

**A TESTAMENT TO HOPE AND RESILIENCE: A STUDY ON
THE STRENGTH OF NATURE AND HUMAN SPIRIT TO
SURVIVE ADVERSITY IN KRISTIN HANNAH'S *THE FOUR
WINDS***

Dissertation

*Submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Arts in English
Language and Literature*

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**A Testament to Hope and Resilience: A Study on the Strength of Nature and Human Spirit to Survive Adversity in Kristin Hanna’s *The Four Winds***” is a bonafide record of research work carried out by **JUHAINA K S** (Register Number AIAUMEG013), a student of M.A English Language and Literature, Fourth semester, in this Department, in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Art in English Language and Literature.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the preparation of this project I am happy to acknowledge my sincere gratitude to my supervising teacher **Dr. Reshmi S**, Assistant Professor of the Department of English, MES Asmabi College for her skilled guidance and painstaking correction and revision. I am grateful to her for providing me the valuable insights of words, appreciation and encouragement at every stage of this project.

I also thank with love and respect **Dr.Reena Mohammed**, Head of the Department of English, for her valuable guidance, help and cooperation. I am also grateful to her for taking my spirits up and her immeasurable guidance in spite of her various preoccupations. I cannot forget her words of correction, appreciation, and encouragement at every stage of project.

I also thank the librarian and her crew for providing enough materials for project.

I express my gratitude to **Dr. A Biju**, the Principal, for the congenial research environment he has always tried to foster in the Department.

And finally, but immensely and most affectionately I acknowledge the love and affection always showered on me by my parents, whose love and prayers are the source of inspiration behind all my endeavours.

Above all I bow my head before God, the Almighty without whose blessing, this work would not have been fulfilled.

Place: P. Vemballur

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Date: 14/06/2022

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Chapter I

Introduction

In English literature American literature also serves equal position with British literature. The history of American literature begins with the arrival of Europeans who speaks English in the seventeenth century. America was a colony under the Europeans during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Like British literature, American literature has also gone through different periods. The periods are: The Colonial and Early National Period (1607 to 1830), The Romantic Period (1830 to 1870), Realism and Naturalism (1870 to 1910), The Modernist Period (1910 to 1945) and The Contemporary Period (1945 to present).

In the colonial Period most of the American writings are principally journals; religious and historical in nature. This period, also known as Revolutionary Period and the colonist were influenced by the political writings of Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin and Samuel Adams. An important person who was very famous during the period is Adam Smith who played an important role in the establishment of the colony at Jamestown, Virginia. Many religious works were introduced during this period by the puritans. It was during the early 1800s that American literature began to divide itself from its British roots. Then the writers, who helped to formulate a distinctly American literature with American identity and themes were Washington Irving and James Fenimore.

The Period between 1880 -1870 is considered to be the romantic period and it is also said as American Renaissance period. The major writers included during the period are Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville etc.

Transcendentalism was a movement started during this Period by Thoreau. The authors experimented in style and developed themes important to the American expression and identity. The realistic period is one of the important periods in American history. During the period America witnessed civil war, deconstruction, and industrialisation. So, all these things made American literature more realistic and certain romantic notions were replaced by realistic portraits. The common people were portrayed sympathetically by the realists and they also gave stress on their dialect. Major writers during this period are Mark Twain, Henry James, and William Dean Howells.

The Naturalistic Period was a literary movement that developed towards the late nineteenth century and it addressed the natural man and his passions and how he is related to the environment and his instincts. Major naturalist writers during this period are Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser and Jack London. The period between 1910 -1945 is considered to be the Modernist period. Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner and Robert Frost are the major writers during this period. Massive improvements were made in science and technology. Fatal sufferings were called by the First World War and great depression made huge impact on American literature and daily life problems were depicted in American literature.

The contemporary period starts from 1945 to till now. The works written during this period is complex and sparkle against injustice. Toni Morrison, Philip Roth etc. are the major writers of this period. After the World War II America becomes the most powerful country economically and politically. The cold war between Soviet Union and the USA outlined the whole global politics and all these

elements had their own influences on American literature. That is why contemporary period is so diverse and full of interest.

