychological and the social forces. Thus, another significant feature of the 'female subject' is her "psycho-social" nature (Hollway, 2006, p. 467). Woman is "psychosocial" as the defensive activities that she adopts, "affect and are affected by material conditions and discourses (systems of meaning which pre-exist

any given individual), because unconscious defenses are intersubjective processes (i.e., they affect and are affected by others with whom we are in communication)" (Hollway, 2006, pp. 467-468). Women have desires, but they also have highly 'relational ego.' Consequently, this makes her a "psycho-social" 'subject' (Hollway, 2006). Urmi, the character in *The Binding Vine* confesses, "Parenthood makes you vulnerable. Since Anu's death I am haunted by fears - what if Karthik falls ill too" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 77). Anu and Karthik are Urmi's children. Urmi, in these lines, divulges her fears of losing her second child after losing one. Urmi displays her "psycho-social" nature in these lines as she articulates her care-giver role as well as dependent role in the context of motherhood. But her 'psycho-social' nature obstructs her from being "defined" and thus Kristeva aptly declares "woman can never be defined" (Kristeva, 1980, p. 141). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna asserts that "it is a new sensibility, a half unconscious attempt towards a new imaginative comprehension" (Lessing, 1962, p. 76). In these lines, Anna validates a "malady" that most women of her time encounter as a result of their exposure to institutional discourses such as education, class, sex and politics (Lessing, 1962, p. 76). The repetitive use of the word "new" connotes the changing and unstable condition of 'psyche.' This instability brings with it a host of complexities too ranging from 'intra-subjective' problems to 'inter-subjective' issues too. Feminist literary critic, Ebert (1991) probes into the 'relational' 'female subject' and asserts that women can be read as:

> Social subjectivity produced by the economic, political and ideological practices organizing the economy of signification around the dominance of the phallic signifier...Woman, then, would not be in and of herself an oppositional presence to man and patriarchy, but would be revealed as simultaneously in a position of oppression in patriarchal capitalism and as one of the crucial supports of that system. (pp. 118-119)

The woman's subjectivity, therefore, is determined by a whole lot of external forces and never defined by an exclusive 'intra-psychic' dimension. This affects the individuality of the woman. Aunt Uju, in the novel *Americanah*, exemplifies women as 'social subjects'

through her own metamorphosis from being an African subject to an American one. When she says, "Dike, put it back," the character Ifemelu observes:

> The nasal, sliding accent she put on when she spoke to white Americans, in the presence of white Americans, in the hearing of white Americans. *Pooh-reet-back.* And with the accent emerged a new persona, apologetic and self-abasing. (Adichie, 2013, p. 108)

Aunt Uju transforms into an American subject by faking an American accent with her son, Dike in the hearing of white American cashier, even though her son comprehends their African accent. This act could be intended to please the white Americans around them. Clinical psychologist, Toronto (2005) in this regard, declares that the woman's "individuality is at risk. It is her story as individual 'subject' which is difficult to extricate both from the shadow of the male and from her existence always 'in-relation'" (p. 24). Thus, the 'female subject' that encompasses a 'relational ego' endorses a predominant 'psycho-social' nature which poses a threat for her individuality and 'female experience.'

3.4   A PROGRESSIVE SPLIT IN THE EGO

Winnicott (1964), who analyzes an infant's 'socialization,' promulgates that "fantasy and fact, both important are nevertheless different from each other" (p. 62). On that account, the woman, with a 'relational ego,' may find it tortuous to strike a balance between her fantasy (driven from 'id' desires) and facts (driven from the external world). If the fantasies are fulfilled, the 'id' emerges powerful, and if the facts are adhered to, the 'ego' emerges powerful. In either case, only one character emerges as the winner. Most often, the 'ego' resorts to a split in order to resolve or balance the 'intra-psychic conflict.' In this regard, Freud (2001g) claims that, "It will be possible for the ego to avoid a rupture in any direction by deforming itself, by submitting to the encroachments on its own unity and even perhaps by effecting a cleavage or division of itself" (pp. 152-153). Thus, a split in the 'ego' can be an obvious response to the 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Freud has described this 'egoic-split' phenomenon in his works including, "Studies on Hysteria (1893-1895)" (Breuer & Freud, 2001), "The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and

Psychosis (1924)" (Freud, 2001j), "Fetishism (1927)" (Freud, 1950), "Five Lectures on Psycho-analysis (1910)" (Freud, 2001r) "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes (1915)" (Freud, 2001e), "Mourning and Melancholia (1914)" (Freud, 2001f), and "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence (1938)" (Freud, 2001i) (as cited in Campbell, 2005, pp. 275-279). A split in the 'ego' generally precedes the conditions leading to 'neurosis' and 'psychosis.' Splitting of the 'ego' can be horizontal and/or vertical (Kohut, 1971, pp. 176-177). Horizontal splitting is associated with "repression" and vertical splitting with "disavowal" (Garfield, 2005, p. 249). When the 'ego' splits due to 'repression,' it is horizontal splitting. When the 'ego' splits to escape punishment from the 'super-ego' as a representation of disavowal, it is vertical splitting. The character Maya, in *Maya's Notebook* states:

> In the mornings I would leave my house, looking like someone on her way to school, but halfway there…I would put on my vampire disguise and go off on a bender till it was time to return home in the afternoon and the look of a school-girl. (Allende, 2013, p. 90)

In these lines, Maya could be responding to the death of her grandfather. Maya is an adolescent who grieves over the loss of her 'love-object.' Her grandfather, Popo's sudden death deeply affects her and she seems to be affected by frustration, 'anxiety' and aggression. Her fantasy desires for her grandfather. But the fact is opposed to this fantasy. Thus, she seemed to have split her 'ego.' While at home she abides by the social norms, and while out of home she vents out her aggression through drugs and illegal pills. In the above example, Maya could be experiencing horizontal and vertical splitting. In the realm of women's 'egoic-splitting,' Flax (1993) strongly believes that the 'female self' "can only sustain its unity by splitting off or repressing other parts of its own and others' subjectivity" (p.109).

A split in the 'ego' is the defensive response to traumatic events such as 'hysteria' or melancholy or fetish or other 'neurotic'and 'psychotic' symptoms (Campbell, 2005, p. 275). When analyzed from the agentic entities' perspectives, a split in the 'ego' could emerge due to multiple 'identifications' with the 'Symbolic Others' and it would in turn

incite pathological responses. When the character Anna confesses, "I was not that Anna" (Lessing, 1962, p. 533), she evinces the presence of multiple 'Annas.' In another instance she also states, "I understood through waves of sickness that I was Anna Wulf, once Anna Freeman, standing at the window of an old ugly flat in London, and that behind me on the bed was Saul Green, wandering American" (Lessing, 1962, pp. 516-517). Anna has undergone multiple 'identifications' to roles such as communist party member, wife, daughter, friend, and so on. These lines could signify the trauma that women succumb to, due to multiple 'identifications.' In this regard, Freud (2001t) claims that when 'identifications' become:

> Too numerous, unduly powerful and incompatible with one another, a pathological outcome will not be far off. It may come to a disruption of the ego in consequence of the different identifications becoming cut off from one another by resistances…there remains the question of conflicts between the various identifications into which the ego comes apart, conflicts which cannot…be described as entirely pathological. (pp. 30-31)

It can be inferred that the consequence of the 'egoic-split' is always directed internally; it never aims to attack the relational 'objects.' The form of defense in an 'egoic-split' signifies "how the mind manipulates its attitudes to representation, not something it does to representations themselves" (Brook, 1992, p. 349). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna demonstrates a woman's psychic conundrum due to numerous identifications. Anna "switched off; something inside her went dead, or moved apart from what was happening. She became a shell" (Lessing, 1962, p. 450). These lines indicate Anna's self-destructive behavior. The pressure to identify with multiple roles often forces women to attack the 'self' rather than their relational 'objects.' Specifically, the intersubjective-theorist Benjamin (1988) remarks that when 'internalizations' are numerous and intolerable, women resort to "a painful division within the self and between self and other" (p. 172). Thus, 'internalizations,' 'identifications,' 'socializations,' and 'assimilations' play a crucial role in the female 'egoic-split.'

The female 'egoic-split' can be assessed optimally through an 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' manner. The Winnicottian theory signals that the 'ego' could split into 'true self' or 'false self' (Winnicott, 1965, p. 140). These forms of 'selves' can be considered as 'split selves' because 'false self' emerges from the 'true self' and this happens when the 'true self' "develops complexity and relates to external reality" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 149). 'True self' is a form of 'self' that invokes "spontaneous gesture" and "personal idea" and only the 'true self' can be "creative" and "real" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 148). In contrast, a 'false self' lies "in a feeling unreal or a sense of futility" and it "hides the infant's inner reality" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 148). 'True self' and 'false self' co-exist and attempt to strike a balance between the two. In *Americanah*, the character Ifemelu contemplates, "She was no longer sure what 'herself' was" (Adichie, 2013, p. 70). Ifemelu, in the course of her life, has had multiple 'identifications' with her 'Symbolic Others.' She was a dutiful African child for her parents, she was the perfect girlfriend to Curt, her American boyfriend, and then with Blaine, her African-American boyfriend. At every stage, she seems to have split off a part of her 'ego' that seemed non-conforming at that moment. Thus, the numerous 'identifications' may have impelled a horizontal and/or vertical split in Ifemelu's 'ego' to the extent of causing confusions and ambiguities regarding her 'true self' and 'false selves.' In the process of catering to the reality (fact), the woman seems to have lost her 'true self' in the myriad of 'false selves.' The character Ifemelu validates the idea that splitting constitutes an "episodic loss or sudden shift of experiencing time induced by two oppositional representational groups" (Shoda, 1993, p. 240). For the woman, her psychological (fantasy) and social (fact) elements are the two antagonistic forces that induce the 'psychic-split.'

Mechanisms of 'projections' and 'introjections' which occur as a response to aggressive impulses could also be interpreted as 'egoic-splits' according to Kleinian psychoanalysis. In the work "On the Development of Mental Functioning (1958)" feminist psychoanalyst, Klein (1975) claims that 'egoic-split' is the "prototype of all subsequent internalized objects" (p. 238). The infant's earliest experience of splitting due to frustration and aggression begins with mother's breast (the first internalized 'object') when gratification

is delayed or repressed. Here, the infant endures 'introjections'/'projections' and splits the mother's breast (mother) into "primal good object" (as a helpful and loved object)/"the primal bad object" (as a frightening and hated 'object') respectively (Klein, 1975, p. 238). "The need to master persecutory anxiety" gives impetus to this splitting (Klein, 1975, p. 238), and 'anxiety' can be 'paranoid' or 'depressive.' 'Paranoid anxiety' is projected outwards onto others "from fear lest expression of anger and aggression destroy the self" (Sayers, 1987, p. 33). 'Depressive anxiety' is introjected inwards against the 'self' "from fear lest outward expression of anger and aggression provoke the loss of those one loves" (Sayers, 1987, p. 33). In either case, the individual splits the 'ego' into good 'objects' and bad 'objects.' The woman, who constantly suffers 'repression,' also nurtures legions of aggressive impulses within her 'unconscious.' Gender critic, Sayers (1987) elaborates on Kleinian 'egoic-split' and expresses that woman is prone to develop both the forms of 'anxiety' to ward off her aggressive impulses that arises out of her "social subordination" (p. 33). In *The Binding Vine,* Urmi contemplates about her relationship with her mother, as well as Shakutai's with her daughter Kalpana and states, "Why do I imagine that love absolves us from being cruel? There's Shakutai – she says she loves her daughter; but I know…that she was cruel to her" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 201). These lines draw attention to the conflictual-relational configuration in the woman as she examines herself and her relationships. Here, if the daughter is inferred as a "narcissistic physical and mental extension" of the mother (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 100), the character Shakutai seems to be splitting her 'ego' through 'depressive anxiety.' Her social subordination could render her to introject her 'anxiety' inwards against herself. Hence, she is cruel to her daughter whom she also loved immensely. Urmi's contemplation bears witness to the reality that the female 'egoic-split' is a double-edged sword where she is affected adversely, be it an 'introjection' or a 'projection.' Even though her 'relational ego' develops love and ambivalence onto her 'love-objects,' her desire for individuality reacts antagonistically.

The 'egoic-split' can be an 'unconscious' process adopted by the 'psyche' to overcome the perpetual feelings of 'anxiety' or frustration or aggression. A Kristevian reading of

the 'egoic-split' terms it as "abjection." The term "abjection" was first used by cultural anthropologist, Douglas (1966) (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2014, p. 1). "Abjection" is typically a form of "splitting" adopted by women as a protest against the social order. Kristeva (1982) defines 'abjection' as:

> A mute protest of the symptom, shattering violence of a convulsion that, to be sure, is inscribed in a symbolic system, but in which, without either wanting or being able to become integrated in order to answer to it, it reacts, it abreacts, it abjects…It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect, from which one does not protect oneself from an object. (pp. 3-4)

The 'abjected' remnant remains within the woman as an 'abject' and it is never destroyed from existence. Ifemelu, in the novel *Americanah*, fathoms that, "Her fleeting victory had left in its wake a vast, echoing space, because she had taken on…a pitch of voice and a way of being that was not hers" (Adichie, 2013, p.175). 'Abjection' implies an 'identification.' Gender-theorist, Butler (1993a) suggests that "the forming of a subject requires an identification with the normative phantasm of 'sex', and this identification takes place through a repudiation which produces a domain of abjection" (p. 3). The character Ifemelu's "fleeting victory" could point to her 'identification' of the American norms (Adichie, 2013, p.175). The term "a pitch of voice that was not hers" (Adichie, 2013, p.175) could indicate the presence of multiple voices wherein some voices are 'abjected' and some are active. The character Ifemelu, during her 'metamorphosis' into an American 'subject,' unconsciously abjects her African voice and internalizes a new voice that conforms the American culture. Her original voice may be silenced and her new voice gives her a new sense of being. However, on realizing her loss she "begin(s) to feel the stain of a burgeoning shame spreading all over her" (Adichie, 2013, p. 175). Ifemelu defends against this new social order by abjecting the new American voice. Ifemelu, who stops faking an American accent, has not expelled it from her 'body,' but it has been silenced. 'Abjection,' could be inferred as a form of 'egoic-split' which helps protect one's 'true self' from being destroyed by the 'false selves.'

3.5   THE PHENOMENON OF FORMLESSNESS

Benjamin (1998) claims that "when the psyche is tensed or under pressure we either break (split) or sustain the pressure" (p. 105). Most often, the 'female ego' splits under pressure caused due to relentless 'repressions.' Chodorow (1978a) analyzes female 'egoic-split' from an 'object-relational' perspective and asserts that the 'female ego' splits due to unstable and highly relational ego-boundaries where the "qualities of the mother are introjected and become part of the self-image and qualities of the self are projected outward" (p. 73). Further, 'psychic-split,' in the form of 'true self' and 'false self,' culminates in 'ego' distortion (Winnicott, 1965, p. 140). Thus, 'true self-false self'; 'introjections-projections'; and/or 'abjections' lead to female 'egoic-splits' which suggest 'formlessness' of the 'female ego' as well as 'formlessness' in 'female psyche.' These structural changes in the 'female ego' arise out of their "object relationships" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 70). In *Maya's Notebook*, the character Maya admits,

> He [her father] and I had never been close. In my childhood he was practically absent, he arranged things so he'd be far away, while my Nini and Popo dealt with me. When my grandpa died and things got ugly between us, he…washed his hands off me. (Allende, 2013, p. 128)

Here, Maya discusses her estranged relationship with her 'Significant Others,' her father. She also reveals the impact that the loss of 'Significant Others' had on her 'psychic structure.' Her father's absence in her infancy, followed by her grandfather's demise, may have induced a perpetual 'anxiety' in Maya. These changes in the 'object-relationships' or choices between multiple 'objects' could also result in 'formlessness' in the woman's 'psychic structure.'

'Socialization' process including 'internalizations,' 'identifications,' 'assimilations' and 'accommodation' in the developmental phase, clearly signify and augment the 'differences' between the "I" and the "not-I" in women. Nonetheless, these processes further reinforce the constitution of "permeable ego boundaries" in women (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 93). This permeability, together with 'identifications' and 'assimilations,' could blur the 'ego-boundaries' for women. Blurred-boundaries could be a feature of woman's

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psychic 'formlessness.' The character Ifemelu, in the novel *Americanah* unconsciously responds:

> *They have the kinds of things we can eat.* An unease crept up on Ifemelu. She was comfortable here, and she wished she were not…This was what she hoped she had not become but feared that she had: a "they have the kinds of things we can eat" kind of person. (Adichie, 2013, p. 409)

These lines suggest that, Ifemelu's 'ego-boundaries' seem to be blurred and she is a victim of 'formlessness.' Although she is an African who loves to eat "jollof rice cooked with a lot of oil, fried plantains, boiled yams," she has unconsciously become an American who loves "quinoa…made with feta and tomatoes" (Adichie, 2013, p. 409). The African and American 'object-relational' norms are in stark contrast with one another and she develops an "unease," for she is forced to choose between the two. Her 'ego' seems fragile, unstable, and amorphous as it is affected by her environmental changes. Philosopher, Mansfield (2000), who specializes in subjectivity-studies, explicates that "subjectivity never quite forms" as a stable event and also that a 'subject' is:

> Merely the hypothetical inside of an imagined container whose walls are permeable…Its incomplete and unresolved nature permanently accompanies it…The boundary fence is never finished. Yet it is important to emphasize that the dramatic nature of this subjectivity is experienced as an intense ambivalence…It is always under threat, in an unresolved state that is exciting as well as dangerous. (p. 81)

These lines blatantly articulate the fragility of the 'subject' and it could be related to the 'female subject' too. Drawing on these lines, the character Ifemelu's egoic-walls also seem permeable, incomplete, and unresolved. Her stay in America transforms her 'ego' into an American; however her African traits weren't wiped out completely during the course. Similarly, on her return to Africa she transposes the American traits and there is a boundary-blurring between her African and American traits. This evinces the lack of stability and fixedness in her 'ego.' Her 'ego' boundaries are violated and unconsciously

blurred. The female 'ego-boundaries,' "grow weak and strong, are sometimes between whole self and whole mother (or other object), sometimes include parts of the mother within the self boundaries or exclude parts of the self as outside" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 73). Gender-theorist, Haraway (1991) in this view, elucidates that for a woman, her "boundaries shift from within; boundaries are very tricky" (p. 49). Thus, the woman's 'egoic-boundaries' are always in a state of flux and therefore, 'formlessness' can be a norm for the 'female psyche.'

3.5.1 Relationality and Formlessness

The 'female self' is formed by exploring her inner "core" which hosts manifold "inner sensations and emotions" and also by "bounded body ego" that is significantly "relational" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 68). For a 'female subject' who is driven relationally, the stable and fixed 'ego' is an "illusion," or a "phantasm" (Kristeva, 2011, p. 334). Hence, the 'female self' assumes an amorphous form. Woman's condition of 'formlessness' is heavily drawn from the 'relational' nature of her 'ego.' Based on their early relationship with their mother, the woman develops, "A sense of self continuous with others and a richly constructed, bisexual, oedipal-oscillating-with-pre-oedipal inner self-object world that continuously engages unconscious and conscious activity: The base feminine sense of self is connected to the world" (Chodorow, 1989, p. 184). These lines further validate that female 'formlessness' is heavily drawn from her 'relational' nature of 'self.' Additionally, her 'relationality' most often collides with her repressed desires (fantasy). This aggravates the 'formlessness' of the 'female ego.' For the character Maya, in *Maya's Notebook*, her grandfather, Popo was her primary 'love-object.' When he dies she grieves, "My Popo…how I miss him!...The house in Berkeley was my world…but at the age of sixteen the catastrophic forces of nature…agitated my blood and clouded my understanding" (Allende, 2013, pp. 60-61). Maya, in these lines hints at 'relationality' and eventually 'formlessness.' The lines, "clouded my understanding" suggests Maya's 'egoic-split' due to 'repression' of desires. With the demise of her primary 'love-object,' she enters into a 'depressive anxiety' state by hurting herself with drugs, alcohol and

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similar substances. Similarly, the character Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying*, laments, "One day I was a mother, and suddenly not, I was unable to process my feelings" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 229). Being a mother, being a wife, being a daughter are some of the various roles that women relate to and define themselves with. Their inner core is significantly influenced by their outer world; inevitably their reality is imposed from outside. On a larger dimension, the 'relational ego' further lays the foundation for a 'relational identity' too. Josselson (1988), in this context, confirms that:

> Intimacy or interpersonal development, among women *is* identity and resides…in the development, differentiation, and mastery of ways of being with others…that meet her standards for taking care, that connect her meaningfully to others, and that locate her in an interpersonal network. (p. 99)

A 'relational' nature is exclusive and innate to women. A woman is likely to experience 'formlessness' when her 'relational-impulsive desires' are denied or refuted by the external world. In the above instance from the novel, Delia's 'formlessness' could be aggravated due to the 'repression' of her 'relational desires.' Her malignant cancer has adversely affected her familial equations. Her sense of 'identity' is changing from being a care-giver to being a person in need of care. Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying*, calls attention to this need for care-taking as she contemplates, "That my daughters would not need this list for many years-or ever-was irrelevant. All that mattered was that they'd know I'd made the effort" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 36). In the above lines, Delia demonstrates that her progressing illness deposes her desires towards familial care and nurture. "Because an ethic of care is fundamental to women's identities, life events and transitions that affect their care activities can result in important identity shifts" (Kayser & Sormanti, 2002, p. 11). These conditions could induce a state of 'intra-psychic conflict' in women which would eventually lead to 'egoic-split' and 'formlessness.'

3.5.2   Disconnection and Formlessness

'Formlessness,' as a response to the 'intra-psychic conflict' emerges from internalized 'object-relations.' 'Internalizations' also signify 'identifications' and both are

constant processes for the law-abiding woman. These processes are most often contradictory to her fantasy or 'id' impulses and the pressure to conform to these contradictory 'identifications' can be traumatizing for the woman. Multiple realities within a 'psyche' are a prime corollary to psychic 'formlessness' that is characterized by multiple 'identifications' and 'internalizations.' When the trauma associated with 'internalizations' intensifies, women could resort to disconnections, psychologically known as 'dissociations.' "Dissociation" is the "splitting of mind from body, thought from emotion and self from relationships, leading to a loss of voice and signs of psychological distress" (Gilligan, 2010, p. xii). Psychiatrist Rivera (1989) describes the features of 'dissociations' in the 'neurotic' sense, as contradictions of the "different voices and different desires within one person…the silencing of different voices with different points of view" and 'identifications' "with anyone of them as the whole story" (p. 28). A 'formless' and 'disconnected' 'female psyche' is likely to fail to strike a balance between her multiple realities. In *The Edible Woman,* the character Marian exhibits 'formlessness' when she states:

> It was a moment before she recognized, in the bulging and distorted forms, her own waterlogged body. She moved, and all three of the images moved also. They were not quite identical: the two on the outside were slanted inwards towards the third…parts of her body suddenly bloated or diminished…All at once she was afraid that she was dissolving, coming apart layer by layer like a piece of cardboard in a gutter puddle…she was afraid of losing her shape, spreading out, not being able to contain herself any longer, beginning (that would be worst of all) to talk a lot, to tell everybody, to cry. (Atwood, 2009, pp. 273-274)

In the above lines, Marian may be connoting the presence of multiple antagonistic realities. Her 'psyche' imagines her 'body' as "bloated" for a moment and "diminished" in another moment (Atwood, 2009, p. 273). Semantically, the terms 'bloated' and 'diminished' hint at antagonism in the relative sense. Her marital commitment to Peter could have augmented her 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Additionally, the feelings such as "dissolving, coming apart layer by layer" (Atwood, 2009, p. 274) could suggest the fear

of non-existence due to 'formlessness' and trauma. The lines "they were not quite identical" (Atwood, 2009, p. 273) has metaphorical undertones of 'multiplicities' and a strong disconnect of her 'self' from the external world. In support of this, Benjamin's (1998) 'intersubjective' theory affirms that, "when experiences with the other are immediately or cumulatively traumatic, the anxiety and intolerable conflict between different reactions leads to dissociation" (p. 106). In this regard, relational-psychologist Bromberg (1998) examines that "we are in fact dealing not with conflict, but rather with a broad range of dissociated states" (p. 216). The character Anna in *The Golden Notebook*, also exhibits disconnected 'formlessness' as she confesses:

> Then there was a moment of knowledge. I understood I'd gone right inside his craziness…I had become part of him, this is what I was looking for too…I wanted to become her. I understood I could no longer separate myself from Saul, and that frightened me more than I have been frightened. (Lessing, 1992, p. 512)

Anna also displays 'formlessness' based on her 'relationality' to Saul Green, her intimate partner. She "wanted to become" the woman Saul Green desired her to be. However, in this process, she may have disconnected or dissociated from her 'true self' and the lines "I had become part of him" could validate the same (Lessing, 1992, p. 512). Anna's 'internalizations' seem contradictory to her 'true self.' Benjamin (2013) examines that, in such cases, it "can result in psyche developing the feelings of difference" (p. 54). Presuming that the woman's 'relationality' with her 'Significant Others' is an inevitable phenomenon, it can be also assumed that "we cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about 'one experience, one identity,' without acknowledging its other side - the ruptures and discontinuities which constitute" (Hall, 1990, p. 225). In another instance from *The Golden Notebook*, Anna asserts, "This feeling of being alien to my own body caused my head to swim…what I was experiencing was not my thought at all. I was experiencing, imaginatively, for the first time, the emotions of a homosexual" (Lessing, 1962, p. 572). These lines depict Anna's dissociated state and 'formless ego.' Her 'formlessness' is caused by the absence of her sexual partner, Saul Green. His absence ruptures her egoic-form and dissociates her 'mind' and 'body.' The words, "not

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my thought," "alien" (Lessing, 1962, p. 572) reflect the degree of 'dissociation' or the 'split' between her 'mind' and 'body.' The constant eruption of 'differences' in the interactions between 'intra-psychic' and the 'intersubjective' realm could intensify the 'formlessness' and simultaneous 'dissociation' in woman. Thus, disconnections from the multiple realities could also be a primal feature of 'female egoic formlessness.'