When we discuss about twentieth century in America, we can classify each decade with different characteristics. In 1920s, there seems very much growth in industry, especially in automobiles, telephones and many gadgets. During this period Henry Ford become a major industry in America. Even though this period witnessed luxury and wealthy people it didn't last long because common people who did not had money want to imitate the luxurious life and they started to buy things in instalments. The economy in America was based on the many that comes in the next ten or twenty years and that lead the twentieth century in to a disaster called Great Depression. Alcohol, which started to destroy the Americans, was prohibited during that period. Harlem renaissance started during this time, where the Blacks raised voice against the whites. Twentieth century writers also called as lost generation include Earnest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitz Gerald, E.E. Cummings among them. During the end of the 1920s America witnessed great depression and caused massive unemployment, feminine in America. The problems faced during this period presented in the works written by authors through their characters especially by Tennessee Williams, William Faulkner etc. The Great Depression era was also simultaneous with the period of modernism in American literature. During the 1940s America sway power over the world by killing people pouring Atom bombs, Hiroshima, Nagasaki was one among them. Through this America started to gain power over the other nations. In 1950s during the post-world war culture is changing. The 1960s is the period of youth movement, subculture movement, feminism, civil rights movements, working class movement and it is not only witnessed by America but also in Europe, France etc. This decade also witnessed one of the most disastrous wars called Vietnam War.

Many literary theories emerged during this period. Individualism and freedom are the part of 1970s 1980s was the time of internet, multinational corporations, globalization and it was a digital age too and America had too much growth in economy.

Many writings were written in 1930 as a part of great Depression that shows the sufferings faced by the Americans. Tennessee Williams 'Glass Menagerie' is one among such writings. William Faulkner's writing sound and fury is also one among them. He also created characters caught between modernity and very depressing historical conditions. John Steinbeck too has written about the Dust Bowl that destructed the life in the Oklahoma region in the south of America. Dust Bowl changed the whole life of style of the people in Oklahoma, agricultural field destroyed in search of food and job people started to migrated from Oklahoma to California. John Steinbeck talks about such people who left Oklahoma (Okies). Same problems faced by Americans during the Great Depression is rewriting in the novel *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah.

When we discuss about the American women writers, we can find that the themes, the situations, the styles etc. they followed become different in each period. Women started to write poetry from the period of colonialism. Surprisingly it was Anne Bradstreet a woman writer, who first published the book of poems by an American and it was also the first American book to be published by a woman. She was forced to publish her book in England because of lack of printing press in America. The themes that she had chosen for the writings was religious that related to the conventional subjects like seasons etc. She was very much influenced by the metaphysical poets like Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser etc. and it is visible in her work named 'The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America (1650). Judith Sargent

Murray was America's first feminist essayist who raised her voice for equal rights for women, education etc. and she occasionally used male pen names, as she did for her column in "Massachusetts Magazine". She was also a playwright. Susanna Rowsom was an American-British author cum actress. She produced so many novels, plays, operas etc. The first Afro-American woman whose work got published in America was Phillis Wheatley's. It is from a house slave she raised to the position of a poetess. Then coming to, different ages, it is very much visible that female writers were in a unique position to provide representations of America's social expectation of women as well as realistic characters who broke those male centred concepts. Each era witnessed the birth of many female writers, but the style, theme they followed was different to each other. Even though many female writers were emerged at the early age, women literature got worldwide prominence by the end of the nineteenth century. In that period, women's rights movement got started and female writers started too fought for their acceptance in the literary community. When the time passes in the attitude towards literature by female writers become much stronger and started to raise their voice against the patriarchal community. And it provided readers with realistic picture of American women who departed from the submissive, truthful house wives and mother of the past. Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, Virginia Woolf, Jane Austen, Mary Shelly, Margaret Atwood, Sylvia Plath, Agatha Christie, Charlotte Bronte, Kate Chopin etc. are the some of the major American female writers.

After the World War second, America has emerged as one of the victors and it entered a period of economic prosperity and cultural changes later came to known as the roaring 20's. Many inventions got started during this period like washing machine, vacuum cleaner, cars etc. life style of people was far better than before because people got loans from banks whenever they needed. Introduction of Ford's T-Model car also

a part of this too. Companies' growth was very high until the fall of stock market in 1929. In history October twenty ninth 1929 marked as Black Thursday as it's called the theorized start of the Great Depression. While the market recovered that day become Black Tuesday it's an outright panic. People fallen in debt and unemployment and it has come to be known as Great Depression, one of the worst economic downturns in the history of the industrialized world. The inventions of 1920s created great demand among the people. But the expense to buy each item was very high. A family might have to save for years to purchase washing-machine or an automobile. It causes the beginning of installment system. The same system followed in stock market too. Investors started to purchase stocks from a broker after paying a small amount. Many people turned to this stock market system to increase their income. In 1929 when the stock market collapsed people started to suffer a lot. Everyone lost their money and later their job too. This marked the great depression period in the American history.