3.6 ISSUES UNDERLYING FEMALE PSYCHIC FORMLESSNESS

Traditional psychoanalytical theories propagate that the 'ego' invests its energy in its 'love-objects' for 'cathexis.' The 'object-cathexis' becomes a crucial trigger that eventually ensures the individual's entry into the final phase of Lacanian psychosexual development, i.e., 'Symbolic Order.' Various instances from the select novels have evinced that female psychic 'formlessness' could erupt chiefly due to her 'object-relationships' and the correlated 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Along with the above mentioned factors, the 'female ego's' 'relationality' plays a crucial role in triggering 'formlessness.' Thus, it is of vital importance to critically evaluate 'object-cathexis' in the woman, with the backdrop of a 'relational ego' in order to unravel the issues underlying female 'formlessness' and the formation of contradictory 'false selves.' Benjamin (1998) in this view, questions, "What kind of self can sustain multiplicity, indeed, the opposition to identity that the relation with the different other brings?" (p. 104). 'Formlessness,' in the 'female psyche,' becomes an issue when the 'true self' breaks under pressure (which is generally 'object-relational'), and generates plural or multiple 'selves' which are most often 'false selves.'

Ample instances from the select novels suggest that 'formlessness' in the 'female psyche' is an obvious phenomenon that follows the 'egoic-split.' 'Formlessness' of the 'female psyche' becomes a grave concern when the 'relational female subject' develops 'dissociation' by adorning a single subject-position or a single voice rather than developing ambivalence between multiple positions and multiple voices. In *The Golden Notebook* Anna deciphers:

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It occurred to her that she was going mad. This was 'the breakdown' she had foreseen; the 'cracking-up.' Yet it did not seem to her that she was even slightly mad; but rather that people who were not as obsessed as she was with the inchoate world mirrored in the newspapers were all out of touch with an awful necessity. Yet she knew she was mad. (Lessing, 1962, p. 564)

In these lines, Anna clearly expresses the predicament of undergoing psychic 'formlessness.' In an instance, she believes that "she was going mad" and in another moment, she confirms otherwise (Lessing, 1962, p. 564). There is a clear collision between her internalized 'Symbolic Order' (which has defined the conditions of normality and abnormality) and her 'true self.' She is constantly confused between "wanting or not wanting to belong: acceptance and rejection" (Griffiths, 1995, p. 76). The lines also reveal her 'obsession' with hoarding newspaper clippings which is an abnormal act according to the norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order.' But, in Anna's view "people" are "out of touch of an awful necessity" (Lessing, 1962, p. 564). Here, Anna could be seen as struggling to maintain her 'object-relationships' as well as striving for autonomy. Similarly, the character Urmi in *The Binding Vine*, who has lost her infant daughter Anu, confesses, "I have hallucinations. I wake up to hear the soft snuffling sounds of her breathing by my side" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 21). In the purview of the 'Symbolic Order,' Urmi seems to be suffering from 'hallucinations' and it is deemed as abnormal. However, if Urmi's 'true self' is evaluated in a gynocentric perspective, she may be expressing "narcissistic extension, and denial of separateness" with her daughter (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 103). In Urmi's case, she refutes the 'self' prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order' and asserts her 'formlessness.' On similar grounds, Delia, from *The Household Guide to Dying*, who is battling a malignant cancer discloses, "Lists were not essential to my life…But this particular morning's list was not for me, and I'd written it late the night before" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 7). The character Delia understands that her list-making behavior is abnormal as per the tenets of her 'Symbolic Order.' Yet, her natural traits of "relatedness and attachment" towards her family (Toronto, 2005, p. 35) forces her to respond to her 'true self' and disregard her 'false selves.' Consequently, she

participates in psychic 'formlessness.' Benhabib (1987) who emphasizes a woman's 'intra-psychic conflict' for her 'object-choices' questions, "how does this finite, embodied creature constitute into a coherent narrative those episodes of choice and limit, agency and suffering, initiative and dependence?" (p. 89). It is a tortuous task for the 'female relational ego' to confront the 'object-choices' and survive 'repression' simultaneously. In several other instances, the woman has submitted to the 'object-relational' norms too. Meanwhile, the character Marian, in *The Edible Woman*, asserts, "I heard a soft flannelly voice I barely recognized, saying, '…I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you'" (Atwood, 2009, p. 107). These lines confirm that Marian is participating "in her own subjugation" and disintegrating in the process (Toronto, 2005, p. 25). Marian fails to recognize her own voice as the voice probably does not reflect her 'true self.' She has internalized her 'object-relational' norms and introjected it within her 'self.' She has conformed to her social norms by agreeing to enter into wedlock with Peter Wollander. Ifemelu, the character in Adichie's *Americanah* "began to do other things that he [Blaine] did" (Adichie, 2013, p. 311). These lines denote that Ifemelu also resorts to 'egoic-split' and suffers 'formlessness' in order to conform to the norms of her 'love-object.' In the cases of Marian, Shakutai, and Ifemelu their internalized social norms that reflect a "male world view" (Toronto, 2005, p. 25) could be preventing them from expressing their 'true self.' It could be inferred that the 'Symbolic Order' has failed to recognize and appreciate the 'female desire,' the 'female language,' and the 'female experience'; thus the 'female experience' becomes "unknown, unquestioned and unthought" (Elise, 2005, p. 195). Consequently, the 'female self' also remains concealed under the multiple 'selves.' Feminist critic, Friedan (1963) asserts:

> It is not possible to preserve one's identity by adjusting for any length of time to a frame of reference that is in itself destructive to it. It is very hard indeed for a human being to sustain such an inner split- conforming outwardly to one reality, while trying to maintain inwardly the value it denies. (p. 41)

As could be seen from this chapter the 'female psyche' suffers a 'psychic-split' constituting an external submission to the 'Symbolic Order' and an internal displeasure

regarding the conformity. These contradictions position the woman in a complex conundrum. Psychoanalyst, Fuchs (2007) asserts that when the 'formless-female-self' splits into multiple 'identities,' splitting of 'self' becomes a temporary response to the dilemma. This splitting will help them as it, "avoids the necessity of tolerating the threatening ambiguity and uncertainty of interpersonal relationships. The price, however, consists in a chronic feeling of inner emptiness" (p. 379). The feelings of inner emptiness can be problematic for the woman consequently affecting her psychic balance adversely. This chapter provided considerable evidences through 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' perspective, which enabled to establish the idea that the diagnosis of 'mental illnesses' in women, through an exclusive and pertinacious application of the scientific knowledge (*DSM* or *ICD*), can be erroneous.

The upcoming chapter discusses the effect of psychic 'formlessness' on the 'female identity.' It would examine the phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation' of the female characters and probe into the processes of 'doubling' and 'multiplication' of the 'female psyche.' It would further attempt to trace various manifestations of 'doubling' and 'psychic fragmentation' in the characters in the select novels. The chapter would critique the 'multiplicity' and 'formlessness' of the 'female psyche' in a state of 'crisis.' The chapter would discuss various means by which forms of 'identities' are relegated and tolerated by the woman.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETING THE FACETS OF FRAGMENTATION

4.1 THE TRAJECTORY OF PSYCHIC FRAGMENTATION

The previous chapter presented an irrevocable connect between the female 'intra-psychic conflict' and the 'female ego' through the select feminist novels. The 'ego' is the basic structural unit of the 'psyche.' Nevertheless, the 'psychic structures' ('id'-'ego'-'superego') play a pivotal role in determining the 'psychosexual stages' of an individual's development. However, the development cannot be generalized across gender. Drawing on these lines, the previous chapter attempted to debunk the traditional 'psychosexual stages' of development wherein the female psychosexual development is considered as a, "tortuous and uncertain route in which she must first give up the mother, then her longings to be a man, and then at long last find her femininity only when it is benevolently given to her by a man" (Toronto, 2005, p. 22). It draws an exclusive attention to the female psychosexual development as well as the 'relational' or 'psycho-social' 'female ego.' To achieve this, an 'object-relational' as well as 'intersubjective' perspective was adopted whereby it was interpreted that 'formlessness' of the 'female ego' could be a crucial phenomenon for understanding the female psychosexual development. The findings of the chapter further disapproves the notion that the diagnosis of 'mental illness' can be complete through the exclusive application of the appointed scientific authorities. Psychological illness, which is determined on the basis of the individual's behavioral adaptation or maladaptation to the social norms, becomes a complex phenomenon, especially in the case of women, wherein an accurate diagnosis necessitates a 'psycho-social' analysis as a prerequisite. The third chapter validates that 'neurotic' imbalances cannot be attributed as a psychological illness exclusively based on the *DSM-V* criteria. The chapter delves into the notions of 'female subject,' her process of subjectivity, and 'female egoic formlessness,' to ensure a comprehensive and empirical

analysis of woman's 'mental illness.' Female 'mental illnesses,' in the opinion of various critics, need not be a reaction "to the pathology within" (Ussher, 2011, pp. 1-2). Starting with 'hysteria' in the early stages and including various other rampant 'mental illnesses' of the twenty-first century such as 'OCPD,' 'eating disorder,' 'depression,' 'PTSD' are believed to be, "woman's response to a system in which she is expected to remain silent, a system in which her subjectivity is denied, kept invisible" (Herndl, 1988, p. 53). Thus, the third chapter had substantiated through the novels that 'mental illnesses' can be a reasonable response in the light of the ongoing 'intra-psychic conflict.'

The current chapter would critically analyze the facets of 'psychic fragmentation.' In this study, 'fragmentation' is traced within the 'psyche,' specifically in the 'female psyche' as a 'psychic phenomenon.' This chapter traces various stages of 'female psychic fragmentation' based on the select novels. In *The Edible Woman*, Marian "had been dying to go for lunch, she had been starving, and now she wasn't even hungry" (Atwood, 2009, p. 135). Marian seems to be in the mire of multiple psychic fragments within her 'psyche' where each unit emotes a contradictory feeling. She displays signs of 'psychic fragmentation' when she concurrently is extremely hungry and not hungry. 'Psychic fragmentation' is the psychic breakdown into double or multiple fragments. The discreteness of the 'female ego' from the 'male ego,' according to various feminist psychoanalysts, rests in traits such as 'relationality,' 'connectedness,' and strong 'maternal capacity' (Chodorow, 1978a, 1989). This being stated, the mechanism of 'female psychic fragmentation' within the domain of her personality is analyzed in this chapter, acknowledging the woman-specific psychosexual traits such as 'relationality' and 'connectedness.'

4.1.1   The Decomposition of the Split Psyche

'Decomposition,' is to "break down into component elements" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006, p. 372). Rogers (1970) defines 'decomposition' as "an obsessive balancing or undoing of one idea or force with its opposite" (p. 14). 'Decomposition,' as a literary technique was popularized by the German romantics under the literary canon

called "doppelgänger." "Doppelgänger" is a German word to literally mean "double-goer" (Živković, 2000, p.122). In literary context 'doppelgänger' is an, "*Operative* or *effective presence*" which "effects the undoing of the framing of the subject by the opposition between mere presence and absence. Such an operation indicates a function of relationality - the various relations that structure the subject's ontology" (Vardoulakis, 2010, p.1, *author's emphasis*). 'Decomposition' induces an instability or flexibility in the 'psychic structure' of the 'female subject.' When analyzed from a literary and psychoanalytic perspective, 'decomposition' could become a pivotal technique for analysis. When the 'psyche' is tensed or under pressure, it "either break(s) (split) or sustain(s) the pressure" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 105). More precisely, the 'ego' (one of the triadic components of the 'psyche') splits in the face of tension or pressure. Benjamin (1998), further adds that "the tendency toward splitting [is] a fundamental piece of psychic reality" (p. 75). 'Egoic-splitting' becomes an inevitable defensive act in response to the 'id'-'ego' 'conflict.' In the context of 'decomposition,' the process of splitting becomes a precondition for the same. 'Decomposition,' therefore, could be described as the disintegration of the 'psyche' in the course of 'egoic-splitting.' It marks the beginning of 'female psychic fragmentation.' To quote an instance from *The Edible Woman*, the character Marian contemplates "it had finally happened at last then. Her body has cut itself off. The food circle has dwindled itself to a point, a black dot, closing everything outside" (Atwood, 2009, p. 325). In the above lines, Marian is referring to her aversion to food. A scientific diagnosis suggests that her 'body' is gradually developing an 'eating disorder' namely 'anorexia nervosa.' Freud (2001d) describes food-aversions as psychotic symptoms and a "hysterical defence against eating" (pp. 88-89). What seems to be the disintegration of the body-structure with a food refusal can be the disintegration in the 'psychic structure' extended and displaced onto the digestive functions. Marian, "faced each day with the forlorn hope that her body might change its mind" (Atwood, 2009, p. 220). These lines suggest that Marian has unconsciously developed an 'intra-psychic conflict' which might have led to her food aversions. Her alliance with Peter may have triggered this 'conflict.' In this regard, literary critic Ellmann (1993) mentions,

"Eating is the prototype of all transactions with the other, and food is the prototype of every object of exchange" (p. 53). Marian may have bartered food in exchange for her repressed 'id' impulses. In 'repression' the 'id' desire is dismissed temporarily and the "process of satisfaction" is degraded to "a symptom" which resides within the 'psyche,' but isolated from the 'ego' and "independently of it" too (Freud, 2001d, pp. 95-97). Technically, the 'psychic structure' no more resembles its original form or shape and is decomposed. 'Repression' mechanism superficially denotes the victory of the 'ego' over the 'id.' But, subliminally the symptom formation signifies the powerlessness of the 'ego.' It could be a sign of 'egoic-split' with a 'depressive anxiety' wherein the aggressive impulses that arise out of social subordination are directed towards the 'self.' Researcher Lahikainen (2007) documents that in 'anorexia' the "true self is filled with hatred, which it directs to her body. In women this split between mind and body is often a usual and culturally approved of thing" (p. 64). In 'anorexia,' woman's 'body' becomes a battlefield by defending or resisting further 'repressions' after an 'egoic-split' and symptom formation. 'Decomposition' could therefore also be viewed as not a splitting of 'selves' but "an obsessive balancing or undoing of one idea or force with its opposite" (Rogers, 1970, p. 14).

'Decomposition,' as a psychoanalytic term, has been cited by several psychoanalysts over the decades. Rogers (1970) uses the term 'decomposition' synonymously with 'fragmentation' (p. 4). He believes that the terms "doubling, splitting, fragmentation and decomposition" are synonymous with one another (Rogers, 1970, p. 4). From the analytical point of view, Rogers (1970) confirms that it is difficult to analyze 'latent,' than 'manifest decomposition'; "the goal is more worthwhile because the constituent parts of the composite character have been compounded or fused within the crucible art by the catalytic heat of creative fire" (p. 40). This study focuses on deciphering the 'latent' form of psychic 'decomposition' in the select feminist novels and analyzes the 'manifest decomposition' only as an after-math to the former. Given that, the 'latent decomposition' could be defined as "psychogenically determined autoscopy…involving

some psychodynamic mechanism of a compensatory or self defensive, or wish fulfilling kind" (Rogers, 1970, p. 15). In *The Golden Notebook*, the character Anna contemplates:

> I woke a person who had been changed by the experience of being other people. I did not care about Anna, I did not like being her. It was with a weary sense of duty I became Anna, like putting on a soiled dress. (Lessing, 1962, p. 524)

The above lines depict the 'latent decomposition' in Anna. Here, she describes being changed by the experiences of "being other people" (Lessing, 1962, p. 524), which suggests a defensive or compensatory mechanism that Anna resorts to, in order to conform to the social norms. The phenomenon of 'dissociation' or 'multiple personality' is an example for 'latent decomposition' and it is characterized by a "behavioral dissociation in time" (Rogers, 1970, p. 15). Anna's character signals at a 'latent decomposition' that clearly manifests her multiple personalities in the lines, "I went to sleep…conscious of two other Annas, separate from the obedient child-Anna, the snubbed woman in love, cold and miserable in some corner of myself, and a curious detached sardonic Anna, looking on and saying: 'Well, well!'" (Lessing, 1962, p. 492). These lines denote her role-play into Anna, Saul Green's mistress, the obedient child-Anna, and the detached sardonic Anna. These 'multiplicities' imply a formation of psychic fissures together with an elemental 'psychic-splitting.' The 'latent' form of 'decomposition' may depict "in one way or another, some very elemental division in the human mind" (Rogers, 1970, p. 44). In the context of psychic 'decomposition' it can be argued that:

> Such fissures…develop between love and hate; heterosexuality and homosexuality; ego libido and object libido…autonomy and dependence; masochism and sadism, activity and passivity…between the psychic constellation of id, ego and superego, or between the oral, anal and phallic stages of libidinal development…or between the pleasure principle and the reality principle. (Rogers, 1970, pp. 16-17)

These lines describe in detail the anatomical process of psychic 'decomposition.' A predominant 'intra-psychic conflict' seems to be the root cause of 'decomposition.' This

'conflict' could in turn originate from an 'object-relational' position between the 'self' and the 'love-object.' Moreover, it is the struggle for individuation and differentiation within the 'psyche,' together with the social pressure to identify, internalize, and assimilate with the "Significant Other" that influences 'decomposition' (Rogers, 1970, p. 50). Extending on the ideas on psychological 'decomposition,' researcher Slethaug (1993) confirms that "deviations representing the decomposition of the mind are explored through implicit (latent) and explicit (manifest) doubles in which the fragmentation may be both dual and multiple (or composite)" (p. 14). Accordingly, 'decomposition' which heralds the process of 'psychic fragmentation' progresses into the development of 'latent' or 'manifest' 'doubles' in women. In the above lines, from *The Golden Notebook,* Anna also manifests 'doubling' and 'multiplication' in the 'latent' form alongside 'decomposition.'

4.1.2   The Process of Doubling

Slethaug (1993) suggests that the immediate aftermath of psychic 'decomposition' is "implicit (latent) and explicit (manifest) doubles" (p. 14). 'Doubling' could be considered as the second stage of 'psychic fragmentation' after 'decomposition.' 'Doubling' has been defined as:

> A repository of feared, inferior self-attributes which ego-consciousness endeavors to repress in order to preserve an idealized self-image (OR) as a symptom of the narcissistic regression of libido; (OR) as the revelation of potentialities whose development is required harmoniously to consummate the actualization of the personality; (OR) as an expression of man's universal desire of immortality. (Porter, 1978, p. 318)

In each of the above mentioned possibilities of 'doubling,' the germination of 'doubling' seems to draw its roots from the 'psyche.' 'Doubling' can be expressed in the implicit or explicit manner. Researcher, Coleman (1934) identifies that in men and women, the 'intra-psychic conflict' becomes a "fundamental factor for the postulation of doubles" (pp. 254-273). Together with 'intra-psychic conflict,' the 'repression' mechanism which

hosts feelings of 'anxiety,' displeasure, guilt, and/or despair could also be the cardinal cause for the rise of 'doubling' within an entity. On that account, the possibilities of development of 'doubles' in women soars higher due to the perpetual 'repression' of the 'id' impulses in the 'Symbolic Order.' A woman's "relational, contextual" 'ego' (Toronto, 2005, p. 29) as well as the "ignored, unrecognized, misperceived and lost" 'female experience' (Toronto, 2005, p. 31) further deepens the 'repressions.' The female characters in the select novels too prove the same. The character Anna, in *The Golden Notebook* asserts:

> Coming back in the train, I thought again how strange it is-for twelve years, every minute of every day has been organized around Janet, my time-table has been her needs. And yet she goes to school, and that's that. I instantly revert to an Anna who never gave birth to Janet. (Lessing, 1962, p. 504)

Anna signals at the presence of 'doubles' in the above lines. Anna could be implicitly experiencing 'doubling' of 'egos' because of the multiple "potentialities whose development is required harmoniously to consummate the actualization of the personality" (Porter, 1978, p. 318). Her different 'egos' could be antagonistic to one another. The rise of 'doubles' in women could be an 'unconscious' process and it serves to "portray inner conflicts…depict a décalage between a character's conscious and unconscious mind" (Porter, 1978, p. 317). Within Anna Wulf, there is an Anna who is identified as Janet's mother and the other who has never mothered at all (Lessing, 1962, p. 504). These developments have taken place unconsciously in Anna. Nevertheless, the egos' split and decompose to form 'doubles' to submit to the reality as prescribed by the respective 'Significant Other.'

'Doubling' which originates in a 'conflict' between the fact-fantasy or 'id'-'ego,' can result in a 'body'-'mind' duality, wherein the 'body' and 'mind' emit different or antagonistic emotions or feelings towards certain environmental stimulus. Thus, the phenomenon of 'doubling' seems to intensify the 'egoic-split.' An 'implicit double' features the split in the 'psyche' in two or more pieces. Researcher, Porter (1978)

describes this condition as a "subjective double" (p. 318). 'Subjects' in subjective 'doubling' can be:

> Hallucinatory; in any event, [he/she] seems to have no independent existence apart from his associated character…[he/she] is a convenient metaphor for the secret life of the mind...is the projection of a character's inner tendencies. Such doubles can appear superficially quite different from their companions, sent the emergence of a suppressed aspect of the personality of which the protagonist was previously in ignorance. (Porter, 1978, p. 318)

Thus, 'hallucinations,' 'contradistinctions,' 'projections' are some significant features of 'subjective doubles' or 'implicit doubles.' Yet another notorious feature in this case is the co-existence of the two split entities within a single psychic space. The character, Marian, exposes her implicitly co-existing psychic 'double,' as she unwillingly conforms to the wishes of her fiancé, Peter. She observes, "I heard a soft flannelly voice I barely recognized, saying, '…I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you.' I was astounded…I'd never said anything remotely like that to him before. The funny thing was I really meant it" (Atwood, 2009, p. 107). The above lines indicate that Marian has developed two different voices ('selves'). Marian's failure to recognize this "soft flannelly voice" (Atwood, 2009, p. 107) can be conceived as a "dissociative experience" (Scott, 1999, p. 437). 'Dissociation,' occurs when "the subselves lose cohesion and act in an independent or contradictory fashion" (Erdelyi, 1994, p. 16). Marian has developed multiple 'selves' that are contradictory and disintegrated. The contradiction and disintegration constitutes a state of "not-I-ness" or "Not-there-ness" (Scott, 1999, p. 455). Marian's experience of the "not-I-ness" in the context of her new voice further vindicates her state of 'dissociation.' Even though, her multiple voices reside in a single psychic space, each is oblivious of the other's existence. Drawing on these lines, it can be inferred that 'implicit doubling,' which splits the 'female ego' ('selves') into multiple co-existing psychic entities, can articulate itself in the form of psychic disorder known as, 'dissociation.' Moreover, among the co-habiting voices, at least one voice seems repressed and a few voices seem internalized.

'Doubling,' in the 'female psyche,' could be a predominant signifier for an internal event that encompasses a boundary beyond the internal psychic state. The state of 'doubling' can be represented in a 'manifest' form too where the 'Significant Other' could be seen as the external 'double.' These 'Others' may not be an exact physical duplicate to a woman, but can "complement his [in this case, her] personality and who together with him [in this case, her] illustrate diverse possibilities for behavior" as 'manifest (explicit) doubles' (Porter, 1978, p. 318). In *The Golden Notebook*, the characters Molly and Anna could be cited as examples for such 'explicit doubles.' When the character Molly complains that "It's always meant so much to me that you should produce something, even if I didn't" (Lessing, 1962, p. 57), Molly could be perceiving her friend Anna as her 'manifest double' who could metaphorically accomplish Molly's repressed desires or her deficiencies or lack and vice versa. Slethaug (1993) in this regard mentions that, "the double is positioned in a lack or a gap and, like Saussure's oppositional system of meanings, is in a perpetually inconstant state of 'doubling' back on itself" (p. 26). Molly and Anna could be the personality 'projections' of one other. In the novel, the character Molly is described as:

> A tallish woman…big-boned, but…appeared slight, and even boyish…She took pleasure in the various guises she could use: for instance, being a hoyden in lean trousers and sweaters, and then a siren, her large green eyes made-up, her cheekbones prominent, wearing a dress which made the most of her full breasts.(Lessing, 1962, p. 30)

On the other hand, Anna was the binary opposition for Molly. She was all that Molly was not. In the novel, the character Anna is described as, "small, thin, dark, brittle, with large black always-on-guard eyes, and a fluffy haircut…she was always the same…she was shy, unable to assert herself, and, she was convinced, easily overlooked" (Lessing, 1962, p. 30). Researcher, Smeuninx (2012) regards that the phenomenon of 'doubling' is "not simply rooted in difference, but constructed from opposites" (p. 24). Molly and Anna seem to be the 'doubles' who occupy antagonistic subject-positions in the social order.

'Doubling,' which enables an 'implicit split' or 'explicit split' into two or multiple entities, leads to positioning one entity as saner or orderly than the other. This could imply that 'doubling' enables to portray the darker side of the ideal human existence. Instances of 'doubling' occurred to "unmask(s) concealed elements of character, particularly veiled social practices and the subconscious psychological workings of the mind" (deMars, 2010, p. 6). As a literary device, deMars (2010) underscores that 'doubling' not only highlights the monstrous characteristics of the devil, it befalls when "some facet of social order is not working properly" and hence "signifies a breakdown of cultural structures" (p. 1). In *The Edible Woman*, the character Ainsley could be seen as Marian's 'manifest double.' On discerning that her decision to marry Peter could be detrimental to herself, Marian thinks of her unmarried-pregnant friend Ainsley and exclaims, "At least…she's [Ainsley] got what she thinks she wants, and I suppose that's something" (Atwood, 2009, p. 352). This case verifies that for a woman, her 'Significant Other' (most often another woman) could be the medium of subduing her 'intra-psychic conflict.' Literary critic, Karl Miller (2008) asserts that in 'doubling' "one self does what the other can't. One self is meek while the other is fierce. One self stays while the other runs away" (p. 416). This antagonistic duality due to 'doubling' of the 'female ego' could symbolize some form of balance or equilibrium.

'Doubling' can also transpire as "the existence of a counterpart entity that evokes a sense of familiarity with something other than itself" (Smeuninx, 2012, p. 20). These 'manifest doubles' share some striking similarities with one another. They are exposed as "shadows, portraits, reflections, statues, siblings" (Porter, 1978, p. 318). In *The Binding Vine*, the character Mira examines that "to make myself in your image/was never the goal I sought" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 124). By "your image" Mira may be referring to her Mother's image. Further, she agonizes stating, "Mother, I am now your shadow" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 126). On becoming her mother's "shadow" or "reflection," Mira expresses shock and discontent over her 'unconscious,' 'manifest doubling.' On yet another level, the characters Kalpana and Sulu, from the same novel, could be seen as each other's 'doubles.' The two personalities shared a plethora of common traits.

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Kalpana's mother, Shakutai supports the 'manifest double' between Kalpana and Sulu through her descriptions. She reminiscences when Kalpana was born she "was so delicate and fair, just like a doll" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 93). About Sulu, Shakutai describes, "she's still delicate, my Sulu" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 93). Kalpana is Sulu's niece and the two women as stated by Shakutai share the common trait of being "delicate" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 93). The two women are Shakutai's 'love-objects.' Eventually, their destinies too radiated similarities with Kalpana dying after a brutal rape and Sulu burning herself in fire. Metaphorically, the two women could be seen as the 'manifest doubles' who latently empathized with each other's pathos. The construction of trait-similarities through 'manifest doubling' is established unconsciously and is a result of 'internalizations' and 'identifications' with the 'Symbolic Order.' Freud (2001f) confirms that 'identifications' are established when the "shadow of the object fell upon the ego" (p. 248). The "shadow" in Mira's case is the consequence of her 'internalization' and 'identification' with her mother, her primal 'love-object.' Similar is the case with Kalpana who considered Sulu as her mother-figure. The above mentioned instances validate Chodorow's 'pre-oedipal' feminine feature where the daughter becomes "an extension or double of a mother herself" through 'internalizations' (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 109).

In women, 'doubling' ('manifest' or 'latent') necessitates 'identification' or "recognition of the other" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 79). An 'intersubjective' perspective hails that 'recognition' is "probably the most straightforward of the double's traits" (Smeuninx, 2012, p. 22). Thus, there could be no 'doubling' without 'recognition' or 'identification.' Most often, 'doubling' results in the woman's subordination to the 'Symbolic Order.' Benjamin (1998) renders an 'intersubjective' exegesis on the shadow cast by the 'Other' on the woman and affirms:

> The ego is not really independent and self-constituting, but is actually made up of the objects it assimilates; the ego cannot leave the other to be an independent outside entity, separate from itself, because it is always incorporating the other, or demanding that the other be like the self. (p. 79)

The constant incorporation with the 'Other' ensues in the formation of the 'Other' as *extension* or 'double' to the 'self.' When analyzed as a heterogeneous process, 'doubling' occurs consistently between a man and a woman wherein, the woman is subjected to identify with the 'Other' (male). To enable this subjectification, woman, most often, is positioned as the 'Other' in the 'Symbolic Order.' Marian, in *The Edible Woman*, exhibits a proof to this as she claims, "In that brief fight I could see myself, small and oval, mirrored in his eyes" (Atwood, 2009, p. 98). Marian hints at her metaphorical 'doubling' wherein she is forced to internalize the norms destined by her 'Significant Other' [Peter]. 'Doubling' could be more painful for the woman because "the male gaze [is] a shaper of [the woman's] life's choices" (Adichie, 2014, p. 40). The above lines determine that between Peter and Marian, Marian is at the receiving end of internalizing the norms defined by Peter. The adjectives "small and oval" seem to symbolize her subordinate position in the process of 'doubling.' Marxist sociologist Hall (1990), in this regard mentions:

> It is one thing to position a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another thing to subject them to that 'knowledge,' not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, by the power of inner compulsion and subjective con-formation to the norm. (p. 226)

The subject-positioning and the consequent 'subjectification' forces the woman to identify with, internalize, and assimilate the 'Symbolic Order' norms resulting in the postulation of 'doubles.'

The 'female psyche' is subjected to 'doubling' ('manifest' and 'latent') as she relentlessly endorses an ideal 'body' and narcissistic 'mind.' This could result in a 'mind'-'body' duality. In *Americanah*, Ifemelu "had not noticed. And it piqued her. This was what a true Lagosian should have noticed: the generator house, the generator size" (Adichie, 2013, p. 393). Ifemelu had formed a 'subjective double' after migrating to America. Having internalized the African norms in Africa, she then transforms into an 'Americanah' after she migrates to America and internalizes the 'new' norms in America. On her return to Africa, she is both an 'Africanah' and an 'Americanah.' Her 'mind' and

'body' are split. A majority of subject's 'identifications' and 'assimilations' are undertaken from "what is outside itself" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 79). Yet, for Ifemelu, her "outside" changed each time. The realization of her psychic doubling "piqued" her (Adichie, 2013, p. 393). 'Doubling' which ensues in 'disintegration' and 'multiplication' of the psychic entity could occur in one of the two distinct patterns. It could occur through psychic division into half of a unified whole or through psychic 'multiplication,' wherein two separate autonomous characters complement each other. In both the cases, the 'psychic fragmentation' is inevitable. Slethaug (1993) asserts that in the process of 'doubling' by 'multiplication,' "different characters represent the working out of a single ideal, problem, or attitude as opposed to doubling by division in which several characters represent opposing qualities" (p. 14). Rogers (1970) adds that 'doubling' by division involves "splitting up of a recognizable unified psychological entity into separate, complementary, distinguishable parts represented by seemingly autonomous characters" (p. 5). From the above mentioned examples, 'subjective doubles' could be considered as an example for 'doubling' through division. Meanwhile, the characters in the novels, Anna-Molly, Ainsley-Marian, Sulu-Kalpana, could be the examples for 'multiplied doubles.' These characters demonstrate that a 'latent (subjective) doubling' is characterized by an 'egoic-split' which is inevitable in all the characters with a 'manifest double.' However, the condition is not the same vice-versa. Thus, the root to germination of all forms of 'doubling' can be 'latent (subjective) double.'

'Doubling' denotes a disorder too; it could be a social and/or psychic disorder. In the 'female psyche,' most often, 'egoic-double' emerges with the 'internalization' of the social order and externalization of the repressed desires. In the light of 'internalization,' 'identifications,' and 'intra-psychic conflicts,' 'doubling' could be a woman's normative response. But, when the 'conflicts' aggravate in their intensity and develop into insoluble psychic complexities, they could transform into pathological responses such as "neurosis, psychosis, narcosis, extreme inebriation, dreams" (Rogers, 1970, p. 29). The 'female psyche' that harbors a relational and connected 'ego,' hosts a plethora of 'intra-psychic conflicts' and increases her chances of 'manifest doubling' and 'latent doubling.'

4.1.3 The Ensuing Fragmentation

An analysis of the trajectory of the split-psyche begins with the germination of 'intra-psychic conflict' and 'repression' of the impulsive desires. This is followed by a profound 'egoic-split,' a subsequent 'decomposition' and 'doubling' in the 'psyche.' The decomposed and doubled 'psyche' lays the foundation for the condition known as 'psychic fragmentation.' Psychic 'decomposition' and 'doubling' brings about 'psychic fragmentation' and it "may be both dual and multiple (or composite)" (Slethaug, 1993, p. 14). Additionally, it can be in the 'manifest' or 'latent' form. Scott (1999) describes that in a fragmented psychic state, "multiple selves appear to be denying autobiographical coherence, yet in the moment of speaking their existence they commence a therapeutic narrative productive of a unitary subject" (p. 447). Thus, 'multiplicity' of the 'selves' could be viewed as a norm in 'fragmentation.' Lack of psychic coherence becomes a critical feature of 'fragmentation.' The fragmented psychic entities can be interpreted as "an abject" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). An 'abject' is anything that "disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). A woman harbours multiple 'abjects' within her 'psyche.' The 'abject' is constructed as a defence or reaction to the psychic breakdown that is caused due to a lack of, or threat to meaning. The character Marian, in *The Edible Woman,* could be seen as threatened by the new rules that she has been internalizing. Marian contemplates:

> All at once she was afraid that she was dissolving, coming apart layer by layer like a piece of cardboard in a gutter puddle…she was afraid of losing her shape, spreading out, not being able to contain herself any longer, beginning (that would be worst of all) to talk a lot, to tell everybody, to cry. (Atwood, 2009, p. 274)

The terms "dissolving," "coming apart layer by layer," "losing her shape," and "spreading out" indicate the threat of 'latent' form of 'fragmentation' (dual or multiple) in Marian. She suddenly becomes aware of her changing selfhood and 'psychic structure.' This unanticipated change was not a welcome change and it inflicts an irrational fear in women. 'Female psychic fragmentation,' can be speculated as a perpetual 'unconscious' phenomenon owing to the endless psychic-conflicts and

relentless 'repressions' as portrayed in various instances from the select novels. Studies conducted by various feminist critics also support the idea that, "The production of a narrative of fragmented subjectivity is considered as an active engagement with previously denied and silenced autobiographical experience and with the dominant contemporary discourse that allows for the episodic denial of self reflexive selfhood" (Scott, 1999, p. 432). 'Female psychic fragmentation,' constructs a 'female subject' who is unable to stitch the threads between her multiple 'selves,' and also between her past, present, and future. The process of 'fragmentation' is also symbolic of the episodes of silencing and denial of expression of 'female experiences.' Additionally, it also indicates the presence of a dominant discourse in the form of 'Symbolic Order.' Psychologist, Kenny (1986) who extensively studies 'dissociation,' attributes it to the social tension of the period such as the oppressive restrictions of women's role. The following lines from *The Binding Vine,* "Don't tread paths barred to you/ Obey, never utter a 'no';/Submit and your life will be/A paradise, she said and blessed me" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 83) articulates Mira's state of social tension she succumbs to. Consequently, these lines substantiate Kenny's claims and also prove the ubiquity of 'female psychic fragmentation.' In these lines, the "she" is speculated to be the primal 'love-object,' the 'mother.' Accordingly, her mother could be suggesting Mira to remain submissive and abide by the 'Symbolic Order,' in order to be rewarded with a life as good as "a paradise" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 83). The notion of a paradise could be a disillusion. The lines depict that the 'female psyche' is forced to internalize and identify with the norms of the 'Symbolic Order,' even though her 'intra-psychic conflicts' deepen the 'psychic fissures.' The specific 'female-egoic' features of "fusion, projection, narcissistic extension, and denial of separateness" further binds her deeper into the 'Symbolic Order' (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 103). Mira's poems affirm the idea that the woman's life "is not entirely under their own possession" (Felman, 2011, p. 343). The character Mira, highlights the manner in which her social factors influence and modify her 'psyche.' With the continued tension between the psychological and social, the state of 'psychic fragmentation' develops as both an internal and external phenomena, that the 'female psyche' is forced to tackle. In

The Golden Notebook, Anna agitates over the 'abjected' psychic state as she states, "Yet with my intelligence I don't care, it's the creature inside me who cares, who is jealous, who sulks and wants to hurt back" (Lessing, 1962, p. 498). In these lines, Anna clearly depicts her fragmented state of 'psyche.' It can be assessed that, her fragmented parts are plural and also contradictory. For a normal psychological functioning, it is important that the multiple fragmented 'selves' are drawn together into a coherent-meaningful unit or web of narrativity. Cultural-theorist, Baudrillard (1987) critiques meaning-making in the context of an 'identity formation' and states, "Everywhere one seeks to produce meaning, to make the world signify, to render it visible" (p. 63). 'Fragmentation' does not become a problem as long as the woman establishes meanings over various fragmented psychic entities. Benhabib (1999) confirms 'multiplicity' of the 'female self' which could be synonymous with 'female psychic fragmentation' as a critical issue. She adds that the issue will be "whether it is possible to be a self at all without some ability to continue to generate meaningful and viable narratives over time" (Benhabib, 1999, p. 347). The 'female psyche' fails when the narrative coherence (in terms of meaning-making) is not achieved.

4.2   FRAGMENTATION, IDENTIFICATION AND IDENTITY

The facets of 'female psychic fragmentation' could be best interpreted when it is analyzed psychoanalytically at the 'structural' level. However, in an 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' perspective, the 'structural' understanding is deemed incomplete without an "agency" level analysis. A rudimentary level analysis of the 'female psyche' reveals that the seeds of 'decomposition,' 'doubling,' and 'fragmentation' are sown into the 'psyche' through agency-based processes such as 'internalization' and 'identification.' 'Internalization' comprises of 'identification' (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 43). These social processes engage the individual in social interactions and influence the 'psychic structure' concomitantly. Psychologist, Schafer (1968) suggests that 'identification' and 'internalization' are the processes by which "the subject transforms real or imagined regulatory interactions with his environment and real or imagined characteristics of his environment, into inner regulations and characteristics" (p. 9). Thus,

the social processes trade the external characteristics into the internal 'psyche.' For the woman, this trading is a one way-transfer from external to internal. This could be inferred from the conventional psychoanalytical idea that "phallus is the privileged signifier" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 581). An etymological analysis reveals that 'identification' is "not simple imitation but assimilation [Aneignung = "appropriation"] on the basis of a similar etiological pretension; it expresses a resemblance [gleichwie = "just as"] and is derived from a common element [Gemeinsames] which remains in the unconscious" (Freud, 2001b, p. 150). These lines reveal the 'unconscious' nature of 'identification' which is nothing less than reducing 'differences' and establishing similarity with the 'Significant Other' ('love-object'). It's a constant exchange between the 'self' and the 'Other' ('love-object'). Lacan (1966b) defines 'identification' as "the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image" (p. 76). Thus, 'identification' commences with the 'mirror' stage. It is necessary to note that the 'mirror' stage is also the germination point of formation of the *"I* function" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 76). Here, "The-*I"* symbolizes 'identity' and in Lacanian lens the formation of *"The-I"* is synonymous with the "ideal-I" (Lacan, 1966b, p. 76, *author's emphasis*). Benjamin (1998) reveals the complexity of 'identification' process in women and she states:

> Identification can serve as a means for bridging difference without denying or abrogating it, but the condition of this form of identification is precisely the other's externality. The other's difference must exist outside; not be felt as a coercive command to "become" the other and therefore not be defended against by assimilating it to self. It is here that the notion of recognition as mediated not only through identification, but through direct confrontation with the other's externality, makes a difference. (Benjamin, 1998, pp. 96-97)

The woman is forced to "become" the other through 'identification' and "the-*I"* within her, is generally the "narcissistic extension" of her mother (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 103). In *The Binding Vine*, Urmi explicates this notion as she states:

> We dream so much for our daughters than we do for our sons, we want to give them the world we dreamt of for ourselves. "I wanted Kalpana to have all that I

didn't" Shaktutai told me. But Kalpana wanted none of her mother's dreams. She had her own too. (Deshpande, 1992, p. 124)

Urmi, through the aforementioned lines, describes the conundrum that the woman faces during 'identification.' Similarly, in *The Edible Woman*¸ Marian also suggests:

> Their reaction though…was less elated glee than a quiet, rather smug satisfaction, as though their fears about the effects of her university education, never stated but always apparent, had been calmed at last. They had probably been worried she would turn into a high-school teacher or a maiden aunt or a dope addict or a female executive. (Atwood, 2009, p. 213)

Marian, through the above lines, suggests the forcible nature of 'identification' process. The number of 'Significant Others' and their pressure to conform could coerce the woman to bridge the 'differences' and become the "other." A woman engages in the process of identifying to bridge the 'differences' with the 'Other'; on the other hand, she is faced with a "coercive demand to 'become' the other" (Benjamin, 1998, pp. 96-97). In this process, she may risk losing her 'real self.' 'Identification,' for the woman, is an overwhelmingly giving-act.

'Identification' that begins in the 'mirror stage' plays a pivotal role in the formation of 'identity.' There exists a functional distinction between the terms 'identification' and 'identity.' The process of 'identification' in an individual "inhabits, organizes, instantiates identity" (Fuss, 1995, p. 2). 'Identity' is a "public persona(s) - the most exposed part of our self's surface [that] collisions with a world of other selves" (Fuss, 1995, p. 2). 'Identification' is a "psychical mechanism that produces self-recognition" and a "more private, guarded, evasive" experience for an individual (Fuss, 1995, p. 2). 'Identification' process influences 'identity.' When the individual establishes similarity with the 'Other,' it can affect the 'identity' with 'fragmentation.' Having established this analogy, a study on 'female psychic fragmentation' could be pragmatic only when a critical analysis of 'identification' also includes a critique of the female 'identity formation.' 'Identity' for the woman, as in the case of the marginalized population, "is

never a priori, nor a finished product; it is only an ever problematic process of access to an image of totality" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 51). The woman is constantly negotiating and problematizing the situation she is exposed to, in the process of 'identification.' In *Americanah*, the character Ifemelu suffers from a cultural shock as she tries to identify with the American cultural norms. On seeing her American flatmates wearing slouchy jeans for a party, Ifemelu asks them, "Won't you get dressed?" and one of them responds, "'We *are* dressed. What are you talking about?' with a laugh that suggested yet another foreign pathology had emerged" (Adichie, 2013, p. 128, *author's emphasis*). These lines suggest Ifemelu's foreignness and her exposure to a new norm that she was expected to adapt to. A failure to identify would probably result in maladjustments or disordered behavior. 'Identification' or "recognition of the Other" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 79) is a tricky process for the woman. Benjamin (2013) proclaims that in a "recognition" process:

> The other's confirming response that tells us we have created meaning, had an impact, revealed an intention. But very early on we find that recognition between persons - understanding and being understood, being in attunement - begins to be an end in itself. Recognition between persons is essentially mutual. (p. 47)

These lines validate that 'recognition' ('identification') in the woman is a unidirectional process and that causes the problem. In *The Edible Woman*, Marian confesses to Duncan, "But I want to be adjusted, that's just it. I don't see any point in being unstable" (Atwood, 2009, p. 332). Further, Marian contemplates that, "she didn't see any point in starving to death. What she really wanted, she realized, had been reduced to simple safety" (Atwood, 2009, pp. 332-333). The 'Symbolic Order' has been unconsciously pressurizing Marian to conform to the social norms by marrying Peter. But, conforming to the social norms has been at the expense of repressing her psychological ('id' impulses). Woman, "being unstable" (Atwood, 2009, p. 332) could be hinting at 'repression,' 'psychic-split,' 'decomposition,' and 'psychic fragmentation.' The phrase, "starving to death" (Atwood, 2009, pp. 332-333) suggests the development of a psychic disorder, 'anorexia' which could be her mute protest against the 'Symbolic Order.' However, in the lines, "I want to be adjusted, that's just it" (Atwood, 2009, p. 332) Marian expresses her desperation to

identify with the norms of the 'Symbolic Order.' This mental dilemma suggests that in case of the 'female psyche,' the 'Symbolic Order' seems to be in stark opposition to her impulsive desires. Hence, the 'conflict' lies between the pressure to identify and not to identify. Yet, the 'female relational ego' urges her to identify and she emerges "in a state of conflict and flux and can be experienced as divided or fragmented" (Woodward, 1997, p. 44). This vindicates woman's problems of 'identification' in a 'phallocentric' 'Symbolic Order.' Thus, 'identification' could divide the woman's 'real self' and 'ideal self'; it could also induce the condition of 'psychic fragmentation.' Drawing on the reliance of 'identity' on 'identification,' the 'female identity' that has identified with the 'Other,' becomes shifting, plural, and contradictory in nature.

'Identities' also constitute personal and social dimension (Oyserman, 2009, p. 251). A woman's 'identification' with her 'Significant Others' hampers the equilibrium between her personal and social 'identity.' In *Americanah* the character Aunt Uju remarks, "I have to take my braids out for my interviews and relax my hair…If you have braids, they will think you are unprofessional" (Adichie, 2013, p. 119). Afro-braids and kinky hair is a striking feature of the African natives' personal 'identity,' as could be seen from this remark. However, Aunt Uju has assimilated and internalized the American norms during her stay in America. Aunty Uju's statement connotes that her new norms deems Afro-braids as being "unprofessional" (Adichie, 2013, p. 119). These lines vindicate that the social forces hampers the personal 'identity' in many ways. A Marxist analysis reveals that underneath the external cues of professionalism or unprofessionalism, an 'ideology' operates at the subliminal level as the pivotal features of the social force. Althusser (1971) asserts that, "*ideology interpellates individuals as subjects*" and "it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals…or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects" (p. 170). In the context of women, literary critic Belsey (2011) further adds that 'ideology' constructs "*people as subjects*" (p. 340). Althusser (1971) terms this construction as "interpellation" (p. 174). The above lines confirm that 'ideology' plays a crucial role in women's 'subjectification' into the 'dominant order' which in turn affects her 'identity.' Here, 'identity' is closely related to the term 'subject' in the sense that the 'subject' is

"tied to one's own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 212). In the context of the African kinky hair, Wambui, Ifemelu's friend in *Americanah*, pinpoints that, Ifemelu is "always battling to make [her] hair do what it wasn't meant to do" (Adichie, 2013, p. 208). The lines affirm that Ifemelu succumbs to the pressure to conform to the dominant 'ideology' too. Accordingly, the characters Aunt Uju and Ifemelu have been recruited, interpellated, and subjected into the American "ideology" and this process has transformed their identities too from being an African one to an African-American one. Critical-theorist, Sedgwick (2011) studies the 'intra-subjective' and 'inter-subjective' factors of 'identification' that affect the female 'identity formation' and comments:

> *Identification with/as* has a distinctive resonance for women in the oppressively tidy dovetailing between old ideologies of women's traditional "selflessness" and a new one of the feminist commitment that seems to begin with a self but is legitimated only by willfully obscuring most of the boundaries. (p. 377, *author's emphasis*)

'Identification,' in the female 'intra-psychic' realm, blurs her 'ego-boundaries,' consciously or unconsciously; wantingly or unwantingly. In the context of 'ego-boundaries,' Haraway (1988) mentions that "boundaries are drawn by mapping practices; 'objects' do not pre-exist as such. Objects are boundary projects" (p. 595). The rigidity of the boundary predicts the degree of predominance of the discursive power, the degree of consequent 'psychic fragmentation,' as well as the gender of the individual. Boundaries, for 'relational' women, are constantly shifting and the fragmented woman is always located on the border with a high chance of new fissure or 'fragmentation.' In this context, critical race thinker Boyce-Davies (1994) asserts that, "The view from the border enables us to apprehend the ultimate arbitrariness of the border itself, of forced separations and inferiorizations" (p. 80). Aunt Uju in *Americanah*, removes her Afro-braids and relaxes her hair each time she has to attend an interview in America. Her 'identity' is located on a border as she shifts between the Afro-braids and the relaxed hair. Woodward (1997) in this regard, comments that 'female identities' are "produced,

consumed and regulated within culture-creating meanings through symbolic systems of representation about the identity positions which we might adopt" (p. 2). The 'female identity' that is produced, consumed and regulated through the 'identification' with multiple 'Significant Others,' "can be both unsettled and unsettling" (Woodward, 1997, p. 17). These factors could worsen her chances of 'psychic fragmentation.'

4.2.1   A Gynocentric Theorization of the Female Identity

Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" proposed by Helms (1990) (Ossana et al., 1992) is apt in keeping with a gynocentric, gender-sensitized and intersectional critique on the female 'identity formation.' This model comprises of four stages including the "preencounter," "encounter," "immersion-emersion," and "internalization" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). Each stage is characterized by an 'intra-psychic conflict' between fantasy and reality; external and internal, 'id' and 'super-ego.' The model suggests that woman's path towards 'identity' is cyclical in nature and the stages can become regressive with the changing social circumstances. This cyclical nature has been termed as "theorized fluidity" (Moradi & Subich, 2002, p. 47). 'Preencounter' is the first stage of Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" and it shares various overlapping features with 'passive acceptance' stage proposed by Downing and Roush (1985) (Moradi, 2005). In this stage, the woman is extremely passive and submissive as she "conforms to societal views about gender, holds a constricted view of women's roles…non-consciously thinks and behaves in ways that devalue women and esteem men as reference groups" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). There are several female characters in the selected novels, who depict the features of 'preencounter' stage. Shakutai, in *The Binding Vine* reflects the features of this stage as she internalizes the blame for her daughter, Kalpana's rape. On understanding about her rape, she blames Kalpana and states, "It's all her fault…we're all disgraced because of her…I warned Kalpana, but she would never listen to me. 'I'm not afraid of anyone,' she used to say. That's why this happened to her…women must know fear" (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 147-148). The character Shakutai has internalized and assimilated the

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patriarchal norms assigned to the woman. Accordingly, she presumes rape as defilement for the woman and also that the accused has valid reasons for the rape. She seems to be ignorant about the sexist politics. The ignorance is likely due to her lower socio-economic status and illiterate background as seen from the novel. Additionally, it could also be due to the decades of 'internalization' of the 'phallocentric' 'Symbolic Order.' Her ignorance, based on the 'Symbolic Order,' is blatantly expressed when she presumes that a body-violation of the girl is due to her own shortcomings. In another instance, there is the educated and financially independent Marian, from *The Edible Woman* who had recently:

> Fallen into the habit…of letting him [Peter] choose for her. It got rid of the vacillation she had found herself displaying when confronted with a menu: she never knew what she wanted to have. But Peter could make up their minds right away. (Atwood, 2009, p. 180)

This is an example of 'passive acceptance' of the patriarchal norms. The character Marian, on her engagement to Peter, transforms herself into a woman who is "dependent and gentle - a born follower" (Smith-Rosenberg, 1972, p. 656). This form of adherence to the idealized gender roles has been related to "silencing the self" phenomenon (Witte & Sherman, 2002, p. 1075). This concept has been borrowed from 'Silencing the self' theory proposed by Dana Crowley Jack (Jack, 1991). "Silencing the self" is a strategy that woman adopt in order to:

> Decrease conflict and maintain intimacy in a relationship. This strategy is characterized by judging oneself by external standards, putting others' needs before one's own needs, inhibiting self-expression, and exhibiting a false presentation of the feminine role imperative. (Witte & Sherman, 2002, p. 1075)

The characters, Shakutai and Marian may have understood the gravity of the situation. They may fear the consequences of 'non-conformity,' especially loss of intimacy. Thus, it could instigate the female characters to exhibit submissive and passive features under such circumstances.