Before the great depression in America the problems related to the farming and farmers after the world war first. One of the major problems happened during and after the Great Depression was the severe drought. This was affected in the South Western Great Plains Region of America. The reasons behind this cause due to changes happen to the natural environments by technologies created by man. In America when the high demand for wheat products increased people started to increase wheat production even the dry land too with the help of technologies and these lead to the destruction of the prairie grasses. All these made the lands bear and many environment damages began to occur. Most among them was that dust bowl which made the Great Plains completely in drought and people were forced to move another place in search of jobs and also for better health. Everyone abandoned their

homes and lands, fleeing westward as a migrant labourer. All these are clearly explained by Kristin Hannah in her work *The Four Winds*.

Kristin Hannah is one among the famous contemporary writers in America. She started her career in an advertising agency and later she graduated in law and worked as lawyer. Being a college student she started to write. Now she is working as a full-time writer. Her novel that she wrote along with her mother is still an unpublished work. Now she is recognizing as an award winning in the national number one best seller with above 50 million copies of books sold worldwide. She wrote more than twenty novels and most of her novels deal with the exploitation of hope strength in female spirit (except their ages). Her works include, *The Nightingale*, *Firefly Lane*, *The Great Alone*, *Winter Garden*, *Night Road*, *Fly Away*, *Magic Hour*, *True Colors* etc. Her first novel *Handful of Heaven* (1991) was a gold rush-era Alaska romance starring a beautiful, adventurous woman and a gruff misunderstood man. The work, *On Mystic Lake* that she wrote in 2004 became her first book to become The New York Times best seller. Her work *Firefly Lane* adapted for online series in Netflix.

The contemporary writers whose writings show similarity to Kristin Hannah's works are Kristin Harmel, Sadeqa Johnson, Mary Lynn Bracht, R.J. Hoffman, Tiff Marcelo and William Kent Krueger. Kristin Harmel's *The Room on Rue Amelie* and Mary Lynn Bracht's *White Chrysanthemum* sets in the period of World war second, where Kristin Hannah's novel *The Nightingale* also deals with the world war second background. The horror of World war second is clearly visible in these three novels even though the places used were different. Human being's endless capacity for hope and care, love even in the face of extreme hardship are some of the themes that Kristin Hannah follows and the same theme is visible in Sadeqa Johnson's *Yellow*

Wife, historical fiction which talks about the slavery on a plantation in Virginia. The family related theme can be seen in R.J. Hoffman's other people's children also a theme that Kristin Hannah follows. Her historical fiction *The Four Winds* and Kent Krueger's *This Tender Land* transport the readers back in time to the great depression era. While romantic, traditional love still having thread in her tales, she now focuses to other relationship such as sisters, best friends, parents and children. She always used to give important to the female characters. She once says that "I have always loved best the big emotional epic female-driven novel that takes me to another time and places."(Hannah).

The dissertation is divided in to five chapters. In the chapter one- 'Introduction', deals with the history of American literature, entry of women writers, dangers of Great Depression and biography of the author Kristin Hannah. In the second chapter 'Ecocriticism in *The Four Winds*' discusses, how human and nature are related to each other. In the third chapter 'Migration and Identity Crisis' deals with the reasons behind migration made to the characters and identity issue they had to face after the migration. Then in chapter four, 'Power of Motherhood' shows how mothers love help their children to survive in all worst conditions. The last chapter 'Conclusion' deals with the relevance of this historical fiction in the present and future generation.