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The second stage, according to Helms' is 'encounter' and it could be equaled to Downing and Roush's 'revelation' stage (Moradi, 2005). In this stage, the woman, "questions those definitions" prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order' in the earlier stage (Moradi, 2005, p. 231). This occurs "as a result of contact with new information and/or experiences that heighten the personal relevance of womanhood and suggest alternative ways of being" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). The character Anna in *The Golden Notebook*, questions the predestined norms as she contemplates:

> Being so young, twenty-three or four, I suffered, like so many 'emancipated' girls, from a terror of being trapped and tamed by domesticity…this man, George, the trapped one, the man who had put that unfortunate woman, his wife, in a cage, also represented for me, and I knew it, a powerful sexuality from which I fled inwardly, but then inevitably turned towards. (Lessing, 1962, p. 130)

Anna's communist life exposes her to analyze her every life experience with a critical eye. Her experience exposes her to the "powerful sexuality," "terror of being trapped," and she wishes to flee from it all. She begins to desire the freedom and yet her 'preencounter' experiences seem to intrude into her current experience and it could be forcing her to "inevitably turn towards" patriarchy time and again (Lessing, 1962, p. 130). In *The Binding Vine*, Mira questions the conventional definitions of femininity through her poems. She writes, "But tell me, friend, did Laxmi too/twist brocade tassels round her fingers/and tremble, fearing the coming/Of the dark-clouded, engulfing night?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 56). In the above lines, Mira refers to the rape within marriage. She questions the traditional norms by asking if the Goddesses such as Laxmi also bore the ill-effects of marital rape. In the context of her relationship with her mother, she records her frustration and asks rhetorically, "Mother…why do you want me to repeat your history when you so despair of your own?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 126). The character Mira took to journal and poem writing as her means of retaliation against the various forms of "androcentric bias." Meanwhile, in *Americanah* the character Ifemelu:

> For weeks…stumbled around, trying to remember the person she was before Curt…she no longer knew who she had been then, what she had enjoyed, disliked,

wanted…Perhaps it had always been so and she had not noticed, because she was
blinded by the brightness of Curt. (Adichie, 2013, p. 299)

Ifemelu's 'intra-psychic conflict' aggravates as she begins to question her lifestyle and her experiences with her boyfriend, Curt. Her 'passive acceptance' of Curt's norms had erased her authentic likes, dislikes, and wants from her 'self.' In Ifemelu's case, she is a colored-woman and hence, her racial position could shape her 'identity' too (Pyant & Yanico, 1991). The colored-woman is doubly marginalized. Ample studies have proven that for the colored-woman, her 'identity' develops from a "position of social devaluation" unlike a 'White' woman (Moradi, 2005, p. 241). Thus, the colored-woman could require double effort to question the 'Symbolic Order.'

Helms' third stage is 'immersion-emersion,' and it shares similarities with 'embeddedness-emanation' stage by Downing and Roush (1985) (Moradi, 2005). This stage involves "rejection of patriarchal definitions of womanhood, idealization of women, and possible adoption of feminist ideology" (Moradi, 2005, p. 231). In this stage, a woman could be seen as deriving her inspiration from the other 'female subjects.' Identity-theorists, Ossana et al. (1992) further describe that:

> Idealization of women, particularly those who expand the definition of womanhood, and active rejection of male-supremacist definitions of womanhood (regardless of their source) are characteristic of the early part of the third stage…The latter part…is characterized by a search for a positive, self-affirming definition of womanhood and intense affiliations with women. (p. 403)

In *Americanah*, Ifemelu is redirected into her African womanhood by her African friend, Wambui. On Ifemelu's constant 'repression' of the African 'identity,' Wambui flashes her anger openly stating:

> You didn't go running with Curt today because you don't want to sweat out this straightness. That picture you sent me, you had your hair covered on the boat. You're always battling to make your hair do what it wasn't meant to do. (Adichie, 2013, p. 208)

Wambui declines the supremacist definitions of womanhood and declares to Ifemelu, "Relaxing your hair is like being in prison. You're caged in. Your hair rules you" (Adichie, 2013, p. 208). Wambui seems to influence Ifemelu to develop a stronger and authentic version of her womanhood. She outrightly shuns the dominant patriarchal norms of womanhood. Similarly, Ainsley, in *The Edible Woman*, becomes the 'unconscious' moral for Marian in her search for self-affirming definition of womanhood. When Marian reluctantly breaks the news of her engagement with her fiancé Peter, Ainsley promptly responds, "But I hope you aren't getting married right away. I don't think you know what you're doing" (Atwood, 2009, p. 100). Through this comment, Ainsley seems to subliminally suggest Marian the feminist 'ideology' that is devoid of any patriarchal influence.

'Internalization' is Helms' last stage of "Womanist Identity Development model" and it could be equaled to 'Synthesis' stage from Downing and Roush (1985) (Moradi, 2005). This term 'internalization' is gynocentric and differs from the traditional psychoanalytical notions of 'internalization.' The woman's 'identity,' in this stage, is believed to embody a, "positive definition of womanhood based on personal attributes, [it] views other women and their shared experiences as a source of information concerning the role of women, but refuses to be bound by external definitions of womanhood" (Ossana et al., 1992, p. 403). This is a stage when the woman has successfully negotiated various 'intra-psychic conflicts' and emerged triumphant against all odds or 'repressions.' Mira, in *The Binding Vine* seems to be struggling with her quest for 'identity.' Her 'identity' is tamed and constantly repressed. She also becomes her mother's "shadow" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 126). Yet, in one instance, she portrays a victory as she refuses to be addressed as 'Nirmala' and hails herself to be 'Mira' which is her maiden name. She mentions in her poem:

> A glittering ring gliding on the rice/Carefully traced a name 'Nirmala'/Who is this? None but I/ My name hence, bestowed upon me./Nirmala, they call, I stand Statue-still./ Do you build the new without razing the old?/A tablet of rice, a pencil of gold/Can they make me Nirmala? I am Mira. (Deshpande, 1992, p. 101)

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The character Mira, in these lines, reflects an "internally defined sense of womanhood" (Moradi, 2005, p. 231). Similarly, in *Americanah* Ifemelu notices the unconventional rapport between Obinze and his mother, which was:

> Free of restraint, free of the fear of consequences, it did not take the familiar shape of a relationship with a parent. They cooked together, his mother stirring the soup, Obinze making the garri. (Adichie, 2013, p. 69)

Obinze's mother, in this novel, also seems to uphold a self-defined sense of womanhood that has encouraged her to instill unconventional values in her son. For a 'relational' woman, to reach the stage of 'internalization,' may require humungous amount of energy and intellect to shield their 'selves' with some strong defensive strategies against the environmental pressures. In the minority-status theory namely, "Black American Racial theory" by Cross (1971), 'intellectualization' is identified as a primary defensive strategy to overcome the hurdles presented from the environment (as cited in Ossana et al., 1992, p. 406). Thus, 'internalization' is strongly correlated to the degree of intellectualization that the woman is exposed to.

As stated earlier, these stages of female 'identity formation' can be repetitive and cyclical. The 'female psyche' is constantly negotiating through every prescribed stage of 'identity development.' Additionally, the cyclical nature of her 'identity' heightens her state of flux. In *The Edible Woman,* Marian "let go of Peter's arm and began to run" (Atwood, 2009, p. 83). In this scenario, she is seen as portraying features of 'immersion-emersion' stage wherein she rejects the patriarchy and also rejects the conventional notions of womanhood. In another instance, she could be seen as regressing into the 'preencounter' stage when she confesses to Peter, "I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you" (Atwood, 2009, p. 107). In this scenario, Marian has demoted herself back into the 'preencounter' stage from 'immersion-emersion' stage. Psychologist, Hansen (2002), further reiterates Helms' idea that "the process of incorporating a feminist identity is complex and dependent on a host of interpersonal and contextual factors" (p. 89). Apart from the stages of identity-development, an 'identity' can encompass varied dimensions across specific time and space. 'Psychic fragmentation' which induces a 'fragmentation'

in an 'identity' could unravel the different, contradictory, changing dimensions in women. The social processes such as 'internalization,' 'identification,' 'assimilation,' 'recognition,' 'subjectification,' 'separation,' 'inferiorization,' and 'superiorization' strongly influence the dimensions of 'female identity.' Based on the 'object-relational' and 'intersubjective' theories, it could be interpreted from this study that multiple dimensions are visible for 'female identity.' Some of the predominant dimensions that continue to pose as a constant threat to women are 'undesired identity,' 'submissive identity,' and 'relational identity' as evident from select novels.

4.2.2 The Undesired Female Identity

Desire is an innate capacity in every individual; be it a male, female, or LGBT. An individual's 'identity' is a result of his/her choices. The choices one makes, signals at the innate desires. Woman's innate desires are most often repressed and this increases the chances of 'psychic fragmentation' which leads to the development of 'undesired identity.' An 'undesired identity' is an 'identity' construct that is formed out of multiple 'repressions' of impulsive desires which are deemed as unconscionable and contradictory, as per the societal standards. It could also be constructed out of the fear of consequences such as loss of love or intimacy from the 'Significant Others.' Benhabib (1987), in this regard argues:

> Identity does not refer to my potential for choice alone, but to the actuality of my choices, namely, to how I as a finite, concrete, embodied individual, shape and fashion the circumstances of my birth and family, linguistic, cultural and gender identity into a coherent narrative that stands as my life's story. (p. 89)

In *The Edible Woman,* Marian fears that, "The situation was rapidly becoming a matter of conscience" (Atwood, 2009, p. 176) and she confesses to Duncan, "I'm going to get married, you know. I shouldn't be here" (Atwood, 2009, p. 176). These lines indicate Marian's desire to foster her relationship with her new friend, Duncan. But, this would categorize her as immoral as she is engaged to Peter. Her conscience and desire are at loggerheads and she is forced to choose Peter over Duncan. For Marian, it is a choice

between an impulsive desire which is labeled as 'immoral' and a 'moral' expectation. In *Americanah,* while in America, when Aunty Uju pronounces her name as "*you-joo* instead of *oo-joo,*" Ifemelu instantly retorts, "Is that how you pronounce your name now?" To this, Aunty Uju responds, "It's what they call me." (Adichie, 2013, p. 104). When Aunt Uju affirms, "It's what they call me" (Adichie, 2013, p. 104) she could be unconsciously expressing her grievance over her undesired identity. The desire to survive and belong to America may have forced her to succumb to this pressure of a new undesired identity. In this way, the 'female desire' is tagged along with various negative connotations such as. 'trouble,' 'immoral,' 'insane,' 'evil,' 'dishonorable,' and/or 'unconscionable.' The philosopher and statesman, Kojève (1969) describes the nature of human desire as predominantly consisting of, "the desire of the other; if he wants 'to possess' or 'to assimilate'… if he wants to be 'desired' or 'loved' or, rather, 'recognized' in his human value, in his reality as a human individual" (p. 6). The desire sets the individual in motion towards the attainment of an 'object,' event, or trait that the individual does not have, and wishes to possess/accumulate/assimilate. But, the woman's desires are censored by the 'Symbolic Order' that decide the morality or immorality, social acceptability or unacceptablility of the desires. The issue lies in the 'androcentric/phallocenric' nature of the 'Symbolic Order,' thus, the 'female subject' is ordained and reigned by the "Absolute Subject (God, the king, the boss, Man, Conscience)" (Belsey, 2011, p. 342). The patriarch "comes *to be proposed, to be imposed, his law,* that is to say an institutionalizing and institutionalized discourse" (Gallop, 1982, pp. 76-77, *author's emphasis*). Naturally, the patriarch determines the woman's instinctual desires as contrary to the 'Symbolic Order' leaving her little or absolutely no potential for free-choice. Consequently, the 'female identity' is thus constructed and becomes an 'undesired identity.'

The woman's desires that are instinctually inclined are deemed dangerous in the language of the 'Symbolic Order.' Philosopher, Sartre defines "desire" as "trouble" and adds:

> The notion of 'trouble' can help us better to determine the nature of desire. We contrast troubled water with transparent water, a troubled look with a clear look.

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> Troubled water remains water; it preserves the fluidity and the essential characteristics of water; but its translucency is 'troubled' by an inapprehensible presence which makes one with it, which is everywhere and nowhere, and which is given as a clogging of the water by itself…If the desiring consciousness is troubled, it is because it is analogous to the troubled water (1956, p. 387).

Similarly, the woman may refrain from expressing her innate desires from the fear of consequences, such as punishments and develop an 'undesired identity.' The character Urmi in *The Binding Vine*, angrily retorts about her friend Vanaa as, "her [Vanaa's] submissiveness, willingness to go along with him [Vanaa's husband, Harish] in whatever he wants, makes me [Urmi] angry" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 80). In the above lines, the character Vanaa, according to Urmi, is submissive and always conforming to the patriarchal norms. Analyzing the scenario from a different perspective, it can be inferred that Vanaa could be assuming that the behavior that is oriented to attain her instinctual desires can induce an unpleasantness in the relationship with her husband, Harish. The woman fears consequences, i.e., the loss of her 'love-object.' Similarly, in *The Golden Notebook*, "Ella places her happiness in relation to the man she pleased sexually…And Ella was delighted with herself, that she could make him so happy" (Lessing, 1962, p. 292). Ella, the character in Anna's novel, from *The Golden Notebook*, has clearly surrendered her desires to the patriarchal law. She now has "the desire of the other…to be 'desired' or 'loved'" (Kojève, 1969, p. 6). It may or may not reflect her instinctual desires. This form of an 'identity,' that the woman develops, serves to suit the desire of the 'Other' which could be termed as an 'undesired identity.' Marian, in *The Edible Woman*, states, "I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you" (Atwood, 2009, p. 107). These lines exhibit that Marian's new 'identity' as Peter's fiancée encapsulated in it various attributes over which she had little or no control over. She fails to recognize the development of these unwanted and undesired attributes within her. In *Americanah*, Ifemelu did not realize that she was internalizing the American 'Symbolic Order' until she encountered a phone call with a telemarketer:

Only after she hung up did she begin to feel the stain of a burgeoning shame spreading all over her, for thanking him, for crafting his words "You sound American"…Her fleeting victory had left in its wake a vast, echoing space, because she had taken on, for too long, a pitch of voice and a way of being that was not hers. (Adiche, 2013, p. 175)

These words by an unknown telemarketer brought in a chilling realization in Ifemelu that she had shed her original skin to adorn herself into a new one which was 'undesired.' Among the various 'objects' that the woman desires innately, the desire for the primary 'love-object' (mother or mother-figure) is a predominant one. This desire triggers the woman to conform to the 'Symbolic Order' in spite of the 'intra-psychic conflict.' This desire also includes the fear of "loss of love from the object" (Freud, 2001d, p. 70). In the above mentioned examples, the characters, Vanaa, Marian, and Ifemelu fear the loss of their respective 'love-objects' and develop an 'undesired identity.' In case of women, 'identification' with another's desire and 'assimilation' of the same into the 'self' can be dangerous. This process of developing an 'undesired identity' is mostly 'unconscious.' In all of these above instances, the 'female identity' is dependent on the 'Others' desires. The desire to be loved overtakes every other motive in women. In order to achieve this, the woman silences her own desires, willingly or unwillingly. When the woman is overly attuned to the 'Others' desires by silencing the innate desires and feelings of the 'self,' she tends to develop an 'undesired identity.'

'Undesired female identity' is closely associated with the woman's 'body' too. Bartky (1997), a feminist phenomenologist exclaims that the woman "lives her body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal Other" (p. 140). In order to be loved by the 'Other,' the woman succumbs to the norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order.' This notion extends to the woman's 'body' too. Bordo (1992), who conceives femininity as a construct, comments that:

We are no longer given verbal descriptions or exemplars of what a lady is or of what femininity consists. Rather, we learn the rules directly through bodily

discourse: through images that tell us what clothes, body shape, facial expression, movements, and behavior are required. (p. 170)

The female, therefore, is continuously striving to fit into the body-specifications as prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order' in order to be desired or loved by the 'Other.' In *The Household Guide to Dying*, Delia the breast cancer patient, expresses her desire for the normative femininity, as she states, "There were a few strands of hair left, making my head look like that of an old doll, pulled to bits by too much possessive love" (Adelaide, 2008, pp. 231-232). Though her suffering with cancer is immense, her external image seems to shake her sense of self-esteem. She compares her 'self' to that of "an old doll, pulled to bits by too much possessive love" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 232). On a similar note, the character Marian in *The Edible Woman*, associates food with negative adjectives such as "gluttonous" and "coagulations" (Atwood, 2009, p. 203). Marian, further, analyzes the married women's bodies at her office Christmas party, and expresses her fear that, "at some time she would be-or no, already she was like that too; she was one of them, her body the same, identical, merged with that other flesh" (Atwood, 2009, p. 206). Marian is unconsciously disciplining her 'body' to achieve the ideal body-image as dictated by the 'Symbolic Order.' The ultimate motive could be the need to be desired by the 'Other.' The character, Ifemelu in *Americanah* who has recently internalized the American norms, was gravely offended when a stranger in a queue at the supermarket commented, "fat people don't need to be eating that shit" (Adichie, 2013, p. 6). With these lines, Ifemelu understands that "fat" in America carries a different connotation from the African notion of "fat." The fact that she felt offended indicates that she cared for the 'Other's' opinion about her 'body.' Bordo (1992) asserts that, "The body is...a practical, direct locus of social control...regulated by the norms of cultural life" (p. 165). In all of the above cases, the 'female ego' as well as the 'female body' are being dominated and controlled the 'Symbolic Order.' The characters Delia, Marian, and Ifemelu, have internalized and assimilated the 'Symbolic Order' norms that are defined for the woman's 'body.' This sets the woman's desires in tune with the man's desires. Every female character that was mentioned above seems to have surrendered their 'body,' as a pawn, in the battle of

sexes. All these acts could leave the woman with an 'undesired identity.' Hence, the 'female psyche' and the female 'physical body' are constructed and reconstructed as desired by the 'Symbolic Order' resulting in an 'undesired identity.'

For a woman to be desirable, she has to be "emotional, dependent and gentle - a born follower" (Smith-Rosenberg, 1972, p. 656). A slight departure from the criteria for desirability could result in punishments of various sorts for a woman. Blanca Schnake in *Maya's Notebook* describes one such form of punishment for not fitting into the standard feminine norms as desired/defined by the 'Symbolic Order.' She confesses to Maya that:

> My husband left me when I got cancer; he couldn't stand the idea of going to bed with a woman who had no breasts…my cancer could come back at any moment…No man wants to get tied down to a woman with this. (Allende, 2013, p. 149)

Woman's 'socialization' and 'internalization' trains her to attribute her unfortunate accidents such as cancer, as the reason for her rejection or abandonment by the 'Significant Other.' When the woman loses, or fears losing the primal 'love-object,' it sets off various destructive tendencies in her. Fear is one of the predominant tendencies that the woman emotes over the formation of socially 'undesired identity.' Shakutai, in *The Binding Vine*, describes another form of a punishment bestowed on the norm-flouting woman by the 'Symbolic Order.' She agonizes, "if you paint and flaunt yourself do you think they'll leave you alone?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 146). By "they," she indicates the 'Symbolic Order' (patriarchy). With these lines, she is explicitly hinting at the punishment that her daughter, Kalpana, suffered for 'non-conformity,' i.e., rape. Though Kalpana's bodily rights were violated, Shakutai's 'internalization' of the androcentric norms forced her to blame the rape victim. In this context, political activist McIntosh (1968) confirms that, "clear cut, publicized and recognizable threshold between permissible and impermissible behavior is constructed and anyone who approaches the threshold is immediately threatened with being a full-fledged deviant" (p. 183). Rather than rape being associated with a violation of bodily rights, it is seen as a punishment in the form of loss of "honour" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 59). Shakutai cries in anguish, "If a

girl's honour is lost, what is left? The girl does not have to do anything wrong, people will always point a finger at her" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 59). When Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" is employed, Shakutai can be located in a 'preencounter' stage of her 'womanist identity' (Ossana et al., 1992). She is passive and submissive. Shakutai translates Kalpana's rape as an act of defilement or unholiness. Douglas (1966) explains the woman's jeopardy in internalizing the 'Symbolic Order' norms as, "the idea of holiness was given an external, physical expression in the wholeness of the body seen as a perfect container" (p. 53). Here, the jeopardy is double-binded for a woman. 'Non-conformity' brings punishments, and stigmatizes the woman as deviant or disordered. In contrast, conformity brings devaluation to the 'female ego' and intensifies her 'intra-psychic conflict' because her 'id' desires are repressed and could be transformed as psychological symptoms. Sociologists, Gagnon and Simon (1973) have addressed these set of norms as "scripts" which instigate a "socially scripted behavior" (p. 262). The 'internalization' of scripts determines that "some behaviors come to be seen as exciting and others as disgusting" (Unger & Crawford, 1992, p. 315). There is a stigmatization and labelling of woman's behavior that takes place beyond the conscious domain of the 'female psyche.' Further, desire becomes "a metonymy" for the woman as her desire is always deferred (Lacan, 1966b, p. 439). A woman living with an 'undesired identity' is vulnerable to develop frustrations and several forms of pathological symptoms. Studies by Jack (1991) assert that the woman who is silenced has higher chances of developing 'depression' as she fears that "significant others will not accept [her] discourse-discrepant feelings, thoughts, and needs" (as cited in Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007, p. 30). Thus, the woman who suffers an 'undesired identity' is prone to develop pathological symptoms as well as 'psychic fragmentation.'

4.2.3   The Submissive Female Identity

'Submissiveness' is yet another predominant dimension of the 'female identity.' This dimension unravels the power structure and the position of women. De Beauvoir (2011) stresses the woman's submissive stance in the power structure and states that she

is "determined and differentiated in relation to man…he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential…he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (p. 26). The title, "Absolute," is a self-proclaimed one and it entitles the man to define and determine the 'Symbolic Order.' In the novel, *The Edible Woman*, Marian contemplates, "Before, she had wondered what their bedroom would look like after they were married, trying out various arrangements and color schemes. Now she knew. It would always look exactly like this" (Atwood, 2009, p. 307). Marian, in the above lines, reveals the freedom of choice in the newly assimilated 'identity' as Peter's fiancée. Her "potential for choice" is nullified against the "actuality of her choices" that is shaped and fashioned by the "circumstances of…birth and family, linguistic, cultural and gender identity" (Benhabib, 1987, p. 89). Thus, the above lines suggests that, between Marian and Peter, the power lies in Peter's hands, and Marian is powerless. She endorses a 'submissive identity.' The submissive position is adopted with the woman's initiation into the gender codes and scripts of patriarchy. A Foucauldian approach to this power structure reveals that Marian has become a powerless 'subject' who is "subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to [his/her] own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Foucault, 1982, p. 781). The 'Symbolic Order' was able to achieve this as the woman's subjection was also marked by "mechanisms of exploitation and domination" (Foucault, 1982, p. 782). British-Australian scholar, Ahmed (1998), in her work *Differences That Matter*, attempts to identify the reason for the inequities in the power structure stating:

> The pre-existing relation of dominance between women and men means that the ideal of an abstract individual as moral agent may serve to reproduce this relation of dominance, not only because women's actualised subjectivity may be incommensurable with it, but because it fails to recognize women's relative immobility in framing the terms of moral discussion. (p. 53)

A 'submissive identity' denotes not only the presence of a 'subject' and a dominant 'Symbolic Order,' but also the presence of a moral agent within the 'Symbolic Order' that defines the norms for the woman. Also, she is deemed incapable of defining the moral tenets. Thus, 'submissiveness' could become a natural act in women. In *The*

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Binding Vine, Urmi analyzes a portrait of Mira's mother and interprets the oddities of the stance in a man and his wife as:

> The mother, a bulky woman, dresses for the occasion, looks, uneasy, sitting slumped awkwardly in her chair, as if she's unused to being centre-stage, and would be more comfortable being in the background. But the father, a trim, spare man, sits erect, looking eager and alive. (Deshpande, 1992, p. 64)

In the above lines, the mother reveals all the features of a submissive person by being "uneasy, sitting slumped, awkward in her chair" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 64). She is everything that the man is not. Being submissive, being silent, being uncomfortable and non-assertive becomes a woman's natural response after decades of 'internalization' of norms of subjectivity. In the same novel, the character Vanaa, has accepted her husband Harish as the unquestionable moral agent. She accepts Harish's judgements about herself and states, "But it's true. I can do nothing right. Harish says I'm not firm enough with both of them…why is it nobody thinks of blaming Harish? He's never around, but it's never his fault" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 64). In each of the above circumstances, the power to dominate and exploit rests with the man. The woman's freedom is curtailed and she has become a "subject-in-process" (Kristeva, 2011, p. 333). 'Submissiveness' in 'female identity,' therefore, hints at psychic structural 'destabilization.' 'Destabilization,' in turn, could make the woman more vulnerable to 'psychic fragmentation.' In these cases, the women "signal the onset of dissociation: the splitting of mind from body…leading to a loss of voice and signs of psychological distress" (Gilligan, 2010, p. xii). Thus, a 'submissive identity' in women, invariably results in the loss of her voice, the loss of an exquisite 'female language,' and also silencing of her intellectual power; all of this is carried out methodically in the name of moral agency by 'Symbolic Order'.

4.2.4   The Relational Female Identity

'Relationality' is another significant dimension of the 'female identity.' Gender-theorist, Hollway (2006) announces "we are psycho-social" (p. 467). By "we" she refers to the woman's population across the globe. The term "psycho-social" indicates that the

social forces can influence the psychological and vice-versa. The 'female identity' is an amalgamation of the psychological and the social forces. Maya, in *Maya's Notebook*, accentuates this 'psycho-social' feature as she states, "it doesn't matter who we love, nor does it matter whether our love is reciprocated or not...Just the experience of loving is enough, that transforms us…If I'd known you existed, Daniel, I would have…taken better care of myself" (Allende, 2013, pp. 223-226). The character Maya, in the above lines portrays the degree of influence her social forces exert on her 'psyche.' Drawing on various identity-theories derived from Erikson, Josselson (1988), further defines the 'female identity' from the "psycho-social" standpoint:

> Intimacy or interpersonal development, among women *is* identity and resides not in the choice of a heterosexual partner, but in the development, differentiation, and mastery of ways of being with others (not just men) that meet her standards for taking care, that connect her meaningfully to others, and that locate her in an interpersonal network.(p. 99)

The woman binds the highest importance to interpersonal relationships in defining her 'self.' Maya, the character also exhibits her desire to love and to be loved by her 'Significant Others.' The gestures of expressing love, care, and 'connectedness' with 'Significant Others' are therefore an innate capacity in woman and any obstacle to the realization of these basic needs affects the 'female psyche' adversely. The 'relational female identity,' could also exhibit defensive activities so as to maintain her interpersonal relationships. Hollway (2006) explains that such defensive activities, "affect and are affected by material conditions and discourses (systems of meaning which pre-exist any given individual)…unconscious defenses are intersubjective processes (i.e., they affect and are affected by others with whom we are in communication)" (pp. 467-468). The woman, who is threatened by the fear of loss of 'Significant Others' engages in various forms of defensive activities, such as displacement, in order to maintain intimacy with her 'love-objects.' 'Relationality' influences the 'female identity' in multiple ways.

A 'relative identity' in woman shares a strong dependency and 'connectedness' with the 'Significant Others.' This dependency and 'connectedness' enables the 'Significant

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Others,' in turn, to enforce the 'Symbolic Order' in women. This 'Order' operates on a representational level and it "includes the signifying practices and symbolic systems through which meanings are produced and which position us as subjects" (Woodward, 1997, p.14). Hence, the woman is positioned as a 'subject' and her experience is entrusted with a meaning whose acceptance or rejection is determined by the 'Symbolic Order.' Thus, 'relationality,' like 'submissiveness,' upholds a power structure where:

> A power relationship can only be articulated on the basis of two elements which are each indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that "the other" (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible interventions may open up. (Foucault, 1982, p. 789)

In gender-based power structure, the woman assumes the powerless position, while the man emerges as the powerful one. Relativity could be assessed based on the amount of 'assimilation' and 'internalization' of the woman into the 'Symbolic Order.' Moreover, the 'relational' woman is bombarded by multiple 'Significant Others.' It renders the 'female identity' in a state of flux owing to the multiple representations from the practices of powerful 'Significant Others.' In *Americanah*, Ifemelu reminicenses about her ways of living in America and contemplates:

> How quickly she had become used to their life… She had slipped out of her old skin. She almost liked winter, the glittering coat of frosted ice on the tops of cars, the lush warmth of the Cashmere sweaters Curt bought her. (Adichie, 2013, p. 200)

As Ifemelu's intimacy with her partners increases, she assimilates their personality traits into her 'self.' The above lines portray an evident 'relationality' in Ifemelu's 'identity.' Her 'unconscious' shedding of her "old skin" could be a vindication for the same. It also depicts her power-position in the gender equation. Psychologists have analyzed the 'differences' in the development of female and male 'identity.' Accordingly, the key terms in development "for the boy in our culture are the erotic, autonomy and identity.

For the girl the comparable terms are the erotic, the interpersonal and identity" (Douvan & Adelson, 1966, p. 347). Ifemelu becomes aware of her "colored identity" on relocating to a 'White-dominated' America. Her 'interpersonal' relations with the 'Whites' and 'non-Whites' affect the construction of her 'identity.' Boyce-Davies (1994) critiques that the colored 'female subject' and her signification process needs to be construed "relationally, provisionally, and based on location or position" (p. 6). Having internalized the inferior position of her racial 'identity,' she constantly and unconsciously aspires to assimilate into the dominant norms (in Ifemelu's case, the American norms). Ifemelu's 'identity' is constantly transforming from being a woman in Africa, to being a colored-woman in America.

'Relational female identity,' becomes an obvious outcome owing to the woman's egoic-traits. But, with this trait, the woman relies immensely on her instinctual desires which are deemed as socially unacceptable in this bargain. On 'relationality,' Gilligan (1982) cites the reasons that, "Sensitivity to the needs of others and the assumption of responsibility for taking care lead women to attend to voices other than their own and to include in their judgment other point of view" (p. 16). These lines deduce that woman's powerlessness is drawn from her desire to connect and take care. Therefore, she submits to the myriad of contradictory norms. In *The Edible Woman*, Marian, who suddenly seems to be "one over whom power is exercised" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 220) contemplates:

> My resentment at Peter for letting me remain crushed under the bed while he moved up there in the open, in the free air, jabbering away about exposure times, started me thinking about the past four months…Ainsley had warned me that Peter was monopolizing me…However it had left me in a sort of vacuum…I would have to decide what I wanted to do…I tried to move: I *was* stuck. (Atwood, 2009, pp. 90-91, *author's emphasis*)

In these lines, Marian who has exhibited her 'relationality' in 'identity' realizes the price she paid for the same. Her lines "I tried to move: I was stuck" (Atwood, 2009, p. 91, *author's emphasis*) metaphorically suggests her conundrum and helplessness in her

personal life with regard to her innate desires. Within a few days of being committed to Peter, she understands that she is at the receiving end of the power-relations in their relationship. She has no control over her experience or 'language' anymore. The character Marian could be representing the 'category' of women who, in Helms' opinion are in the 'Revelation' stage of 'identity formation' where she wants to question the patriarchal codes of conduct (Ossana et al., 1992). Her 'female language' seems to be silenced and her experience with 'language' seems to be "alienated and objectified, already in submission to the law" (Toronto, 2005, p. 30). This lack of choice-making could only heighten their personal distress. Identity-theorist, Chaffee (2012) claims that "To reflect on others, social institutions and even the self, involves representations, signs and most frequently language" (p. 101). A woman requires humongous power to attend to her 'female language' which constitutes "sensory cues" (Toronto, 2005, p. 32). However, this would hamper her 'relational identity' dimension.

4.2.5   The Crisis in Female Identity

The earliest mention of 'crisis' in the context of 'identity' was by social psychologist, Erikson (1968, p. 17). He believes that 'crisis' occurs at every 'psycho-social' stage of 'identity formation' and is resolved with the 'assimilation' into a new stage. In case of woman, 'crisis' in 'identity' could be a result of the peculiarities such as, 'undesirability,' 'submissiveness,' and 'relationality' which induce instability and a state of flux. British art historian and writer, Mercer (1990) declares that "identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty" (p. 43). The 'female identity,' with her numerous 'identifications' and 'assimilations,' is everything but fixed, and coherent. Philosopher, Derrida also supports this, stating that the female is "not a determinable identity" (1979, p. 49). Secondly, the 'female identity' could be in a state of 'crisis' because she is defined in relation to "what she is not" (Rabine, 1988, p. 17). The woman "seeks fulfillment through the loss of an essential oneness" (Rabine, 1988, p. 18). A woman who is assimilating into the 'Symbolic Order' norms, in various instances,

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compromises on her 'true self' and adorns multiple, contradictory 'identities.' This situation could eventually instigate doubt and uncertainty in the 'female identity.' The problem becomes predominant when meaning-making out of these plural, unstable, and contradictory 'assimilations' becomes a tortuous task for the woman. In *The Binding Vine¸* Shakutai questions her conventional upbringing and blames herself for Kalpana's plight. She portrays her helplessness as she asks Urmi, "Did I do wrong, Urmila, was I cruel to her?...I didn't want her to be born, is that why she's dying now? Is this my punishment?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 112). Shakutai, in these lines, seems to suggest her uncertainties and doubts in the context of her parenthood. Her questions indicate her difficulties in the comprehension of her multiple, contradictory 'identities.'

Psychologists Lapsley and Power (2012), rephrased the ideas of psychologist, Andrew Weigart in the "Preface" to their work *Self, Ego and Identity: Integrative Approaches*, and asserted that 'crisis' in 'identity' takes, "the form of ambivalence and existential anxiety, and as a search for authenticity" (p. x). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna demonstrates the contradiction in her multiple identities in the following lines, "He [Michael] prefers Janet to have left for school before he wakes. And I prefer it, because it divides me…It is a strain having to be both at once" (Lessing, 1962, p. 301). The words "he prefers" (Lessing, 1962, p. 301) helps one to identify the authority in the power structure. These lines call attention to Anna's growing psychic dilemma due to contradiction and 'plurality' and the consequent split personalities. Anna juggles to perform the two 'identities' at different times so as to suit Michael's desires. The two identities include Michael's mistress and Janet's mother. These contradictory expectations may have resulted in her 'psychic fragmentation' as well as 'fragmented' identities. She is divided from inside and out. The above lines express Anna's desperation to make sense of various symbols and experiences that she is exposed to. Her 'identity' seems to be in a state of 'crisis.' She understands that multiple 'Significant Others' enforce multiple and varied norms into her 'psyche.' However, drawing a meaning out of each norm becomes troublesome when it is accompanied by contradiction, 'plurality,' and instability. Eventually, the 'female identity' is marked by a state of "doubt and

uncertainty" (Mercer, 1990, p. 43). These peculiarities of the 'female identity' make them vulnerable to a 'crisis.' In the process of being 'relational,' and desirable, the 'female identity' also emerges as submissive and powerless; consequently the 'female identity' lands in a state of 'crisis.'

4.3   THE IMPACT OF FEMALE PSYCHIC FRAGMENTATION

4.3.1   Differences and Pluralities

Belsey (2011) defines 'female identity' as "a matrix of subject positions which may be inconsistent or even in contradiction with one another" (p. 342). When the woman lives with plural, unstable, and contradictory identities for a long time it is likely to grow into 'psychic fragmentation.' At the 'intersubjective' level, 'differences' could be a crucial underlying factor that engenders 'psychic fragmentation.' It is the 'differences' that compel the 'female psyche' to identify and internalize. Sociologist, Woodward (1997) defines 'identity' as "most clearly defined by difference, that is by what it is not…identities are frequently constructed in terms of oppositions such as man/woman, straight/gay, healthy/unhealthy, normal/deviant" (p. 2). The 'female identity' is always defined in-relation to the man, thus the 'differences' also emerge in stark opposition with the man. Butler (1993b) describes this process as creation of "categories" (p. 308). 'Categories' play a crucial role in creating individual 'differences' (Butler,1993b; Woodward, 1997). Butler (1993b) argues that 'categories' "tend to be instruments of regulatory regimes, whether as the normalizing categories of oppressive structures or as the rallying points of a liberatory contestation of that very oppression" (p. 308). Through the processes of 'identification,' 'internalizations,' and 'introjections,' the individual could be aiming to reduce the 'differences' between the 'self' and the 'Other.' These processes help in reducing the 'differences' or establishing "sameness" or "incorporation of the other" or for "identification with difference" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 95). In *The Edible Woman*, Marian "stared into the Egyptian-lidded and outlined and thickly-fringed eyes of a person she had never seen before" (Atwood, 2009, p. 278). These lines depict that Marian has identified her new role as Peter's fiancé and reduced the 'difference'

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between her 'self' and 'Other.' Benjamin (1998) outlines various preconditions for the operation of 'identification' (or 'recognition') with the 'Other' and that include "by apprehending…the ongoing tendency towards splitting…towards an exclusion" (p. 103). Thus, 'egoic-splitting' and exclusion enable the presence of 'difference' within the 'female psyche.' In the above example, the character Marian fails to recognize this image in the mirror. This would suggest that, although she has internalized the new norm, she has not yet destroyed her 'true self' in the 'unconscious.' The failure to identify with the 'mirror' image could suggest the transfer of 'differences' into the 'intra-psychic' realm. Benjamin (2013) supports this notion that, these processes that engage in a "constant exchange between the 'intra-psychic' and the external world, can result in psyche developing the feelings of difference" (p. 54). Thus, 'differences' become both cause and consequence of 'female psychic fragmentation.' When the 'differences' are formed within the 'psyche' it hampers the 'true self.' This condition could lead to multiple 'abjections' of various psychic fragments where each psychic fragment functions as a separate entity with no coherence among the entities. Foucault makes a valid argument in this regard and states, "a subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 208). Thus, in the above example, Marian could be divided from within or implicitly fragmented with the 'differences' internalized into the 'intra-psychic' realm. Thus, 'plural identities' may reduce external 'differences' with the identified 'object,' but the internal 'differences' between the co-existing 'plural identities' can heighten 'psychic fragmentation.'

Reduction of 'differences' often involves difficult choice-making. In "Conclusion: A Note on Essentialism and Difference," gender-theorist and philosopher, Grosz (1990a) exposes the dilemma that 'difference' bestows on the woman and states that:

> For patriarchs difference is understood in terms of inequality, distinction or opposition, a sexual difference modeled on negative, binary, or oppositional structures within which only one of the two terms has any autonomy; the other is defined only by the negation of the first. Only sameness or identity can ensure equality. In the case of feminists of difference, however, difference is not seen as

difference *from* a pregiven norm, but [of] *pure* difference, difference in itself, difference with *no identity*…pure difference refuses to privilege either term. For feminists, to claim women's difference from men is to reject existing definitions and categories, redefining oneself and the world according to women's own perspectives. (p. 339)

An intense dilemma can expose the woman into making a difficult choice. It is a choice between being a party to the predestined category or not being a party to one. The former bestows an 'identity' to the woman in a 'phallocentric' society (which may be 'undesired' or 'submissive'), but the latter connotes "no identity" in the social sphere (Grosz, 1990a, p. 339). The status of "no identity" can instill a fear of non-existence. In *The Binding Vine*, Mira portrays this dilemma in her poem stating, "Huddled in my cocoon, a somnolent silkworm/ Will I emerge a beauteous being?/ Or will I, suffocating, cease to exist" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 65). Mira clearly juggles between the choice of belonging to a 'category' or 'no category,' between existence and non-existence. She understands that her 'psyche' is undergoing a transformation wherein she desires to reject the 'category.' However, the consequence of her choice could be inducing a fear of non-existence in Mira. The existential thinker, de Beauvoir (2011) has probed into this woman-problem and she states that the woman is always, "determined and differentiated with reference to man…she is the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the absolute: she is the Other" (p. 26). The categorizations worsen the psychological well-being of the woman as she is forced into a state of utter dilemma, 'anxiety,' or even 'dysfunctionality.' In the same novel, the character Urmi also suffers a similar dilemma. She explains that she felt "a sense of being vulnerable and naked, as if some armour I've been wearing all these years-against what? - Has fallen off" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 200). Urmi's dilemma seems to rest in the multiple definitions of femininity as prescribed by her 'Symbolic Order.' The term "all these years" suggests the duration of her dilemma. In her current situation, her dilemma could also be if she should voice out against Kalpana's rape or remain silent. Benhabib (1999) metaphorically

equates the woman's situation as "webs of interlocution," a term coined by philosopher, Taylor (1989). Benhabib (1999) further adds that as a woman in this web:

> We do not choose the webs in whose net we are initially caught or select those with whom we wish to converse, our agency consists in our capacity to weave out of those narratives and fragments of narratives a life story that makes sense for us, as unique individual selves. Certainly, the codes of established narratives in various cultures define our capacity to tell the story…they limit our freedom to "vary the code." (p. 344)

The woman becomes powerless or lacks control to reject or choose her preferred 'categories.' Consequently, she possesses a mixed bag of rewards and punishments that add up to her attributes for her 'identity.'

As the woman continues her battle with overcoming 'differences' and establishing 'pluralities,' her next challenge constitutes in interpreting the representational practices defined by the 'Symbolic Order'. Thus, reducing 'differences' by establishing 'identification' makes meaning-making an excruciatingly cumbersome task for the woman. In this regard, McNay (1999a) asserts that, "The process through which identity receives its form and substance is understood through an essentially abstract understanding of meaning as the product of a series of differences" (p. 323). In *The Binding Vine*, Urmi describes, "as if some armour I've been wearing all these years…has fallen off" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 200), she could be hinting at rejection of an internalized 'category.' It could be a part of her 'true self' or 'false self.' This, in turn indicates a new meaning-making for the newly internalized norm. One significant issue that could emerge in this condition is the loss of authenticity for the woman. Authenticity is an "individual's striving for meaning, coherence, and significance. It deals with assessments of what is real and what is false with regard to oneself" (Gecas, 2000, p.101). Authenticity plays a pivotal role in 'identity formation' (Gecas, 2000). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna's fictional character, Ella understands that "this is what she would like to be herself, this imagined woman is her own shadow, everything she is not" (Lessing, 1962, p. 193). Ella

has overcome 'differences' and identified herself with the "imagined woman" as desired by her lover, Paul (Lessing, 1962, p.193). In order to achieve this, she may have suffered 'psychic fragmentation.' But, she is also aware that the new 'identification' is "everything she is not" (Lessing, 1962, p.193). Ella seems to have internalized the 'difference' by splitting from her 'true self.' Her authenticity seems to be compromised. Ifemelu, in *Americanah*, confesses, "She was no longer sure what 'herself' was" (Adichie, 2013, p. 70). In the above lines, Ifemelu hints at her innumerable 'identifications' for reducing 'differences.' Ifemelu is an African native who has migrated to America for better career opportunities. In America, her individual 'difference' becomes more evident owing to her race. In order to reduce these 'differences' and conform to the American norms, she attempts to identify with the new norms. In this process, Ifemelu may have shunned her authenticity. "An original is lost in a continuous play of signs and the subject is fragmented" (Rodaway, 1995, p. 248). The bombardment of multitudinous signs and signifiers can hamper the woman's 'true self.' Consequently, the 'female identity' could be in a 'crisis' too. The loss of the original (in this case the 'true self') worsens the condition of 'psychic fragmentation' in the 'female psyche.'

The problem arises when 'identification' becomes an attempt to "become" the 'Other.' In the process of 'identifications' and 'assimilations,' Benjamin (1998) commands that, "the other's difference must exist outside; not be felt as a coercive command to 'become' the other, and therefore not be defended against by assimilating it to self" (p. 95). Ifemelu, in *Americanah*, contemplates, "Perhaps she was being too American about it" (Adichie, 2013, p. 406). In the above lines, Ifemelu refrains from discussing her personal life with her employer in Lagos, Aunt Onenu. This indicates that she has identified with a new norm, and thus harbors more than one 'identity' within her 'self'. She has *become* that 'new' 'identity' on her migration to America. Woodward (1997) in the context of 'difference' and 'identification' remarks that, "social differentiation is how these classifications of difference are 'lived out' in social relations" (p. 12). 'Identification' assigns meanings, categorizes, and classifies the woman into various subject-positions. The 'phallocentric' 'Symbolic Order' seems to leave little or no space for the woman to

venture into the plural positions by simultaneously preserving her authenticity. She is forced to repress her authenticity on the grounds of abnormality or immorality or 'non-conformity.' Douglas (1966) comments that, "It is only by exaggerating the differences between within and without, above and below, male and female, for and against that the semblance of order is created" (p. 4). The woman's strife towards reducing the 'differences' is infinitely deferred or postponed as she is forced to qualify her binary opposite, male as her ideal or "the standard" or "the norm" (Adichie, 2014, pp. 38-39). The male, with a fixed ego-boundary, can host stable meanings; but a 'relational' woman with a fluid 'psychic structure' cannot be trapped into meaning-making through binary categorizations. Additionally, her "feminine experience has been ignored, unrecognized, misperceived and lost" (Toronto, 2005, p. 31). The female psychic nature metaphorically seems to suggest that 'multiplicity' or 'plurality' of the 'psychic structure' and 'recognition'/'difference' with the 'Other' is a norm in the 'female psyche.' However, the norm becomes problematic when the 'Object' of 'identification' is 'phallocentric' and practically unachievable. It is, therefore, only valid to question the reliability and outcome of such predetermined 'identifications' and 'assimilations.'

4.3.2 Fragmented Psyche and Female Mental Illness

Various identity-related studies across the globe have supported the idea that the woman's struggle towards her 'identity formation' is accompanied by symptoms such as anxiety/distress or pathological symptoms (Baldwin, 1984; Carter & Parks, 1996; Davar, 1995; Holden et al., 2016-2017; McNamara & Rickard, 1989; Moradi & Subich, 2002). Evidences from the selected novels also support this argument. In *The Edible Woman*, Marian, demonstrates the 'anxiety' that has been latently residing in her 'psyche' in the lines, "It was waking up in the morning one day and finding she had already changed without being aware of it that she dreaded" (Atwood, 2009, p. 256). The character Marian exhibits an irrational fear over an unknown stimulus. This fear has risen after her marital commitment to Peter and after her consequent 'identifications' with the new norms. She "dreaded" the 'unconscious' changes that have occurred in her persona over her decision

to marry Peter. Thus, 'anxiety' could have formed due to the fear of losing her authenticity ('true self'). The psychologically troubled Marian eventually develops a form of visual 'hallucination' at her pre-wedding party and she exclaims:

> I was seeing him in a new light: he was changing form in the kitchen, turning from a reckless young bachelor into a rescuer from chaos, a provider of stability. Somewhere in the vaults of Seymour Surveys an invisible hand was wiping away my signature. (Atwood, 2009, p. 106)

Both the instances depict a relentless struggle to balance her 'psycho-social' 'conflicts' through her ego-defenses such as escapism, denial, and so on. The situations depict 'repressions,' 'intra-psychic conflicts,' instability in her 'psyche,' a possible 'psychic fragmentation,' and an 'unconscious' formation of symptom ('anxiety' and 'hallucinations'); this is directly relative to the 'intersubjective' changes. While she seems to be absolutely powerless, Peter is emerging absolutely powerful. While Peter progresses into being a "reckless young bachelor into a rescuer from chaos, a provider of stability," Marian is left with an irrational fear of an unknown force "wiping away" her "signature" (i.e., her 'identity') (Atwood, 2009, p. 106). It could also be presumed that Marian was experiencing the fear of non-being or non-existence. Sociologist, Giddens (1991) affirms that the fear of "non-being" is "one of the primal anxieties of the developing infant" (p. 49). Thus, this 'anxiety' to non-exist may have led to her development of 'eating disorder' which is evident in the lines, "It had finally happened at last then. Her body has cut itself off. The food circle has dwindled itself to a point, a black dot, closing everything outside" (Atwood, 2009, p. 325). These lines indicate Marian's transformation into an Anorexic. Douglas (1966), claims that, "danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable" (p. 97). The lines "closing everything outside" (Atwood, 2009, p. 325) may be suggesting her establishment of 'differences' from the external realm into the 'intra-psychic' realm which has aggravated her 'intra-psychic conflicts' and surfaced in the form of a 'neurotic disorder,' 'anorexia nervosa.'

Psychologists, Moradi and Subich (2002) demonstrated a correlation between feminist 'identity development,' the sexist events that a woman is subjected to (ranging from gender discrimination to sexual assault), and psychological distress. The study claims that "feminist identity development and experiences of perceived sexist events have important practical value because of their relation to women's psychological concerns" (Moradi & Subich, 2002, p. 63). Sexist events, such as rape, can hamper the psychological well-being of the woman. Additionally, as stated in the earlier chapter, the cognizance of rape of a loved one too can act as a "secondary traumatic stressor" in the 'relational' woman (Figley & Kleber, 1995, p.78). In both the cases, it could result in a 'female psychic fragmentation.' The character Shaktutai, on learning of her daughter's rape, undergoes a significant post-traumatic stress. Analyzing Shakutai's condition Urmi mentions, "She [Shakutai] begins sobbing for the first time, a horribly agonized sobbing…after a while she falls asleep…suddenly she wakes up with a start…Her eyes roll about as if she is searching for something, then rest on my face" (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 189-192). Shakutai's grief over the rape of her daughter could be transformed into 'PTSD' or 'ASD.' This is substantiated by her hysterical behavior in the above lines. In yet another study, psychologists, Carter and Parks (1996) attempted to draw a correlation between Helms' "Womanist Identity Development model" and mental health. This study included colored and 'White' women. The study revealed that the 'White' woman has high chances of developing pathological symptoms in her struggle towards 'identity formation' (Carter & Parks, 1996, pp. 484-489). Specifically, 'hallucination,' 'depression,' 'obsessive compulsivity,' 'anxiety,' 'phobia,' 'alcohol abuse,' and 'paranoia' are the set of psychological symptoms which the 'White' woman was inclined to develop. The 'White' character Delia, from *The Household Guide to Dying*, develops an 'OCPD' for making lists for her family after she understands that she is dying of cancer. The mortal illness (cancer) intrudes in her development of 'identity' and consequently her psychological well-being. Although she understands that list-making is a "weird behavior," her worry exceeds her reasoning capacity. Delia worries if her "absence would make any real difference into the running of the household" (Adelaide,

2008, p. 38). Other than these intersectional studies, there have been locale-specific studies on 'female identity' and their mental health. Mental health activist, Davar (1995) who conducted a secondary analysis on the mental health conditions of Indian woman asserts that a woman is at a high risk for developing 'mental illnesses.' She claims, "if one is a woman, married, in her reproductive years, divorced, widowed or separated, is a housewife, in low or middle level occupation, in unpaid jobs, or illiterate" (Davar, 1995, p. 2885). The sufferings of the characters Shakutai, Urmi, and Vanaa from *The Binding Vine* support the argument. Social researchers, Holden et al.(2016-17) highlight the reports from the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (2015) regarding the African-American women and their cases of severe 'depression.' As per this study, Holden et al. (2016-17) claim that "African-American women are twice as likely as men to suffer from severe depression" (p. 14). Additionally, many studies also highlight the vulnerability of the African women towards the development of mental stress and disorders due to their racial experiences (Baldwin, 1984). Researchers Schneider, Hitlan, and Radhakrishnan (2000) in their study have identified that African women are more prone to develop 'depression' due to environmental stress factors such as sexism, racism, economic inequality, 'socialization' practices, and health-related adversities. The character Ifemelu, in *Americanah*, vindicates the studies through her bouts of 'depression.' Her migration to America leaves her unsettled in socio-economic ways. After giving in sexually to earn a few dollars, to survive in America, she develops a state of 'depression.' Ifemelu confesses that she:

> Was bloodless, detached, floating in a world where darkness descended too soon and everyone walked around burdened by coats, and flattened by the absence of light…She deleted his [Obinze's] voice messages unheard and his e-mails unread, and she felt herself sinking, sinking quickly, and unable to pull herself up. (Adichie, 2013, p. 155)

These lines suggest that Ifemelu may have developed a 'depressive disorder.' The characters, Ifemelu, Marian, Ella, Anna, Molly, Shakutai, Urmi, Vanaa, Maya, Blanca Schnake, Delia, and other female characters in the selected novels show a significant

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correlation between the complexities in 'identity formation' and their vulnerability to developing pathological symptoms. In terms of the 'psychic structure,' each of them depicts a marked 'psychic fragmentation.' Every character is on the verge of a psychological breakdown or has already broken down. Technically, every character is situated on the border and is battling to form her authentic 'identity.' Her boundaries "shift from within…are very tricky" (Haraway, 1988, p. 201). In the purview of female 'egoic-boundaries,' Latin-American feminists, Flores and Yudice (1990) argue that the woman's shifting boundaries enable her to "apprehend the ultimate arbitrariness of the border itself, of forced separations and inferiorizations" (p. 80). This chapter has extensively discussed 'female psychic fragmentation' and identified its trajectory. What begins with an 'intra-psychic conflict,' advances into psychic 'decomposition,' 'doubling,' 'multiplication,' and eventually 'fragmentation.' Thus, 'decomposition,' 'doubling,' and 'multiplication' are identified as the phases that eventually culminate in 'psychic fragmentation.'