Chapter II

Ecocriticism in '*The Four Winds*'

The relationship between human being and environment is very much strong and the bond between them is an unbreakable one. The existence of human beings is depended upon this natural world and environment. Ecology studies the interactions of living things with each other and with the environment. The term 'ecology' is from the Greek words 'Dikos and Logos' means 'home and to study. All organisms must interact with all other organism whether they are living or non-living. Coming to human beings it is better to explain with ecological studies. The term 'Ecological study' refers to a research project in which participants observe the environment, the level at which data is collected and analysed, i.e., at the population or group level, is the definition of a study. Ecological studies are frequently used to determine the prevalence and incidence of disease, especially when the disease is uncommon. They are affordable and simple to conduct out since they use frequently gathered data, but they are prone to bias and confounding furthermore, because they are region-level studies, caution must be exercised when extrapolating to individual persons inside the measuring area to a longer population level. Despite the fact the other study methods are often deemed more reliable, especially in interring causality, the population context of individual characteristics has been demonstrated to be a strong driver of disease at the population level than individual level risk factors.

In the novel *The Four Winds*, Kristin Hannah shows, how the dust bowl effected the entire population economically and also in health matters. Even though the novel deals with the matter of Great Depression, the writer at a same time shows

how human life is bonded with nature. The novel clearly shows how human beings are related to nature and also how nature reacts to the deeds done by humans. Among the people, they have the thought that, the humans are superior to every creator existing in the environment. This kind of concept is later said to be known as anthropocentrism. It is a key topic in environmental ethics and philosophy, where it's frequently regarded as the core cause of issues caused by the human's involvement in the environment. But ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment, which giving importance to nature than human in the light of literature. It is the interdisciplinary study of literature and the environment; in which all science join together assess the environment to generate solution for resolving the current environmental predicament. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, edited by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm and *The Environmental Imagination* by Lawrence were both published in the mid-1990s, and the officially launched ecocriticism.

Cheryll Glotfelty, in her text *Literary studies in an age of Environmental Crisis* discusses about the needs of environmental literary studies. The text is an introduction to a credited publication by Harold Fromm and Cheryll Glotfelty. In the preface Harold Fromm says about Glotfelty while she was a graduate student at Cornell University how she had most intense in relation between environment and literature. She begins by arguing that in postmodern time literary studies always changing their scopes, as newer and newer approaches and issues come to the society. So, she got surprised why literary profession doesn't take any effort in environmental topics. She says people are not aware of environment other than race; class and gender until an obstacle come under the feet. Even though many disaster even happened people are not still bothered about the nature or environment. Since 1970s

every aspect showing concern about nature expects literature, she adds. Even graduates were taking back from such nature related issues considering it's under graduated one and they also had a feeling have no job opportunities in such fields. Even though some people raised voice for nature, only solo voices were available. The main reason behind it was people were not ready to show any interest in environment issues and also not ready to do in groups. William Rueckert, Cheryl Glotfelty were some persons who raised the voice for nature. William Rueckert in his essay *Literature and Ecology*, an experiment in ecocriticism, talks about possible connections between literature and nature. Rueckert said that: "the reason behind applying such ecological concepts in the study of literature is that, its relevance with the world's present and the future condition" (Rueckert 107). Environmental issues have become an integral part of human existence and that is why ecocriticism makes it attempt to find more environmentally conscious position in literary studies or literature. But when the time passes everyone came up with the importance of nature. Psychology, theology and literature started to recognize environmental issues and raised their voice for nature.

In the novel *The Four Winds* Kristin Hannah discusses about the disaster- The Great Depression that once hit and shook America and other countries. She also bring in front of the reader how that Great Depression came along with Dust Bowl, affected life of Americans. In many parts of the novel there we can see a link between characters and the natural environment. First of all, the cover page of the novel is designed with the image of wheat. So, we can see how the novel is related to the nature. The novel is speaking to the reader with a period of time, before and after the Great Depression. Here we can see Kristin Hannah specified each period before the chapters. The novel begins with the year 1921 to 1936 and few years after that. After

the prologue, under the year 1921 she quoted Wendell Berry's (Farmer and Poet) saying, "To damage the earth is to damage your children." (Hannah 3). So, from this quotation we can understand that nature have an important part in this novel especially with the characters. The novel begins with the year 1921, years before the great depression. During that period the lifestyle of Americans was very good and they had enough economic status too. The main source for their living was especially wheat cultivation. The story takes place in the Texas Panhandle town at Dalhart. The protagonist in the novel is a lady and her name is Elsa Wolcott. She belongs to a well-known and a rich family. She tried to make her life a successful one. For Americans the Great War was a boon for them, because after that America become a powerful country among the other nations in all aspects. Dalhart was the country that also experienced the economic growth. People started to say, "The Great War had turned these acres in to a gold mine of wheat and corn. Wheat will win the war I was a phrase that still filled the farmers with pride." (10).