From this chapter, it could be inferred that 'psychic fragmentation' is a norm in the 'relational' woman. But the impact of 'fragmentation' is both a boon and a bane for the woman. 'Psychic fragmentation' impacts the 'female identity' too and results in the formation of 'relational,' 'undesired,' 'submissive' 'identity.' The 'female identity' can also lead to a state of 'crisis' owing to the established 'pluralities' and 'differences.' However, it is important to achieve a coherence, authenticity, and narrativity between the 'plural identities.' "The issue becomes whether it is possible to be a self at all without some ability to continue to generate meaningful and viable narratives over time" (Benhabib, 1999, p. 347). This chapter highlights the dilemma of the woman in various stages of her 'identity formation' struggling to achieve a meaning out of her fragmented psychic experiences. It establishes various arguments from the select novels to support the idea that there exists a strong correlation between 'plural identities,' 'psychic fragmentation,' and female 'mental illness.' The imbalances of the 'intersubjective' and 'intra-psychic' forces usher her into various forms of psychic imbalances such as

'OCPD,' 'PTSD,' 'ASD,' 'anxiety disorder,' 'eating disorder,' 'depressive disorder,' and so on. The chapter endorses the need to fathom the facets of 'psychic fragmentation' and the apparent female 'mental illness' in an 'intersubjective' perspective as evident from the novels.

Narrativity, coherence, and authenticity determine the health of an individual's 'identity.' 'Identity' becomes meaningful only when there is a "conjecture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we live in now" (Rutherford, 1990, p. 19). A 'female identity,' as analyzed in the current chapter, has varied dimensions. The dimensions traverse along the 'psycho-social' path. The chapter provided various instances to analyze the 'psychic fragmentation' which has led to a form of egoic-disconnection in the woman. The upcoming chapter "Nexus of the Female Psyche and the Fragmented Self" attempts to analyze the possibilities of co-existence of the plural and contradictory 'female identities.' It also studies the possibilities of women living with multiple 'fragmented identities.' The chapter undertakes an 'intersubjective' analysis to trace the 'female identity' that is enmeshed in the socio-cultural, political network in the select novels.

CHAPTER 5

NEXUS OF THE FEMALE PSYCHE AND THE FRAGMENTED SELF

5.1 METAMORPHOSIS AND EVOLUTION OF THE FEMALE PSYCHE AND THE FRAGMENTED SELF

Having traced the trajectory of 'female psychic fragmentation' extensively in the earlier chapter, this chapter probes into the repercussions of the phenomenon. Accordingly, the current chapter addresses the woman's 'mind-body interdependency' in the context of 'fragmentation.' With a specific reference to the female gender, Griffiths (1995), establishes that, "self (the self, the individual) is constrained by overlapping various communities, each of which is itself changing. Such plurality is the norm, not the exception" (p. 92). 'Plurality,' one of the immediate after-maths of 'psychic fragmentation,' is a norm. Thus, 'fragmentation' of the 'female psyche' is also a norm in the pretext of the ongoing 'repressions,' 'identifications,' and multiple 'assimilations.' For that reason 'egoic-split,' 'formlessness,' 'abjections,' and 'differences' also become a norm in the 'female psyche.' This chapter attempts to study the different ways in which the woman survives the 'fragmented identity' in spite of being enmeshed in the 'Symbolic Order' with multiple 'Significant Others.' This study discerns that living with 'formlessness,' sustaining 'abjection,' experiencing 'plural identities,' negotiating the 'differences,' and non-existence are the necessary post-fragmentation outcomes of the woman. In each of these conditions, 'neurotic' symptom formation and 'mental illnesses' are a common denominator. By adopting the theories of 'narrative identity,' 'intersubjectivity,' 'object-relationality,' and 'relational psychoanalysis,' the chapter investigates into the condition of 'psychic fragmentation' and the consequent pathological imbalances. This chapter further attempts to fathom the evolution of the 'female psyche' and the fragmented 'self.'

5.1.1 Living with Formlessness

The 'female form,' with reference to the 'psychic structure,' is most often a representative of the cultural and societal milieu. This form is the consequence of incessant negotiations of the 'intra-psychic' elements ('Id'-'ego'-'super-ego') with the 'intersubjective' ('love-objects'). The previous chapters have substantiated that the 'female form' shares a direct correlation with the 'female identity' wherein the 'identity' ('persona') becomes more of a cultural construct than an anatomical development. From a discursive psychological view, researcher, Weatherall (2002) defines 'identity' as:

> Produced and negotiated in the ongoing business of social interaction. In this view, identities do not have predefined, essential characteristics. Rather, identities emerge from the actions of local conversations…Thus, identity is not viewed in essentialist terms as something that people 'are.' Rather, identities are progressively and dynamically achieved through the discursive practices that individuals engage in. (p. 138)

The terms "produced," "negotiated," "progressive," and "dynamic" demonstrate that the woman is indefinitely configuring and reconfiguring the 'psyche,' 'identity' and 'self.' Thus, the woman's 'psychic structure' can be inferred as characterized by 'formlessness' interminably. Douglas (1966) examines the concept of 'formlessness' in the context of societal norms, taboo, and pollution. She observes that 'formlessness' is "credited with powers, some dangerous, some good. The play on form and formlessness is even more clear in the rituals of society" (Douglas, 1966, p. 96). In *The Edible Woman*, Marian depicts her 'formlessness' and states:

> All at once she was afraid that she was dissolving, coming apart layer by layer like a piece of cardboard in a gutter puddle…she was afraid of losing her shape, spreading out, not being able to contain herself any longer, beginning (that would be worst of all) to talk a lot, to tell everybody, to cry. (Atwood, 2009, p. 274)

In the above lines, the character Marian indicates her psychic 'formlessness' with the phrases "coming apart layer by layer" and also "spreading out, not being able to contain herself" (Atwood, 2009, p. 274). The reason for the female psychic 'formlessness' can be

credited to the rituals of the society (in other words, 'Symbolic Order'). When Marian expresses her fears for not being "able to contain herself any longer" (Atwood, 2009, p. 274) it could imply her 'dysfunctionality' or 'non-conformity' to the prescribed social norms. These lines describe the predicament that the 'female psyche' suffers from. The 'Symbolic Order' defines a boundary for woman's 'containment.' Nonetheless, the woman is judged by the male standard. This directly impacts her ability to contain and she is always battling to be "what she is not" (Rabine, 1988, p. 17). Marian compares herself to a "piece of cardboard in a gutter puddle" (Atwood, 2009, p. 274). With this, Marian could be questioning the intentions of the 'Symbolic Order' as it is inflicting a dilemma within her 'psyche.' Ussher (1997), in the work *Body Talk*, mentions in this regard that, "where we question the validity of social categories and the ideological intent behind them, we can be left with a scenario where nothing is 'real,' everything is just a social label; an invention of those in power" (p. 6). The woman whose pangs of 'formlessness' increases, could "question those definitions" prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order' in her quest for 'identity' (Moradi, 2005, p. 231). Marian's inability to maintain her form could be construed as abnormal or dysfunctional by the 'Symbolic Order.' Yet, questioning the definitions of the 'Symbolic Order' enables the woman to live with her 'formlessness' and simultaneously protect her 'relational ego.' Douglas (1966) analyzes the merits of 'disorder' which could be extended to its root cause, i.e., 'formlessness.' She asserts that:

> Disorder spoils pattern, it also provides the material of pattern. Order implies restriction; from all possible materials, a limited selection has been made and from all possible relations a limited set has been used. So disorder by implication is unlimited, no pattern has been realized in it, but its potential for patterning is indefinite. This is why, though we seek to create order, we do not simply condemn disorder. We recognize that it is destructive to existing patterns; also that it has potentiality. It symbolizes both danger and power. (Douglas, 1966, p. 95)

An apposition of the above ideas on the woman's condition of 'formlessness' therefore, suggests that a woman, who is on the verge of disorder, remains unrestricted, and harbors immense power to explore her repressed potential. Therefore, 'disorder,' in the view of the 'Symbolic Order' may hamper an order or 'pattern.' Nonetheless, for the woman, it allows her egoic-structure, which is predominantly 'relational,' to prosper due to its unlimited and indefinite nature. In *The Golden Notebook,* Anna depicts the disorder and 'formlessness,' when she says:

> Now it was terrible, because I was faced with the burden of re-creating order out of the chaos that my life had become. Time had gone, and my memory did not exist, and I was unable to distinguish between what I had invented and what I had known, and I knew that what I had invented was all false. It was a whirl, an orderless dance, like the dance of the white butterflies in a shimmer of heat over the damp sandy vlei. (Lessing, 1962, p. 538)

Anna clearly displays disorder, chaos, and an indefinite nature in these lines. She also displays her social pressure to create an "order out of the chaos" (Lessing, 1962, p. 538). When Douglas (1966) asserts that disorder "symbolizes both danger and power (p. 95), she could be hinting at the various positive repercussions that the pressure to conform could assert on women. Most of these repercussions emancipate the woman unconsciously and instill a fear in the 'Symbolic Order.' Anna's disorder has technically induced pathological imbalances such as a psychic 'dissociation' where she has lost the sense of time and memory too. But, from the gynocentric standpoint, it has emancipated her from the chains of patterns or form which is antagonistic to the woman's egoic-nature. Thus, Anna could be able to explore her potential by traversing beyond her predestined boundary. From a deconstructive standpoint, Anna's disorder allows her to exhibit "freeplay" of signs (Derrida, 1978, p. 365). The lines, "I was unable to distinguish between what I had invented and what I had known" suggests this notion (Lessing, 1962, p. 538). By freeplay, it implies "a field of infinite substitutions" in the territory of a finite unit (Derrida, 1978, p. 365). The woman who is bound in a 'phallocentric' constitution is gorged with multiple 'identities,' multiple subjectivities, and consequently multiple

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meanings. 'Formlessness' in the woman could be seen as the result of excessive 'internalization,' 'socialization,' and 'accommodation.' Nonetheless, this condition enhances the potential for psychological disorders in women, which in turn gives them reason enough to disregard the 'Symbolic Order.'

A topographical analysis of a stable structure, for instance the 'male ego,' assumes a fixed form with a center. Derrida (1978) critiques the function of the center as one that, "orient(s), balance(s), and organize(s) the structure" (p. 352). He further adds, "by orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the center of a structure permits the play of its elements inside the total form. And even today the notion of a structure lacking any center represents the unthinkable itself" (Derrida, 1978, p. 352). In this purview, woman's 'psychic structure' is "unthinkable" as it lacks a fixed form, consequently lacks a definite center and coherence. The term "unthinkable" attaches a sense of mystery and power to it. Such a mystery, in the 'female form,' could become dangerous for the male. The 'formless' woman can emerge powerful to disregard the social norms and perform dangerous acts such as 'aversions,' 'rejections,' 'repulsions,' 'repetitions' and such other 'non-conformities.' These acts can empower the woman to live with 'formlessness' without hampering her 'psyche.' In *The Binding Vine*, Mira confesses, "Love!...If this is love it is a terrible thing. I have learnt to say 'no' at last…What is it he wants from me?…Why can't he leave me alone?" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 67). These lines explain Mira's repulsion to the forced sexual act with her husband. Mira is forced to identify and internalize the feminine norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order.' But, the lines, "I have learnt to say 'no'" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 67) suggests that she has refuted those norms and thus developed 'formlessness' within her 'psyche.' This response demonstrates Douglas' idea of the power and danger vested in 'formlessness.' The 'Symbolic Order' diplomatically assigns a form and fixedness to the woman's 'relational' 'psychic structure.' But, her 'relationality' prevents the woman's structure to assume stability. In the light of 'forms' and 'structures,' Butler (1995) mocks at woman's confinement into 'identity' "categories" (p. 50). She asserts that these 'categories' function as being "exclusionary" and "normative" (Butler, 1995, p. 50). The 'category' called as "woman"

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is attributed by a plethora of "differences, one that cannot be totalized or summarized by a descriptive identity category" (Butler, 1995, p. 50). But, a woman with 'relational ego' cannot be categorized; therefore her psychic 'formlessness' needs to be interpreted as a quality rather than a lack. Butler (1995) suggests that lack of 'categories' can lead to a site for "permanent openness and resignifiability" in women (p. 50). It signals at more lucrative avenues such as, "multiple significations, to emancipate it from the maternal or racialist ontologies to which it has been restricted, and to give it play as a site where unanticipated meanings might come to bear" (Butler, 1995, p. 50). When a woman is constantly identifying, assimilating, and accommodating multiple social norms, she will invariably perform multiple significations and multiple 'identities.' Living with 'formlessness' can be one of the natural outgrowths of the woman who has to balance her 'relational ego' and 'Symbolic Order.'

5.1.2   Sustaining the Female Abjection

An 'abject' is "*the 'object' of primal repression*...powerless outside, impossible inside" (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 12-48, *author's emphasis*). The 'female psyche' fragments by creating an 'abject.' When the woman 'abjects,' she doesn't discard the 'abjected' ensemble (i.e., repressed desires). In turn, it co-exists with the newly internalized element within the 'self,' yet stays distinct from it. It could be speculated that the 'fragmented female psyche' engages in a host of 'abjections' in order to function normally in the society. Urmi from *The Binding Vine* cites an example of the character Shakutai who exhibits her co-existing 'abjects' when she says:

> And so we go on. I don't want anymore, I've had enough, I've had enough. Shakutai cried out. But in the morning I found her getting on with her chores. You can never opt out, you can never lay it down, the burden of belonging to the human race. (Deshpande, 1992, p. 202)

As evident in these lines, Shakutai clearly hints at her 'abjection.' The character, Kalpana has been brutally raped. This trauma exposes her mother Shakutai into symptoms of 'PTSD.' Even though she understands that Kalpana is an innocent and helpless victim

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who should be empathized with, she displays her vulnerability by blaming the victim instead of the accused. Her 'self' is split between the social norms (i.e., 'ideal') and psychological impulses (i.e., 'real'). She 'abjects' the 'Ideal' feminine role at night, but embraces the same in the morning unconsciously or consciously. This instance suggests Shakutai's 'abjection.' 'Abjection' can also be a quality for the 'female psyche' to sustain 'psychic-fragmentation.' 'Abjection' is most likely to occur when certain 'abjects' threaten woman's "sense of social or moral thresholds" (Ilott & Buckley, 2015, p. 3). The list of 'abject' people include, "the traitor, the liar, the criminal with a good conscience, the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a saviour" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). Thus, the 'abjects' seem to be the wrong-doers who justify their action on moral grounds and force the 'Other' to accept their rationalizations too. They represent the 'Symbolic Order' who justify their violation of woman's psychological/bodily rights in the pretext of socio-cultural norms. Thus, 'abjection' is a necessity for women who have a predominant 'relational ego' and strong 'object-relations.' Marian, from *The Edible Woman* displays her level of 'abjection' as she confesses:

> I had dug myself a private burrow. I felt smug… It was satisfying to be the only one who knew where I really was…I began to wish they would hurry up and realize I had disappeared, so they could search for me. I could no longer recall what good reasons had led me to cram myself under Len's bed in the first place. (Atwood, 2009, p. 90)

Marian, in the above lines, reflects over her behavior of secluding herself from her 'Significant Others' and eventually questions her own actions. This could suggest her state of 'abject' where her one 'self' desires to be Peter's trophy-wife and the other 'self' wishes to be the 'real self.' There is a severe 'intra-psychic conflict' which may have triggered this 'abjection' as well as her development of 'Anorexia Nervosa.'

Women tend to 'abject' an unwanted part of their 'psyche' as an after-math of 'intra-psychic conflicts' due to their 'object-choices.' An 'abjection' suggests the power of the 'ego' and the external agency ('Symbolic Other') as well as 'repression' of the 'id' impulses. The female 'abject' is "powerless outside, impossible inside" (Kristeva, 1982,

p. 48). In spite of repudiation, the 'abject' cannot be claimed by the outside 'Other' as it continues to reside in the 'psyche.' The 'abjected' remnants seem to switch between 'conscious' and 'unconscious' 'intra-psychic' zones. Kristeva (1982) supports this argument as she comments:

> The 'unconscious' contents remain here *excluded* but in a strange fashion: not radically enough to allow for a secure differentiation between subject and object, and yet clearly enough for a defensive *position* to be established…as if the fundamental opposition were between I and Other or…between Inside and Outside. (p. 7, *author's emphasis*)

Kristeva's lines clarify the manner in which the 'abject' becomes impossible inside. Woman is persistently identifying and internalizing the norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Other.' These processes, as described in the previous chapters, transfer the prevalent 'differences' from the external world into the internal. In the constant transfer from the external into the internal world, the 'true self' seems to be hampered. Also, woman's 'egoic-boundaries' become more blurred, more chaotic, and the psychic dilemma increases. 'Abjection' reduced the psychic tension by creating temporary boundaries between the newly identified component and the 'true self.' This form of internal compartmentalization allows women to function normally in the society in spite of the 'fragmented psyche' within. Benjamin (1998) describes this form of 'abjection' or repudiation as "exclusion" which enables the 'female psyche' to "shore up the subject's identity, not to the truly outside other" (p. 102). In such a scenario, each compartment could be 'unconscious' of the 'Other' and every 'identity' could be a 'temporal identity.' In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna struggles to summon up one of her 'abjects' in another social context and time. She asserts, "But I can't remember, it's all gone. And I get exasperated, trying to remember-it's like wrestling with an obstinate other-self who insists on its own kind of privacy" (Lessing, 1962, p. 137). These lines substantiate that 'abjection' could be one of the solutions that women resort to, to sustain the 'psychic fragmentation.' By creating a boundary, 'abjection' helps in a clear demarcation between the 'true self' and the internalized 'selves' ('Other').

Along with demarcation, 'abjection' protects the 'ego' from the harsh consequences of the 'Symbolic Order.' 'Abjection' allows an expression of the repressed desires by fragmenting the unwanted parts of the 'psyche.' Benhabib (1999), in this regard comments that:

> This projected or "abjected" other is thus excised from oneself; placing it outside, the self feels secure in maintaining the boundaries of its own identity without being threatened by dissolution into otherness. The other is the stranger, the foreigner, the one who is "alien" and "unlike" us. (p. 350)

'Abjection' could be a survival strategy for woman's 'body' in order to secure the 'true self' from being totally transformed into an 'ideal self' which is stranger, and foreign to the 'true self.' The 'abjects' that host the repressed desires could be communicated by woman through her 'female language' such as, sensory cues. In Marian's case, her 'abjected' remnants were expressed through her 'body' through aversive symptoms (technically known as 'anorexia nervosa'). The below lines depict her aversion to food, "She became aware of the carrot. It's a root, she thought…maybe it even makes a sound, a scream too low for us to hear, but it doesn't die right away, it keeps on living, right now it's still alive" (Atwood, 2009, p. 220). These aversions could be the sensory cues that communicated Marian's 'abjections.' The character Marian, in the above lines, examines carrots critically. Her aversion to food that started with carnivorous beings, slowly extends towards any living being, which includes the flora too. The carrot, for Marian, could symbolize her repressed 'abject.' Her aversion towards carrot could metaphorically suggest her aversion towards the new norms of the 'Symbolic Order.' Thus, Marian's development of 'anorexia nervosa' could be seen as a symptomatic 'abjection' of an unwanted aspect of the 'self' that demands 'repression' of the impulsive desires. Kristeva (1982) supports this interpretation asserting that the relentless 'repressions' of the 'female psyche' bring about modifications "within the subject…either of speech (parapraxes, etc.), or of the body (symptoms), or both (hallucinations, etc.)" (p. 7). Thus, 'abjection' could be a strategy employed by the 'female psyche' to express the repressed desires and divulge the symptoms into the external world.

'Abjection,' destabilizes "systems of order, meaning, truth and law that is at stake" (Mansfield, 2000, p. 85). The systems of order, meaning, truth and law, as critiqued by various feminist theorists, represents and propagates a "male world view" (Toronto, 2005, p. 25). The human social order, which is defined by the patriarchal myth, orders "men first, women second" as the "universal truth" (Toronto, 2005, p. 25). Thus, it could be inferred that the female 'abjection' could be a revolt against the social order aimed at destabilizing the 'Symbolic Order.' The character Ifemelu in *Americanah* believes "The more she wrote, the less sure she became. Each post scraped off yet one more scale of self until she felt naked and false" (Adichie, 2013, p. 5). Ifemelu, in these lines, showcases her 'abjection' related to racial injustices through a sublimatory medium, i.e., blog-writing. With the lines, "each post scraped off yet one more scale of self" (Adichie, 2013, p. 5) she reveals the extent of destabilization of her 'self' due to this 'abjection.' However, these 'selves,' which are communicated externally as a blog write-up, could be the internalized 'selves' based on the American norms. Thus, 'abjection' unleashes "the internal ambiguity and uncertainty that logical systems try to deny or disguise" (Mansfield, 2000, p. 85). Thus, 'abjection' brings to the fore the ambiguous and uncertain part of the 'female self' that was repressed in the 'unconscious.' Mansfield (2000) who critically examines Kristeva's (1982) notion of 'abjection' claims that, "there is no selfhood without a simultaneous abjection. In gender terms, there is no commitment to masculine subjectivity without a simultaneous subversion of that subjectivity's wholeness and completion by an impulse to fragmentation, ambiguity and ambivalence" (as cited in Mansfield, 2000, p. 89). 'Abjection' empowers the woman to re-establish her sense of 'self' that was repressed through 'internalization,' 'identification,' 'assimilation' with the 'Symbolic Other.' The character Ifemelu subverts the masculine subjectivity through the expression of her 'language' in the sublimated form, i.e., in the form of blog-writing. Thus, her 'abjected self' rests in her every blog-post. The 'abjected female selves' contribute towards the formation of woman's subjectivity too. For a woman, such a form of subjectivity is "experienced as an intense ambivalence…It is always under threat, in an unresolved state that is exciting as well as dangerous" (Mansfield, 2000, p. 81).

'Abjection' allows the woman to subvert the absolute 'Order' (i.e., the 'Symbolic Order') and also function normally in the social set-up. Consequently, 'abjection' could be seen as one of the powerful strategies a woman adopts to survive the 'psychic fragmentation.'

5.1.3   Experiencing the Plural Female Psyche

'Plurality' is one of the conspicuous outcomes of 'female psychic fragmentation.' 'Plurality,' in this context, can be associated with multiple 'identities' and multiple 'selves.' From an evolutionary biological perspective, 'multiplicity' of 'selves' is the "multiple versions of the self [that] exist within an overarching, synthetic structure of identity…[which] probably cannot possess the degree of internal cohesion or unity" (Slavin & Kriegman, 1992, p. 204). 'Multiplicity' of 'selves' results in 'plurality' of 'identity' too. In *The Golden Notebook* Anna exhibits 'pluralities' as she states:

> For years my life seems to have consisted of activities I began to do provisionally, temporarily, with half a heart, and which I then stayed with…And yet there were always two personalities in me, the 'communist' and Anna, and Anna judged the communist all the time. And vice-versa. (Lessing, 1962, p. 82)

Anna depicts 'plurality' of 'self' and 'identity' in these lines. 'Plurality' suggests intervention of 'identification' process to reduce external 'differences.' Simultaneously, it also suggests increased 'intra-psychic conflicts' due to the co-existing 'plural identities' within the woman. Researcher Budgeon (2001) claims that 'female identity' is "always plural and shifting," and remarks:

> The contradictory and complex nature of identities makes a politics based upon the representation of identity inherently flawed. Representation seeks to define and thereby fix in place a secure or uniform identity, but one consequence has been the non-identification by young women with that subject, suggesting that their difference evades this fixing in place. (Budgeon, 2001, p. 23)

'Plurality' in 'identity' connotes multiple 'representations'; most often the 'representations' are contradictory with one another leading to contradictory nature of 'identities' too. 'Representation,' as cited by Butler (1999), serves the "normative

function" (p. 3). 'Representations' produce 'identities' and they are at the root of 'internalization' and are culture-driven. 'Representations' aim at stabilizing the 'identity' structure, but the 'ego-relational female' can never own a stable or fixed structure. Consequently, one of the pivotal challenges for the woman with a 'plural identity' is the ability to balance her multiple and contradictory representations. Moreover, the pressure "to define and thereby fix in place a secure or uniform identity" (Budgeon, 2001, p. 23) creates 'plurality' as an issue. Otherwise, 'plural identities' could be a qualitative response of the woman to 'psychic fragmentation' when she cannot define herself into a fixed representation due to her egoic-traits. In the above lines, from *The Golden Notebook*, Anna showcases such a dilemma where, her communist 'identity' judges the non-communist Anna and vice-versa. Anna's 'identity,' in the midst of the representational politics, seems to be "inherently flawed" (Budgeon, 2001, p. 23). It is the 'Symbolic Order' that presumes this quality as a failure to establish coherence. Another significant factor that requires analysis in woman's 'plurality' is the balancing act of 'multiplicity' of significations. Literary critic, Belsey (2002) describes 'female subject' as "subjects of particular forms of knowledge, which may construct mutually incompatible subject-positions" (p. 51). Thus, woman's 'plural identities' could also connote multiple and contradictory "subject-positions" (Belsey, 2002, p. 51). In the purview of multiple significations, 'female subject' is "linguistically and discursively constructed and displaced across the range of knowledges" (Belsey, 2002, p. 51). In *The Edible Woman*, Marian examines her friend Clara who is constantly changing her physical form due to her continuous pregnancies. She thinks:

> Clara was deflating toward her normal size again she would be able to talk with her more freely: she would no longer feel as though she was addressing a swollen mass of flesh with a tiny pinhead…bulging with the burden of an entire society, a semi-person…a cluster of hidden personalities that she didn't know at all. (Atwood, 2009, p. 138)

Even though Marian refers to Clara's pregnancy and her changing body-shapes in these lines, it could be an analogy for the plural and shifting 'female identity.' She explicitly

suggests 'plurality' when she referred to Clara as a 'body' that was "bulging with the burden of an entire society, a semi-person…a cluster of hidden personalities that she didn't know at all" (Atwood, 2009, p. 138). Clara exhibits the highest degree of social intervention through her 'body.' "Linguistically and discursively" (Belsey, 2002, p. 51) she has been constructed as the Earth Mother, whose only duty is bearing children. Marian expresses her disgust to this form of social intervention as she claims that Clara "lets herself be treated like a thing" (Atwood, 2009, p. 39). Thus, 'plurality' asserts multiple significations, but it also suggests Clara's failure at balancing her multiple significations. This can lead to 'neurotic' symptom formation. A 'mad identity,' which could be the result of 'plurality' is the "inevitable result in the presence of a heterogeneous space" (Parr & Philo, 1995, p. 192). The woman, with a 'relational ego,' adorns heterogeneous spaces too which further encourages her 'plural identity.' Of these, some 'identities' are desired, some undesired, some contradictory and some non-contradictory with one another. Woman is expected to perform in all these roles in order to accomplish normality in society. However, 'plurality' can hamper the 'female psyche' internally when she fails to balance the multiple significations and heterogeneous spaces.

'Plurality' in 'identity,' can be both advantageous and disadvantageous. On the one hand, it induces vulnerability in woman's 'psychic structure.' On the other, 'plurality' can be a defensive strategy that a woman adopts to outgrow the pressures of 'fragmented psyche.' In this view, Mansfield (2000) suggests that, "the self that is committed to the symbolic order, and on which the latter depends, is fragile and vulnerable. It contains within it a plurality and uncertainty that is always threatening to tear it apart" (p. 88). A woman who constantly conforms to the 'Symbolic Order' emerges as fragile and vulnerable; and that form of vulnerability can be dangerous too. In *The Household Guide to Dying*, the character Delia, who is battling for survival with a malignant cancer, describes herself as "new reconstructed dying me" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 273). Similarly, in *Americanah* Ifemelu claims, "I came from a country where race was not an issue; I did not think of myself as black and I only became black when I came to America" (Adichie, 2013, p. 291). For Ifemelu, while in America, gender as well as race became a significant

'identity' matrix that instigated her struggle to conform and 'become' the 'Ideal.' These lines clearly depict the 'plurality' in the 'female identity.' The terms such as "reconstruction" and "became" connote a constant change in the representational practices or her heterogeneous spaces; consequently a change in the 'psychic structure' too. In these cases, woman's 'psychic structure' could be compared to a 'borderland.' Boyce-Davies (1994) describes the nature of borderland as they are "set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish 'us' from 'them.' Nevertheless they are unnatural boundaries, the sites of constant transition" (p. 49). Moreover, she asserts that, in a borderland, "multiple identities collide and/or renegotiate [their] space" (Boyce-Davies, 1994, p. 49). The female with a 'relational ego' and permeable 'ego-boundaries' could be adjusted to borderlands. However, it is the social interventions which try to define her to create an issue. The renegotiation could be either conforming or non-conforming to the social order. In this regard, Belsey (2002) comments, as much as the new vocabularies and new analysis will make the 'subject' "restless, dissatisfied and eager, if only in unrecognized ways…in that precariousness, that dissatisfaction, lies the possibility of transformation" (p. 54). Similarly, with the reconstructions and becoming, the characters Delia and Ifemelu could be transforming their plural and fragmented 'identity' into newer avenues.

5.1.4   Negotiating the Differences

In addition to forming 'plurality,' 'differences' could be at the base of the methodic "interpellation" (Althusser, 1971, p. 174) of a woman into a 'subject.' It is 'difference' that creates the distinction between 'self' and 'Other.' It is crucial for the 'female psyche' to negotiate their 'differences' to survive the 'fragmented psyche.' 'Categories' play a crucial role in creating individual 'differences' (Butler,1993b, 1995; Woodward, 1997). Further, Woodward (1997), confirms that 'categories' are "classificatory systems" that are "always constructed around difference and the ways in which differences are marked out" (p. 38). One of the significant aims of categorization or classification could be the marking of 'differences' between 'this' and 'that,' 'him' and

'her,' 'inside' and 'outside,' 'subject' and 'object.' Having established the 'differences' through 'categories,' a woman, who is subjected to the 'Symbolic Order,' is expected to be all that she cannot or does not want to be. In this process, the male standard is the norm or order. The binary opposite 'female' naturally becomes categorized as 'disorder' or 'not-norm.' Douglas (1966) affirms:

> Ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and unishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the differences between within and without, above and below, male and female, for and against that the semblance of order is created. (p. 4)

Thus, first 'differences' are established and consequently woman is forced to internalize. The strategy for negotiating the 'differences' for a woman rests in 'internalization.' In *The Edible Woman*, Marian, demonstrates the ill-effects of succumbing to categorization. She assumes, "maybe Peter was trying to destroy me, or maybe I was trying to destroy him, or we were both trying to destroy each other" (Atwood, 2009, p. 353). Marian has internalized and identified with the norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order' (patriarchy) and consequently reduced her 'differences.' In this process, she transforms from being an independent, self-sufficient woman into a dependent and submissive one. She could be in a state of "shock of the 'doubleness' of similarity and difference" (Hall, 1990, p. 227). In this regard, gender-theorist, Irigaray (1985) aptly comments that, "for a woman it is not a matter of installing herself within this lack…it is rather a matter of trying to practice that difference" (p. 159). Possibly, a woman responds positively to the 'Symbolic Order' in order to overcome the inferiority that she is believed to possess. Marian, eventually cites her reason for these 'internalizations.' She confesses that, "I want to be adjusted, that's just it. I don't see any point in being unstable...didn't see any point in starving to death" (Atwood, 2009, pp. 332-333). The terms, "adjusted" and "unstable" denotes her pressure to submit to categorization. But the phrase, "starving to death" denotes symptom formation. These lines denote that although Marian's 'internalizations' and symptom formation are in the two ends of the spectrum, Marian

presumes that her symptom formation is due to maladjustment. Her boundaries are blurred and she is in a dilemma. She has unconsciously displaced these desires onto her appetite by developing an 'eating disorder' called as 'anorexia nervosa.' 'Internalization' is a tortuous process for a woman who is forced to internalize 'objects,' "in relation to themselves…experiencing external relationships as internal and their feelings in relation to someone else as an internal sense of self" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 42). This exchange between the 'internal' and 'external' to overcome 'differences' can result in symptom formations in women.

The consciousness of 'differences' between 'self' and 'Other' constitutes an "effect of the other," uproots "certainty" and represents "an experience of change, transformation and hybridity, in vogue as it acts as a focus for all the complementary fears, anxieties, confusions, and arguments that accompany change" (Rutherford, 1990, p.10). A woman is incessantly trying to negotiate the 'differences' with the 'Symbolic Order' and survive the 'fragmented psyche.' Considering the antagonism between the 'Symbolic Order' and the 'female ego,' the 'female psyche' may experience negotiation as a tortuous task. Social researcher, Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2007) reinstates the *Silencing the Self* paradigm proposed by Jack (1991) and suggests that the normative expectations for a woman "insist that they be overly attuned to others' needs, often at great cost to their own goals, desires, and feelings" (p. 29). Under these circumstances, 'negotiations' become imbalanced with the social norms defeating the psychological desires. In *The Household Guide to Dying*, Delia justifies her obsessive behavior as:

> Cleaning to me was never an ignoble activity. Of course, I yelled at the girls for dropping chips and wrappers on newly swept floors, dirty clothes and wet towels on their beds. But the act of cleaning, like cooking, suspended from its context…was a source of simple pleasure. (Adelaide, 2008, pp. 264-265)

These lines demonstrate her defensive behavioral response to the excessive submission to the social norms. Developing an 'obsession' for cleanliness beyond the normal limits is categorized as 'OCPD.' Delia's 'obsession' could be a defensive response to her repressed care-giving desires. The 'repression' that fostered frustration could be

displaced in the form of an obsessive and compulsive behavior such as 'cleaning' and 'making lists.' With regard to displacement of such repressed desires into a symptom, Fenichel (1946) comments that, "If a person reacts to an event in an exaggerated way or with a type of affect that seems inadequate, this is a sign of displacement; the affect actually belongs to some other situation which had been warded off" (p. 75). The character, Delia is displacing her frustration by developing obsessive and compulsive symptoms. In another instance, she confirms her reasons for these frustrations, "I doubted he [her husband, Archie] has ever understood how tight a thread I had been all these years" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 39). These lines prove that Delia may have displaced her 'repression' into a 'neurotic' symptom (i.e., 'OCPD'). She has negotiated her 'differences' by reconstructing her 'self' as a dependent, from being a care-giver. Benjamin (1998) describes this tensed process as:

> The self is nonidentical. First, the self is constituted by the identifications with the other that it deploys in an ongoing way in particular to deny the loss and uncontrollability that otherness necessarily brings. Second, it is reciprocally constituted in relation to the other, depending on the other's recognition, which it cannot have without being negated, acted on by the other, in a way that changes the self, making it nonidentical. (p. 79)

A woman, who is striving to become identical or reduce the 'differences,' could be doing so for an expensive bargain. She can consequently lose her 'true self' too. Additionally, her negotiation can hamper her psychological well-being. In this regard, Belsey (2002) points out that in such cases, "one way of responding to this situation is to retreat from the contradictions, and from the language that defines the conflicting ideals, to become 'sick'" (p. 55). This rationalizes the development of disorders in women more than men. In *The Edible Woman,* Marian's 'Anorexia Nervosa' could be a defensive response to her 'repressions' and 'intra-psychic conflicts.' Marian transforms from a phase of helplessness to a state of understanding her 'conflicts.' She affirms, "At first she had been running blindly; now however she knew exactly where she was going. 'You'll be all right,' she said to herself" (Atwood, 2009, p. 309). These lines seem to suggest that

Marian may either have identified her reason for the pathological imbalance or learnt to manage the 'differences,' the 'categories' as well as her 'Significant Others.' The 'fragmented female identity,' could be able to negotiate her 'differences' only when she is emancipated to construct meanings for her prescribed 'categories' through a 'female language.'

5.2 STRIKING THE EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN FRAGMENTED PSYCHE AND THE FEMALE SELF

In the context of 'minority identity' Hall (1990) describes, "We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about 'one experience, one identity,' without acknowledging its other side - the ruptures and discontinuities which constitute" (p. 225). The minority 'subject,' i.e., a woman, is characterized by ruptures and discontinuities which in turn bring about fluidity and instability. Her innumerable 'internalizations,' 'identifications,' and 'assimilations' soars her level of instability. This instability acts as an obstacle for the woman who is striving to achieve a cohesive 'self.' Griffiths (1995) substantiates this in an attempt to trace the woman's path towards self-development and asserts:

> First there is a problem with finding (or creating) oneself: often expressed as finding a real self or a self acceptable to itself. Second there is the problem with making the subjective experience of the self intelligible. This second problem usually expressed as a problem of dealing with the experience of a fragmented and changing self. (p. 76)

These lines presume that 'multiplicity' of 'selves' is a norm in case of a woman. Also, a cohesive 'self,' for the woman, may not be concerned with the fixedness of the structure. Rather, the concept of cohesion could be related to meaning-making. The conundrum with regard to her self-development is not limited to finding a 'true self' but it is also related to the meaning-making associated with each 'self.' Marian, in *The Edible Woman*, depicts her state of perplexity as she battles her multiple-contradictory 'selves.' She confesses, "Once I was outside I felt considerably better. I had broken out; from what, or into what, I didn't know" (Atwood, 2009, p. 93). These lines confirm Marian's

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'fragmented psyche' and multiple identities. Her predicament is incomprehensible to her, in the sense that, although she understands that she has broken out of something, she fails to understand "from what, or into what" (Atwood, 2009, p. 93). This reflects a deep conundrum between the psychological and the social. The 'social self' of the woman is expected to represent the norms of the 'Symbolic Order' and they are more or less concrete. On the other hand, her 'psychological self' is a changing-self due to her 'relational ego' and the numerous 'Significant Others.' Thus, a woman is a "subject-in-process" (Kristeva, 2011, p. 333). Hall (1990) resonates a similar idea while discussing 'minority identity' as an ongoing "project of the self"'; hence "instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact…we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production' which is never complete, always in process" (p. 222). This is true of the 'female identity' which is constantly configured and reconfigured depending on the situations she is located in.

In the novel *Americanah*, Ifemelu grieves, "She had taken on, for too long,…a way of being that was not hers" (Adichie, 2013, p. 175). In this case, the 'female identity' is fixed in a predicament between the 'social self' and the 'psychological self.' Ifemelu is stuck between becoming a 'social-self' and being a 'psychological self.' A choice of one among the two seems impractical for the woman as her 'identity' is 'relational' and 'interpersonal.' Ifemelu who had been engrossed in the process of becoming a socially approvable 'self,' understands that "she was no longer sure what 'herself' was" (Adichie, 2013, p. 70). These lines clearly demonstrate that the 'social self' has adversely affected her 'psychological self.' At the same time, attending to the 'psychological self' by denying an exclusionary paradigm or by rejecting the 'categories' (Butler, 1993b, p. 309), is also not a practical solution for a woman (McNay, 1999a, p. 329). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna demonstrates the consequence of such a choice in the lines, "I could see these Annas only as apart from me…I no longer had a sense of time" (Lessing, 1962, pp. 516-517). Here, Anna has been exclusively conforming to her psychological desires by disregarding the social norms. "This provokes the dualisms of subjection-resistance, exclusion-inclusion" (McNay, 1999a, p. 328). Instead McNay (1999a) suggests, "There is

a need to develop a more positive or substantive account of certain aspects of subject formation" (p. 329). The solution, therefore, could be the dialectics of *idem* (selfhood)-*ipse* (sameness) (McNay, 1999a, p. 320, *author's emphasis*). McNay (1999a) suggests that this dialectic form denotes "the hermeneutic aspects of this intertwinement of the temporal dimensions of past and future" (p. 330). McNay (1999a) supports Ricouer's (1992) theory of 'narrative identity' as a practical possibility for the feminist paradigm and states that:

> Idem accounts of identity cannot offer a dynamic, temporalised notion of the self (ipse) as constancy through and within change. Idem identity implies permanence in time in terms of sameness and similitude and it finds its paradigmatic expression in numerical identity. (p. 320)

A balance between the *idem* and *ipse* allows a healthy interplay between "stasis (*idem*) and change (*ipse*)" (McNay, 1999a, p. 333, *author's emphasis*). Women should also be allowed to do that to qualitatively survive 'psychic fragmentation.'

5.2.1   The Female Predicament with Meaning-making and Authenticity

An 'identity' emerges in a state of 'crisis' when the individual is unable to maintain a stability and coherence (Mercer, 1990, p. 43). The concept of "coherence" could be suggestive of woman's meaning-making. Benhabib (1999) substantiates, "The issue becomes whether it is possible to be a self at all without some ability to continue to generate meaningful and viable narratives over time" (p. 347). Meaning, together with "coherence and significance" makes up for "authenticity" (Gecas, 2000, p. 101). It enables an individual to distinguish between the 'real self' and 'false self.' A woman with a 'relational ego' is forced to disconnect her 'true self' from her 'false self.' While the 'true self' may be non-conforming, the 'false self,' most often, portrays the 'ideal.' Thus, the woman strives to balance the authentic against the ideological, the 'intra-psychic' against the 'intersubjective'; 'id' against 'ego.' When the 'ego' overpowers the 'id' a woman becomes "what she is not" (Rabine, 1988, p. 17). Studies have proven the correlation between an individual's meaning-making and the management of difficult life

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events (McAdams, 2004; McLean & Prattt, 2006; Pals & McAdams, 2004). Feminist-theorist, Friedan (1963), observes that:

> It is not possible to preserve one's identity by adjusting for any length of time to a frame of reference that is in itself destructive to it. It is very hard indeed for a human being to sustain such an 'inner' split - conforming outwardly to one reality, while trying to maintain inwardly the value it denies. (p. 41)

Various instances from previous chapters unravel the 'female desire' to be loved by the 'Significant Other.' The woman's 'interpersonal' inclination is higher than that of her counterpart. This desire becomes a problem when a plethora of 'Significant Others' enforce varied and contradictory norms. Grosz (1994) comments in view of gender politics that, "There is no 'natural' norm; there are only cultural forms of body, which do or do not conform to social norms" (p. 143).

In the case of women, the social norms repress her 'id' (authentic) or 'intra-psychic' impulses. Consequently, her 'psyche' fragments and situates herself in various social spaces that further shape the 'female identity.' Multiple social spaces can be a serious challenge for women. In *The Golden Notebook*, the character Anna has internalized various social norms prescribed by the 'Symbolic Order.' She is expected to play many roles in her life. Yet, when she attempts to make sense of each role, she is in a predicament. Her inability to tap her authenticity seems to push her on the verge of a breakdown. She confesses:

> It occurred to her that she was going mad. This was 'the breakdown' she had foreseen; the 'cracking-up.' Yet it did not seem to her that she was even slightly mad; but rather that people who were not as obsessed as she was with the inchoate world mirrored in the newspapers were all out of touch with an awful necessity. Yet she knew she was mad. (Lessing, 2013, p. 564)

These lines prove that the character Anna is immersed into a condition of 'multiplicity'; it could be a 'multiplicity' of 'selves' and consequently 'multiplicity' of meanings. This 'multiplicity' in the meaning-making can disturb woman's perception. In the purview of 'multiplicity' and arbitrariness of meanings, Baudrillard (1987) identifies the problem

with meaning-making and asserts that, "We are not, however, in danger of lacking meaning; quite to the contrary, we are gorged with meaning and it is killing us" (p. 63). The inability to make sense of the multiple meanings has not only 'fragmented' Anna, but her fragmented 'selves' aren't synchronized with one another. Anna's 'obsession' and 'compulsion' over the hoarding of newspaper clippings could be seen as a displacement of her desire to make sense of her outer world. She seems to be unable to draw the thread between her 'within and without' as well as her multiple fragmented 'selves' within. She has become a heterogenous being. In another case, Ifemelu from *Americanah* encounters her heterogeneity on her return from America. She fears, "This is what she hoped she had not become but feared that she had: a 'they have the kinda things we can eat'" (Adichie, 2013, p. 409). Ifemelu understands that her 'body' has reconstructed and re-established the African norms on her return to Africa. However, her 'mind' had been subjected to newer and plural 'assimilations,' consciously or unconsciously. She has accommodated into multiple geographical spaces by trying to be an 'American' in America and by being an 'African' in Africa. In each case, as much as she was an 'African' during her stay in America, she also was an 'American' back in Africa. These instances demonstrate that a woman is clearly unable to balance her multiple meanings emanating from her multiple 'identities.' Another factor that could be restricting a woman from narrating her 'id' impulses or 'true self' could be the silencing process. Research has proven that individuals subjected to sexual abuse or rapes have been silenced incessantly (Fivush, 2004). 'Narrative identity' theorist, McLean (2008) discusses 'silencing' in the context of 'canonical narratives' and 'non-canonical narratives' (p. 1695). McLean (2008) outlines the features of 'silencing' as:

> The explicit or implicit message that one's stories, and consequently, one's self, are not acceptable, interesting, or relevant, thus rendering one's voice unheard…*Voice* is given to those people who have personal narratives that match the canonical narrative, as their experiences are both socially accepted and assumed. Conversely, those people who cannot identify with the canonical narrative have experiences that are *silenced*. (p. 1695)

Women, one of the predominant minority groups, are silenced under the pressure of 'Symbolic Order.' This process of 'silencing' only rationalizes the development of 'neurotic' symptoms in women as a reasonable response.

If a woman is forced to choose between her authentic and ideological or between her 'intra-psychic' and 'intersubjective,' she would be unable to survive or function normally. The ideological practices may deem the 'female identity' as "inherently flawed" (Budgeon, 2001, p. 23); nonetheless the 'female identity' cannot be exclusively ideological or even exclusively authentic. There is a need to achieve a balance between authentic and ideological in order to establish a healthy 'female identity.' In this view, meaning-making becomes a pivotal issue. A host of studies have proven that an individual's 'identity development' is largely dependent on the individual's ability to draw the meaning out of the multiple 'selves' or multiple subject-positions. McLean (2008) claims that, "the reflective meaning-making process is one of the major mechanisms by which identity emerges…and is revised, deepened, and sustained throughout the life course" (p. 1698). Meaning-making has been examined extensively by 'narrative identity' theorists. Meaning-making is defined as the degree to which, "The protagonist learns something or gleans a message from an event. Coding ranges from no meaning (low score) to learning a concrete lesson (moderate score) to gaining a deep insight about life (high score)" (McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 234). Understanding the meaning of various life experiences and being able to weave them into a life story adds to the 'identity development' and/or 'self' development (McAdams, 1985, 1990, 2018). Meaning-making could be equaled to the term "autobiographical reasoning" which was introduced by Habermas and Bluck (2000) and it means "the dynamic process of thinking about the past to make links to the self" (McLean, Pasupathi & Pals, 2007, p. 263). Studies showcase clear correlations between individual's experience, 'identity,' and self-concept (McAdams, 1988; McLean, 2008; McLean et al., 2007). Accordingly, the ability of the woman to narrate the life experiences should further her understanding of the 'self.' McAdams (2018) asserts that 'identity,' "if you could see it, would look like a story. After all, a story potentially integrates different psychological elements, brings a

certain kind of narrative order and logic to the chaos of experienced life" (p. 361). When a woman who is situated in a social context, is allowed to narrate (internally or externally) her life story, without being silenced, she would be able to achieve a meaning and coherence for her life. This idea has been supported by McLean et al. (2007) who suggest that, "Selves Creating Stories Creating Selves" i.e., individual's 'selves' narrate stories and these stories in turn create selves (p. 262). Deshpande's character, Urmi's comments suggest that "the past is always clear because it is more comprehended; we can grasp it as a whole. The present, maddeningly chaotic and unclear, keeps eluding us" (Deshpande, 1992, p. 121). Urmi could be seen as showcasing the dilemma of the 'female identity' that is expected to function socially well in multiple subject-positions. In this context, making sense out of each subject-position becomes a herculean task. Additionally, the same woman can interpret the same experience in different ways across different social context and time (Josselson, 2009). Anna further emphasizes on this argument when she states, "What I remember was chosen by Anna, of twenty years ago. I don't know what this Anna of now would choose" (Lessing, 1962, p. 137). Anna, in *The Golden Notebook*, demonstrates the 'differences' in a woman's meaning-making, across different social roles and social contexts. In this view, post-structuralist thinkers such as Parr and Philo (1995) assert that:

> If it is appreciated that the spaces of the social world are indeed many and various, being heterogeneous in terms of the incredible diversity of phenomena (material and immaterial) contained within them, then it follows that the identity of any one person cannot avoid being in a constant flux depending upon the myriad differing influences to which they are exposed when travelling around this profusion of spaces. (p. 192)

Parr and Philo comment on the functioning of the 'subject' in heterogeneous social spaces. It is clear that an individual attempts to form meanings from the experiences around the profusion of spaces. Understanding these experiences can lead to the understanding of the 'self.' 'Multiplicity' of 'selves' and multiple social spaces need to be analyzed as a narrative, or a shared reality, instead of stark oppositions. In this regard,

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Benjamin (1998) questions the practicality of making a choice between the psychological and social forces stating:

> To include without assimilating or reducing requires us to think beyond the binary alternatives of self enclosed identity and fragmented dispersal to a notion of multiplicity. What kind of self can sustain multiplicity, indeed, the opposition to identity that the relation with the different other brings? (p. 104)

The 'female identity' cannot be established when the social and psychological are presented as stark oppositions which requires a choice-making. Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying*, represents those women who want to connect the threads between their multiple social spaces as she states, "and up until the last operation, when my body was sliced, sawed and priced open (the head this time), I still remained a scrap of hope"(Adelaide, 2008, p. 4). Delia's cancer has turned malignant with little or no hope for survival. Yet, she desires to take on various social roles such as being a dutiful wife, a good mother, an obedient daughter, and much more. Her multiple social spaces seem to be in stark contradiction to her authentic or 'true self'; and that could have landed her in pathos. However, her reflection of her condition drives her to seek the "capacity for forgetting…living in the moment. I needed a bit more of that" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 74). Delia battles her authentic and ideological clashes; nonetheless she succeeds to make sense of her surroundings. Delia could be seen as comprehending her 'fragmented identity' through an "autobiographical reasoning" (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). When a woman adopts a narrative structure to understand her past experiences, it helps her to mediate the "tension between stasis and change" (McNay, 1999a, p. 320). In the context of meaning-generation, McNay (1999a) adds that, "narrative imputes meaning and coherence to the flux of events but can never achieve closure in that it must, to some degree, accommodate the emergence of new possibilities" (p. 320). This condition applies to the 'female identity' as well, which is always in the process of 'becoming,' never a totalized 'self.' In *The Household Guide to Dying*, Delia grieves, "I could have been lots of things. And yet I had become a dying mother with a book that possibly would never be finished…I still had to be alive" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 211). Delia's

'identity' has shifted and changed multiple times. She had transformed from being a 'mother,' to becoming a 'dying mother.' Yet, her ability to narrate her changing experiences seem to help her draw a meaning out of her every role. The 'female identity' is constantly bombarded with new experiences which demands changes in the 'psychic structure.' The 'female identity,' that is allowed to narrate her story will not only be able to establish a meaning for a certain social role and social context, but would also further/progress her understanding of the 'self.'

5.3   POSITIONING THE FRAGMENTED SELF AND FEMALE PSYCHE

An exclusive 'intra-psychic' or 'intersubjective' cannot be the ultimate solution for the 'female self' who is battling to balance the two. The solution lies in striking equilibrium. In this regard, intersubjective-theorist, Benjamin (1998) comments that:

> Identification can serve as a means for bridging difference without denying or abrogating it, but the condition of this form of identification is precisely the other's externality. The other's difference must exist outside; not be felt as a coercive command to "become" the other, and therefore not be defended against by assimilating it to self. It is here that the notion of recognition as mediated not only through identification, but through direct confrontation with the other's externality, makes a difference. (pp. 95-96)

The 'socialization' processes such as 'identification,' 'assimilation,' and 'accommodation' attempt to resolve the 'differences' in the individual. In this process, the woman is at a risk of developing an obscurity between her 'self' and the 'Other.' Additionally, her pressure lies in becoming the 'Other.' In these testing conditions, the 'female psyche' learns to balance the 'conflict' between her psychic tensions and 'intersubjective' endeavors by fragmenting and living with 'multiplicities,' or 'abjections,' and negotiating 'differences.' In *The Binding Vine,* Urmi analyzes Vanaa's process of breakdown and integration and remarks that Vanaa has displayed her resilience as she emerges "from these moments of despair, cheerful and optimistic once again. She seems to go to pieces, but comes out of it intact and while" (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 78-79). These lines portray that even though the woman undergoes a breakdown or disintegration, she overcomes that situation by coming

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out "intact" (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 78-79). By coming out "intact" it could mean, abjecting and living with 'fragmentation,' or living with 'pluralities' or even living with 'formlessness,' or all of the above. In this regard, Benhabib (1995) asserts that women can sustain 'fragmentation' when they learn to articulate "a sense of self better than the model of autonomous individuality with fluid ego boundaries and not threatened by otherness" (p. 30). Destroying the 'categories' cannot be an ideal solution for a woman who desires and craves for interpersonal relationship. Instead, they can resolve their 'crisis' by understanding to locate the 'differences' outside the 'self' rather than negating them totally or assimilating them completely. A 'dying mother,' Delia, in *The Household Guide to Dying* grapples through the meaning of her existence and resolves her 'crisis' as she contemplates, "about being in control when everything-sickness, drugs, procedures, doctors-was threatening to control you…until…one day I woke up and realized there was much more to taking control than I thought" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 106). These lines depict her desire to live, to be the care-taker for her family. At one point of her life she is constantly worried that, "It was natural to want to tie up the dangling threads before you died" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 261). Her frustrations were associated with her inability to take care of her family due to her malignant cancer. Over time, she has outgrown her worries and learnt to build that bridge between her 'fragmented psyche' and her reconstructed 'self.' When Delia asserts that "there was much more to taking control than I thought" (Adelaide, 2008, p. 106), she may have comprehended the purpose and meaning of her various social roles in a narrative fashion, as an autobiographical narration. A narrative perspective towards 'identity formation' asserts that:

> Through repeated interactions with others, stories about personal experiences are processed, edited, reinterpreted, retold, and subjected to a range of social and discursive influences, as the storyteller gradually develops a broader and more integrative narrative identity. (McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 235)

As the individual develops experiences, their 'selves' learn to create stories, which in turn create 'selves' (McLean et al., 2007).