People started to use tractors in order make life and good crops easier we can see that Kristin Hannah purposefully mentioning the vehicles used during that period. When America becomes a powerful country after the Great War that combined with the rain and increase in wheat prices, gave everyone a reason to celebrate their independence of their country on July fourth. At that time, in order celebrate people from the whole country gathered in their own in town halls. When the America's power increased the life status of Americans' also improved. Wheat farming and farming related business make people rich and they started to own vehicles for farming and also for travelling.

While reading this novel we can see that Ford Company started to produce vehicles in the automobile field. To show the company's growth, instead of calling trucks and cars she uses model T Ford truck, Model T. But what we can see here other than the company's profit the pollutions that made by those vehicles to the nature; because here in the novel Kristin Hannah says, "The Dalhart Grunge Hall had been decorated in layers of red, white and blue hunting. A dozen or so cars were parked out front." (28). When America got stable economically bankers offered financial support for the farmers. So, everyone started to own their own vehicles. When the demand for the vehicles increased the production also increased. Though it was a great time, real issue started in America after that. All these matters are clearly visible in Kristin Hannah's novel *The Four Winds*.

In this novel we can see Elsa was born and brought up in a wealthy family which was very well-known among the others in Texas. Her father supplies tractors for others. Elsa's life changed in to another way when she met Rafaell Martinelli. He was an eighteen year old; son of a farmer. When Elsa got pregnant by Rafe, her family abandoned her for casting shame upon the family. She was taken to Rafe's family where live Rafe's father and mother Tony Martinelli and Rose Martinelli. The lifestyle was very different while comparing to her previous life. Actually Martinelli family was immigrants from Italy. So, they always depend in farming wheat. Though they are immigrant farmers they have got everything in their farm. To show the prosperity in that farm Kristin Hannah beautifully given a picture of that land through her novel like, a big wooden barn, a horse corral, a cow paddock, a hog pen, a chicken coop, several outbuildings, and a windmill etc. Though they were immigrant they got everything to root in that land. The land provided the family with everything. As a proof we can see how Tony says about his hard work in that land and what kind of life

they got from it and he added that, the land will also provide better life to Elsa too. From these words it is very much clear that land can provide us everything if we love it and work hard on it. It also shows human beings' lives are very much linked to the environment. From Tony's words we can understand that, it's not money nor dream can complete our life. Otherwise we need to love the land that we are living and work hard on it. Thus we can earn money and reach our dream. Humans cannot break that bond to the nature, because his whole life is fixed in that system. But men considered him as the complete and supreme power in this earth. But men never understand that his life has no existence without nature's existence.

Before the Dust Bowl everything happened in Texas was quite natural. They had proper season every year. Plenty of surplus from their farm land and they even didn't find any difficulty in their day to day life. Here in this novel being a town girl and when she was ready to accept the condition on which she was going to live. She becomes part of that family and started to enjoy each and everything in that land and day by day she is getting attached to the land. She started to imagine her child running and playing and learn the stories told by the ground and grapes and the wheat. Actually they had got everything that needed for their entire life. If it is winter time they had got whatever they needed in that time because they stored enough food items for the winter season. In winter season their job was, especially women would do cleaning, sewing, darning and knitting and on the other hand men will take care of the animals and make the equipment ready for the farming in the coming spring season. In a year they had a clear cut idea about each season, because they knew that how long one season would exist and leave. So they never found any difficulties in their life and they got enough food for their entire life. From this entire instance we can understand that how nature is behaving very well for us for our good behaviour to the

nature. If we are ready to respect the environment, it will give everything back that we are expecting from the nature. Here till the chapter five before 1934 what we are seeing is how nature provides things for the existence of human beings through the families of Elsa and Rafe. Though the story is about them what we can see is that they are the representatives of all the human communities in the whole world, the nature provided everyone with everything. But it is men who themselves started to ruin his own existence in the world by ruining the nature.