Woman, as Hollway (2006) affirms is 'psycho-social' (p. 467). From the 'intersubjective' front, it is important that she is given a chance to recognize and be recognized by the 'Other' "without dissolving in his/her otherness" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 86). It is beneficial as a two-way process for the development of 'female identity.' The situation becomes problematic only when this two-way process reduces to one-way or nothing without a chance for reintegration. These cases can give rise to pathological imbalances. Benhabib (1999) investigates that in such an extreme case the woman, "may become incapable of establishing and sustaining this tension because he or she is delusional and violent or completely rigid and fragmented. In either case, the ability to 'narrate' proximity and distance, intimacy and alienation is lost or impaired" (p. 352). These lines describe the socio-cultural triggers for the development of 'neurotic' or 'psychotic' disorders in women. This reinstates Ussher's (2011) idea that these disorders are women's "reasonable response to the pathology within" them (p. 1). In *The Golden Notebook*, Anna vindicates that:

> While she could not prevent herself from the careful obsessed business of reading masses of print, and cutting out pieces, and pinning them all over her walls, she knew that on the day Janet came home from school, she would become Anna, Anna the responsible, and the 'obsession' would go away. (Lessing, 1962, p. 564)

Anna understands that her newspaper hoarding habit is an 'obsession' beyond the normal standards. She also comprehends that her 'identity' has other facets too, along with this facet of being an obsessive and compulsive individual. 'Narrative identity' theorists interpret this condition as "autobiographical reasoning" wherein Anna is seen as "making connections between the past and the 'self,' the effort reported in making those connections and the emotional evaluation of the connections" (McLean & Fournier, 2008, p. 527). Anna tries to trace her multiple social roles against a single frame in mind. Her 'multiplicities' are attributed with a newer dimension and newer possibility. Pile and Thrift (1995) discuss the need to map the 'female subject' in a newer niche and recommend:

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> It clearly requires the construction of a discursive image of the self which: is not located in the traditional discourses of individualism; is located in an historical analysis of what self and experience can consist of at particular conjunctures; is relational; is embodied; insists on difference as a qualitative multiplicity; and can provide new, empowered speaking positions. (p. 16)

Woman can speak from an authentic position and with a real voice when her 'multiplicities' are certified as a quality, rather than as negativity. Such a constructive view suits the 'female subject' that is always defined "in relation" to others (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 93). This study recommends that narrativity can be one of the strong solutions in the case of 'female psychic fragmentation.' Benhabib (1999) in this view remarks, "We become who we are by learning to be a conversation partner in these narratives" and this capacity includes "the familial and gender narratives to the linguistic one to the macronarrative of one's collective identity" (p. 344). In *The Edible Woman*, Marian finally chooses between her fantasy and reality. She bakes a cake in the shape of a doll, and feels, "Her image was taking shape" (Atwood, 2009, p. 339). She speaks to the edible cake and states, "You look delicious…Very appetizing. And that's what will happen to you; that's what you get for being food" (Atwood, 2009, p. 342). Marian, as could be inferred from these lines, seems to be projecting her fears externally and experiencing a shared reality too. She manages to disclose her fantasy by creating an 'Other' 'subject' which could replace her subject-position. She problematizes her fears by displacing them onto this new 'edible' 'subject.' The scope of edibility by the external 'Object' could be the fear that she has projected onto the baked doll which is evident in the lines "that's what you get for being food" (Atwood, 2009, p. 342). A woman should be allowed to explore her "capacity to generate meaning over time so as to hold past, present, and future together" (Benhabib, 1999, p. 353). This ability can help her develop her 'identity' and own a well-functional 'psyche.' This is true in the cases of the women characters in the select novels, irrespective of their socio-cultural and temporal peculiarities. The character Delia, from *The Household Guide to Dying*, seems to accept her 'identity' as a 'dying mother.' She learns that "there was much more to taking control" than she thought (Adelaide, 2008, p.

106) and also that the cancer had"become quite normal" for her eventually (Adelaide, 2008, p. 126). She may have learnt to balance her 'intra-psychic conflicts' with her maternal desires. Similarly, Urmi from *The Binding Vine¸* also learns that disintegration and integration of 'self' is a cyclical process and Anu's death should not stop her from being cheerful. By observing Vanaa and through introspection, she learns that woman "seems to go to pieces, but comes out of it intact" (Deshpande, 1992, pp. 78-79). Additionally, Marian from *The Edible Woman*, who belongs to the post-industrialization era of America, also eventually learns to balance her psychic desires and her 'intra-psychic conflicts.' She metaphorically visualizes her "image…taking shape" as she was baking a cake (Atwood, 2009, p. 339). In the above mentioned examples, the character Delia belongs to the Oceania continent, Urmi belongs to the Asian continent and Marian belongs to the North-American continent. 'Fragmentation' as a psychic phenomenon in women, could be considered as uniform across different cultures, where the characters Delia from *The Household Guide to Dying* or even Urmi from *The Binding Vine* exhibit signs of 'psychic fragmentation.' They also belong to different temporal boundaries. While the characters, Urmi and Delia belong to the end of twentieth century; the character Marian belongs to mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, it could be observed in the select novels that the phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation' affects women irrespective of their temporal differences. Thus, as could be evidently seen from the select novels, in spite of these differences each of them displayed traces of pathological imbalances ranging from 'OCPD' to 'eating disorder.' Moreover, their path towards 'identity formation' remains uniform. This could indicate that 'female psyche,' irrespective of her cultural and temporal differences can be affected by 'female psychic fragmentation.' Benhabib (1999) further echoes Benjamin's idea of, "owning the Other within" and describes the process of establishing a narrativity in 'identity' and states:

> This capacity to own up to the "strange" within and the "stranger" without presupposes the capacity for narrative synthesis: the capacity to generate individual and collective stories of the many voices within us, reflecting the

fragility as well as the complexity of the webs of interlocution that constitute us.
(p. 354)

The voice of the 'female subject' becomes a pivotal aspect in the resolution. As stated in the earlier sections, her voice is silenced and she does not protest the silencing for mysterious reasons. However, if the woman is allowed to express her "many voices" and also allowed to resignify various linguistic signifiers that suit the 'female experience,' she can form a nexus between her 'psychic fragmentation' and the multiple 'selves.'

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

'Fragmentation,' as understood from this study, is the unstable view of oneself, in the context of 'psyche' and 'identity,' marked by an inability to draw the meaning between past, present, and future. In this condition, the 'mind' and 'body' are split into two or multiple 'selves.' The phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation,' is a less studied area within the discipline of feminist psychology. 'Psychic fragmentation,' which blooms as a result of the 'repressions' and 'intra-psychic conflicts,' may lead to formation of two or many contradictory realities within the 'female psyche' surmounting to the prevalence of 'neurotic disorders' or 'psychotic disorders' or pathological imbalances. Based on previous studies, it can be deduced that feminist psychoanalysis and literature not only traverse each other, various psychoanalytic readings inhabit in the fictional texts. There is ample scope to interrogate these texts from an often neglected gynocentric perspective. Among the various topics in feminist psychoanalytical interpretation, 'psychic fragmentation,' trauma, and psychic disorders among women are less explored areas. Specifically, the 'female psyche' has been less examined within the purview of the rampant psychological disorders, the consequent 'female psychic fragmentation,' as well as the 'female identity formation.' The present study has supplemented relevant research and has analyzed the phenomenon of 'female psychic fragmentation' and its impact on 'identity formation' in women. This research has explored the 'female psyche,' the 'female unconscious,' the 'female experiences,' the 'intra-psychic conflict,' the 'female self,' and the 'female identity' in detail. In the field of feminist literature, it has been found that there is an ample scope for studying 'female psychic fragmentation.'

6.1   RESEARCH FINDINGS

Through this research, it is found that the phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation' plays a pivotal role in feminist psycho-literary studies as 'psychic fragmentation' is caused by and accounts to structural imbalances in 'female psyche.' Further, this phenomenon demands an in-depth analysis in gynocentric literature as it influences the 'female identity formation.' This research has extensively critiqued the 'female psyche' and the trajectory of the female psychosexual development with a feminist psychoanalytical perspective as evident from the novels taken for this study. Through this research, it is found that the 'female psyche'/'female self' are distinct and different from the 'male psyche'/'male self.' Thus, this research reinstates the idea that a critique on the female psychosexual development cannot incorporate the traditional theories of psychosexual development. This research investigated into the 'female psyche' and its 'structural divisions,' as well as into the 'intra-psychic conflicts' based on the select novels and infers that 'intra-psychic conflicts' and 'repressions' are at the core of any 'psychic fragmentation.' The characters in the select novels such as Anna, Molly, Delia, Urmi, Shakutai, Vanaa, Maya, Ifemelu, Aunt Uju, Wambui, Ainsley, Clara, Marian and so on suffer from constant 'repressions' as well as 'intra-psychic conflicts.' It was also found that 'psychic fragmentation' of the woman is inevitable and it influences the 'female psyche' and 'female identity' adversely across social and cultural borders. In the purview of 'female psychic fragmentation' as seen from the select novels, 'egoic-split,' 'psychic decomposition,' 'doubling,' and 'multiplicity' are the antecedents to 'psychic fragmentation.' Moreover, in the context of 'female identity,' the findings suggest that the condition of 'fragmentation' in the 'female psyche' constructs 'undesirability,' 'submissiveness,' 'relationality,' and 'crisis.' The 'female identity' that battles 'psychic fragmentation' could develop any or a combination of the above characteristics. This research finds that 'fragmentation' positions the female in irresoluble conundrum where she is challenged to choose between her psychic desires or 'intersubjective' expectations. In the presence of psychic 'fragmentation', the 'female identity' and the 'female psyche' sustain the pressures of 'fragmentation' by living with 'formlessness,' sustaining

'abjections' and 'pluralities,' negotiating 'differences' and 'crisis' too. The study found that 'fragmentation' surmounts to the prevalence of different forms and degrees of 'neurotic' or 'psychotic' disorders or pathological imbalances based on the social and familial conditions of the character. This study reckons that these 'imbalances' or 'disorders' in the woman necessitate a consideration of the socio-cultural milieu together with a scientific account. The research suggests that the female predicament with 'fragmentation' can be resolved when the relative appendages such as 'plurality,' 'differences,' 'formlessness,' 'abjections' are interpreted as a quality rather than as a lack. These qualities can enhance the 'female language,' the female voice; in turn it could lead to a nexus between 'fragmented female self' and her 'psyche.'

6.2   SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

'Psychic fragmentation,' in the psycho-literary domain has been discussed before; but research on 'psychic fragmentation' as a gynocentric phenomemon that significantly influences the female 'psychic structure' and 'identity formation' has been scanty in literary studies. A gynocentric research on the 'female psychic fragmentation' as a crucial phenomenon that influences the woman's psychological development in the works of feminist writers from across the globe qualifies this research undertaking as an exclusive contribution to the domain of gynocentric literature with a psychoanalytical perspective. This research has been able to discern the connections between the 'female psyche' and the 'fragmented female self.' The failure to resolve the 'intra-psychic conflicts' as could be seen from this study, could lead to the condition of 'psychic fragmentation'. 'Fragmentation' is a norm in the 'female psyche' and it extends its repercussions onto the eventual formation of 'female identity' and female sense of 'self.' The study leads to major observations that the condition of 'female psychic fragmentation' could germinate certain pathological imbalances such as 'dissociative disorder,' 'OCPD,' 'eating disorder,' 'PTSD,' 'ASD,' 'anxiety,' and other 'neurotic disorders' as evident from the characters in the select novels. The study has also demonstrated through sufficient evidences that the diagnosis of 'mental illnesses' in the 'female psyche' cannot be absolved from a socio-cultural milieu.

'Psychic fragmentation' could be interpreted from this study as the process of breakdown of the 'female psyche' and personality into two or multiple pieces which initially affects the 'psychic structure' at the rudimentary level and eventually affects woman's cognitions, emotions, affects, behavior, and personality. 'Decomposition,' 'doubling,' and 'multiplicity' are identified as the phases that eventually lead to the condition of 'female psychic fragmentation.' The study has also found considerable evidences that 'psychic fragmentation' is closely related to the germination of 'mental illnesses' in women. As observed from the study, 'fragmented psyche' extends its impact and determines the formation of the 'female identity' too. In the purview of 'identity formation,' it results in the formation of 'formless identity,' 'abjected identity,' and/or 'plural identities.'

The present study has inferred that the phenomenon of 'psychic fragmentation' is closely associated with the 'female psyche.' This study infers that 'fragmentation' can be established as a key concept in feminist psychology. Although, there are a few studies which have verified the relationship between 'fragmentation' and the individual 'psyche,' the present study has extended the existing literature by verifying the relationship between 'female psychic fragmentation,' the 'female psyche' and the 'female identity' from a gynocentric perspective as studied from specific literary works. This study observes that 'psychic fragmentation' and the emergence of 'neurotic disorders' in women are correlational. This study would initiate new avenues of knowledge production in the domain of feminist psycho-literary studies. The study has attempted an intersectional analysis of 'neurotic disorders' in the sphere of feminist psychoanalysis. This is yet another arena which has been a significant contribution.

6.3   SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

'Fragmentation' is the inability to balance the multiple realities that dwells within the 'female psyche' as well as the failure to balance the multiple 'identities.' This study identifies that 'psychic fragmentation' is the pivotal trigger for the 'neurotic disorders' in women as traced in the select novels. 'Female psychic fragmentation,' can be inferred as

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a normative phenomenon in the light of relentless 'repressions' and the irresoluble 'intra-psychic conflicts.' 'Fragmentation' of the 'psyche' is an inescapable consequence for women who are caught in the web of 'relationality,' 'connectedness,' and 'interpersonal networks.' This research examined the facets of 'fragmentation' and the impending consequences of the same on the 'female psyche.' An 'intra-psychic conflict' and 'repression' is speculated to be the rudimentary trigger for the onset of 'psychic fragmentation.' The study adopted various feminist psychoanalytical perspectives to probe into the development of the 'female identity' in the presence of 'female psychic fragmentation.'

The first chapter, "Introduction" traced the history of psychology and feminist psychology. Feminist psychology has been an emerging discipline since the last decade of the twentieth century. Until recently, the spheres of knowledge in psychology were dominantly characterized by a patriarchal control. In the context of psychology and literature, the "psychology of writing or responding to literature" (Guerin et al., 2005) has progressed into the development of the new discipline in the field of literary criticism, namely, psychoanalytical literature. This discipline also draws its androcentric-bias from the fields of psychology. The chapter elaborates on the need to understand various psychological concepts such as 'id'-'ego'-'superego,' 'intra-psychic conflicts,' 'repression,' 'female unconscious,' 'female self,' and 'female psychic fragmentation' from the gynocentric psychoanalytical perspective. The chapter also described the literary attributes of select works by feminist novelists including *The Golden Notebook* (1962) by Doris Lessing, *The Edible Woman* (1969) by Margaret Atwood, *The Binding Vine* (1993) by Shashi Deshpande, *The Household Guide to Dying* (2008) by Debra Adelaide, *Maya's Notebook* (2013) by Isabel Allende, and *Americanah* (2013) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The chapter foregrounds the need to adopt feminist psychoanalytic criticism to interpret the gynocentric language exhibited by the characters in the novels.

Psychic disorders have been speculated to be the consequence of relentless 'intra-psychic conflict.' The 'neurotic conflict' *"takes place between drives, that is, the id and the ego"* (Fenichel, 1946, p. 115, *author's emphasis*). Taking this idea into consideration, the

second chapter, "Dissociation and Other Psychic Disorders" extensively discusses and diagnoses the disordered state of the 'female psyche' specifically based on the beliefs of the scientific authority, *DSM-V* (APA, 2013). The characters from the select novels displayed significant 'neurotic conflict' and inferences could be traced on psychic disorders such as 'OCPD,' 'anxiety disorder,' 'eating disorder,' 'depressive disorder,' 'PTSD,' and 'dissociative disorder.' The chapter probed into the oddities of psychic disorder in select novels as presented by the female characters. This research emphasizes the idea that female 'neurotic disorders' cannot be studied without a sociological and cultural understanding of the 'female experience.'

The third chapter "Formlessness as a Psychic Phenomenon" begins by undertaking a gynocentric analysis of the female 'psychic structure.' The chapter infers that female psychosexual development cannot be interpreted by employing the traditional psychosexual theories of development as the trajectory involved in traditional psychosexual theories of development is predominantly male. In consideration of the 'ego' which is the basic structural unit of the 'psyche,' the study reinstates the 'object-relational' idea that the 'female ego' is characterized by 'relationality' and 'connectedness' to the world. Thus, the 'egoic-boundaries' are "more flexible or permeable" (Chodorow, 1978a, p. 169). When the 'ego-boundaries' are found to be in a state of flux, 'formlessness' could be an obvious outcome. A structural analysis of the 'formless psyche' decodes a probable division in the 'self.' Thus, 'egoic-split' is interpreted using feminist psychoanalytical perspective. Similarly, the chapter extends the analysis of the 'female subject' and the 'female experience' using a socio-cultural perspective. The chapter infers that the diagnosis of 'mental illnesses,' in the case of women, through pertinacious application of the scientific knowledge (*DSM* or *ICD*) can be erroneous. 'Mental illnesses,' in women, need not be interpreted as a reaction "to the pathology within" (Ussher, 2011, pp. 1-2). In the light of the relentless 'repressions' and ongoing 'intra-psychic conflicts,' 'mental illness' can be a reasonable response to the internal tension.

The fourth chapter, "Interpreting the Facets of Fragmentation" critically analyzes the 'female psyche' and its various stages of psychic division, in other words 'psychic fragmentation.' The mechanism of 'female psychic fragmentation' is studied in this chapter with the woman-specific psychosexual traits such as 'relationality' and 'connectedness' being the locus of attention. The chapter studied various facets of 'psychic fragmentation.' Accordingly, 'decomposition,' 'doubling,' and 'multiplicity' are identified as the phases that eventually culminate in 'psychic fragmentation.' The chapter further asserts the need to fathom the facets of 'psychic fragmentation' and the apparent 'mental illnesses' in women from a 'psycho-social' perspective based on instances from the select novels.

The fifth chapter "Nexus of the Female Psyche and the Fragmented Self" explores the possibilities of co-existence of the 'fragmented female psyche' with the 'formless' and/or 'plural' and/or 'contradictory' and/or 'abjected' 'female identities.' It analyzes the patterns of women living with a 'fragmented female identity.' It is inferred from the study that 'fragmentation' of the 'female psyche' is inevitable. But "the subjective experience of a fragmented, changing self or set of selves" could threaten the 'female identity' (Griffiths, 1995, p.82). It suggests that the threat involves a destruction of either the 'intersubjective' or 'intra-psychic' realm of women. Even if there seems to be an order in the 'intersubjective' realm, a disorder prevails in the 'intra-psychic' realm; the inter-dependency between the two components impedes the psychic balance. The chapter undertakes an 'intersubjective' analysis and interprets that the woman can establish her 'identity' when the 'plurality' or 'abjection' or 'formlessness' can be understood as qualitative phenomenon rather than as a lacunae.

6.4   SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study suggests ample scope for possibilities of future research. As is evident from the findings of this study, 'female unconscious,' 'female language,' and the consequent female psychosexual development have abundant scope for analysis. Future research could be conducted to investigate more innovative ways of tapping the 'female

unconscious' and 'female language.' 'Psychic fragmentation' and the correlated 'neurotic disorders' can be studied in a locale-specific manner which would enable more comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural milieu. While this study addressed the correlations between 'female psyche,' 'psychic fragmentation,' and the prevalence of 'neurotic disorders,' a possible extension of this study could be to investigate the 'female psyche' and its correlations with the 'psychotic' disorders too. This research examines the possibilities of studying English literature written by female authors in a psycho-literary perspective. Future research can focus on examining other fictional narratives by male and/or LGBT authors from a similar perspective.

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ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS			
PhD. (English)	2014-present	National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Surathkal, INDIA	----
M.A. (English)	2012	St. Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangalore, Karnataka (Mangalore University), INDIA	69.4
B.A. (Arts)	2010	St. Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangalore, Karnataka (Mangalore University), INDIA	83.92
Class XII	2007	St. Aloysius College PU College, Kodialbail, Mangalore (Karnataka State Board), INDIA	92
Class X	2005	Canara Girls High School, Mangalore (Karnataka State Board), INDIA	94.56
PAPERS PRESENTED AT CONFERENCES IN RELATION TO THESIS WORK			
International Conferences			
Mallya, D. (2019). "The Metalanguage of Race Amidst the Post-Truth Politics in Adichie's *Americanah.*" *International Conference on Annual IACLALS Conference 2019*, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, INDIA.			06 - 08 Feb, 2019

Mallya, D. (2019). "Marginalization and Sublimation: Blog as a Discursive Text in Adichie's *Americanah." International Colloquium on Possible Worlds Reflections and Refractions of Theory in the (e-) Merging Disciplinary Fields*, Kannur University, Kerala, INDIA.	31 Jan - 01 Feb, 2019
Mallya, D. (2017). "Obsessions, Compulsions and the Female Desire to Control: A Study of Debra Adelaide's *The Household Guide to Dying* and Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook." International Conference on English Studies, Education and Women Empowerment 2017*, Goa, INDIA.	02-04 February, 2017
Mallya, D. and Pannikot, D. (2016). "Congeniality of Psycho-literary Studies." *International Conference on Literature, Culture & World Peace*, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA.	23 - 24 Sept, 2016
Mallya, D. (2014). "Identity Formation and Patriarchal Dominance: A Study of Select Female Narratives." *International Conference on English Language & Literature – 2014 (ICELL-2014)*, Pondicherry, TN, INDIA.	14-15 Nov, 2014
Mallya, D. (2014). "Psychoanalysis and the Ego: A Study of Select Narratives of Margaret Atwood." *International Conference on Language, Literature and Culture*, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA.	15-17 Dec, 2014
National Conferences	
Mallya, D. (2017). "Early Separation, Impending Anxiety and the Consequent Substance Abuse: A Study of Isabelle Allende's *Maya's Notebook." National Conference on Approaches and Systems: Understanding the Child and Children's Literature,* Mangalore, Karnataka, INDIA.	3 Mar, 2017
Mallya, D. (2016). "Quest for Self-Identity in Sublimated Acts of Blogging in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah." National Conference on Redefining Identities, Cultures and Literatures*,	09-10 Dec, 2016

Aurangabad, Maharashtra, INDIA.	

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">PUBLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THESIS WORK</td></tr>
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- Mallya, D. and Pannikot, D. (2017). "Deciphering the Female Psychic Disorder: Anorexia Nervosa." *Man in India*, 97(23), 903-918.

- Mallya, D. and Pannikot, D. (2016). "Congeniality of Psycho-literary Studies." *Journal of Higher Education & Research Society: A Refereed International*, Dr Sudhir Nikam, ed., 4 (2), 61-67, ISSN: 2349-0209. (Refereed International Journal)

- Mallya, D. (2015). "Psychoanalysis and the Ego: A Study of Select Narratives of Margaret Atwood." *Asian Quarterly: An International Journal of Contemporary Issues*, Dr Ashok Thorat, ed., 13 (1), 24-31. (Refereed and UGC Approved Journal)

- Mallya, D. (2014). "Identity Formation and Patriarchal Dominance: A Study of Select Female Narratives." *English Studies International Research Journal*, Dr Rathnakar, ed., IMRF Publications, Andhra Pradesh, India, 2 (1), 189-191. (Refereed International Journal)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">MEMBERSHIPS</td></tr>
</table>

Member of:
- Indian Association For Women's Studies (IAWS)
- Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
- South Asian Literary Association (SALA)

PUBLICATIONS

List of Publications based on PhD Research Work

(to be filled- in by the Research Scholar and to be enclosed with Synopsis submission Form)

Sl. No.	Title of the paper	Authors (in the same order as in the paper. Underline the Research Scholar's name)	Name of the Journal/ Conference/ Symposium/ Vol., No., Pages	Month & Year of Publicati on	Category *
1	Deciphering the Female Psychic Disorder: Anorexia Nervosa	Deepali Mallya, and Dhishna P.	Man In India, 97(23), 903-918	2017	1
2	Congeniality of Psycho-literary Studies	Deepali Mallya, and Dhishna P.	Journal of Higher Education & Research Society: A Refereed International, 4(2), 61-67, ISSN: 2349-0209	Oct, 2016	3
3	Psychoanalysis and the Ego: A Study of Select Narratives of Margaret Atwood	Deepali Mallya	Asian Quarterly: An International Journal of Contemporary Issues, 13(1), 24-31	May, 2015	3
4	Identity Formation and Patriarchal Dominance: A Study of Select Female Narratives	Deepali Mallya	English Studies International Research Journal/2(1), 189-191	Nov, 2014	3

*Category 1: Journal paper, full paper reviewed
2: Journal paper, Abstract reviewed
3: Conference/Symposium paper, full paper reviewed
4: Conference/Symposium paper, Abstract reviewed
5: Others (including papers in Workshops, NITK Research Bulletins, Short notes etc.)

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