When the novel moves in to its next part, i.e. from the year 1934 we can see that changes happening to the environment of Texas Panhandle. In America, by 1929 they started to experience instability in their economy. Though they were powerful after the World War II it all started to diminish by 1929. When America becomes powerful, they give economic help to the citizens, means they lent each and every one money to buy all the electronic things in instalment. That time also witnessed the demand for automobiles and production in automobiles increased. It is clearly mentioned by Kristin Hannah in this novel *The Four Winds* in its beginning chapters. Tractors, trucks started to use abundantly by the farmers for reducing their hard work in the farmlands and also for time management, but when the use of such automobiles increased pollution to the environment started to increase day by day. America had witnessed many drought issues in different years. When the drought ends people again show their misbehaviour to the nature. As a proof we can see in the in the novel were people saying about the forgotten drought in 1908. From this we can understand that whenever people had experience from the nature on the next moment they will forget about it and again repeat the cruelty against the nature. But even today men never ready to accept his fault. They all are repeating the same thing again and again. Actually in America economic depression coupled with extended drought, unusually

high temperature, poor agricultural practices and the resulting wind erosion all contributed to the dust bowl. The changes in weather in the southern plain areas of the United States in the 1930s were a reason for that disaster too.

When we go through the novel further we can see how people go suffering due to this Dust Bowl and great depression. Within three years everything started to change, scarcity of rain and water, shortage of money, skin infection, scarcity of food. People went to church for some food and raggedly dressed appearance show how much they were suffering from the great depression and the dust bowl. The whole place started to die. The protagonist Elsa's appearance too changed. She herself made clothes from grain and flour sacks. Within these years Elsa and Rafe had another child, Anthony. Now they got two children, Lorena and Anthony. In the novel we can also see how Lorena remembering about the god and the bad time. In her school what she can hear was about Great Depression and we can see that, she is remembering about the green land and the image of tractor rolling over the grounds twenty four hours a day like a horde of mechanical insects chewing up the ground. Continuous mechanical works was there in the farmland and their undisciplined kind of farming was the main reason for their own fate. When Dust Bowl came along with the Great Depression people become very weak and they can't afford anything even clothes for their daily needs. When poverty and unemployment started to hit place people decided to leave the place and move to another place hoping to find a better future there. Animals started to die because of this dryness. When Lorena looked out to the street what she can find is, all these painful images. This shows people started to abandon not only their land but also the animals and vehicles that they once owned installments. When people lost their income they had no way to pay back money to the bank and such small farmhouses doors hammered with the sign board of 'Auction'

and 'Foreclosure'. People decided to move to California because they thought: "California land of milk and honey, they say. Don't need honey. Just work jobs for everyone land of opportunity go west to California." (72).

When the dust storm increased life become very hard for children too. It was very hard for the children to go to the school and study. Continuous dust storms make the condition of school and house very bad. Dust started to rain from the ceilings and the small creepers started to take shelters in their houses. It shows how nature reacting to humans by taking whatever they owned from the nature. Everyone had to cover their face as prevention from the dust. Elsa used their horse Milo to the wagon for travelling. Once they used the trucks for their daily use including transportation and travelling. But now they have no enough money to move their truck that run from gasoline. Most people started to use their farm animals like horses for their transportation purpose. Here we can clearly visible that how people coming down back to the feet of nature.

Day by day condition of nature becomes more and more pathetic. All the trees were dying and the season had turned them sick grey-brown and leaves turned to crunchy, blackened papers. Where ever they look they were seeing the same sight like dying trees, dusty soil lay in heaps and dunes and base of every fence post. Food, that the Martinelli family stored for their cows and horses decreased day by day. Loreda had an inseparable bond with the horse Milo. She always used to do her home work in Milos stall and both of them munch own carrots that she pulled from the garden. Now those all incidents remain in Loreda only a memory. The drought started to break the land in to pieces. The cruelties of men to nature were not only affecting the environment too, but also each and every living thing.

When poverty hits its peak peoples started to migrate as soon as possible. Loreda had to say good bye to her best friend Stella, who is leaving Texas. The vegetables that Elsa and Rose had tended with such loving care were dying and the wind and dust and also the relentless sun torn out by the roots or lay wilted and dead. Every, past three years in the distant field, Tony and Rafe work hard to plant winter wheat in the ground and prayed for rain, but there were no used at all. The only way for them to get income is from milk, soaps and eggs they have to sell. They had to conserve each and every drop of water for their cows, horses, roosters and also for themselves. The temperature increases day by day and it reached up to 115 degree Celsius. The only food that they can give for their livestock- two horses and two cows those prickly Russian thistles that grow wild. Day by day the condition of those living beings started to become very worse. To see some greenery Elsa made a small garden directly below the kitchen window. Pouring a few precious drops of water on the soil, watching it darken instantly she said: "I know you want to bloom." (94). Here what we can see is that, she is missing those green days and she herself understands that, if that greenery exists, only then they will have their own existence in the land. Here the 'you' means the Mother Nature and the humans itself. When the pioneer day comes we can see Kristin Hannah comparing that special day celebration in 1905 and 1935. In 1905 they celebrated day with parties with lots of food and streets decorated with flowers. Pioneer day had been an expression of the farmers' pride in them and a celebration of their hard work. But today all these prosperities has gone. Nothing left any flowers delicious food etc. only few people had used the automobiles and dressed well. Others were cheated by the bankers and took their automobiles.

When the intensity of dust storm increased the Red Cross donated the big box of gas masks to the bank for the kids to wear during dust storm. Everyone in the Martinelli family had a hope that the land will sprout again with greenery except for Rafe. Without telling anyone he left the family. But Tony, Rose and Elsa had hope that one day everything would become smoother and she believed that land is their heritage future including their children and this is their home. When the time moves they started to loose each of their horses and cows. The milk, produced by cows Bella decreased day by day. Tony slaughtered pig for their food. They were used cow chips for fuel purposes but death of animals cause lose in that fuel. When day passes rich people too suffered from poverty. People moved to different places like California, Oregon etc. continuous dust flow made children to use the mask permanently and that later caused Ant to suffer from breath problems. As per the doctor's suggestion they were forced to leave the place. But Tony and Rose was not ready to follow them. The whole street looked like a graveyard with no vehicles in the street and only closed shops and dead plants everywhere.

While reading this novel and when we came across those incident where children forced to wear mask to protect themselves from dust storm bring in us the contemporary issue that we are facing so badly in this world. When corona hit the whole world the life style of the people changed. It was like a kind Great Depression because many people lost their job and travelling become very hard full. Many countries banned transportation because of the fear on the spread of corona virus. People were forced to wear mask in order to protect themselves from the virus infection. Along with mask people were forced to sanitize the body and places. There were no schools supposed to open. All the students had to attend online classes for about two years. Though the spread of virus was decreased we were not sure about

whether it will come again or not. When we compare those Great Depression, Dust Bowl and corona viral infection, though they were happened in different time period, its effect was common, unemployment, poverty, scarcity of food etc. where part of it. The situations that people faced were as same as past.

The 1930s Dust Bowl during the Great Depression in the US comes closet, mimicking covid-19 acute respiratory distress and suddenness. The seeds of the Dust Bowl may have been sowed during the early 1920s. A post-world-war 1 recession led farmers to try new mechanized farming techniques as a way to increase profits. Many bought plots and other farming equipment, and between 1925 and 1930 more than 5 million acres of previously unfarmed land was ploughed. Farmers produced record crops during the 1931 season with the help of mechanized farming wheat over production, combined with the Great Depression, resulted in sharply lower market prices. The wheat market was over flowing and individuals couldn't afford to buy it. Farmers were unable to recoup their production costs and had to enlarge their farms in order to break even. They planted wheat in place of the native drought-resistant grasses on the prairie, leaving any unused fields barren.

However in this region, plough based farming produced an unanticipated result. The loss of valuable topsoil, which literally flow away with the winds, leaving the land prone to drought unsuited for producing crops. By 1932 dust storms known as black blizzards and millions of people were forced to flee the area. The same problem the whole world faced when the world spread with that Covid pandemic.

When we again compare these two situations we can say that both occurred due to the human activities. Because the Dust Bowl was a cause of unmechanized crop cultivation done by the human society with the help of trucks and tractors. When

men started to use these vehicles, it polluted the natural air and it makes the earth hard to breathe. So we can say that as a punishment nature reacted upon this cruelty in the form of dust bowl which make people to suffer from breathe problems and also poverty. Though this dust bowl was a problem in US only, but the pandemic Covid 19 was a worldwide issue. The reason behind this pandemic was a virus, but nobody can even know from where it has come, but when we look deep in to the situation we can say humans' unmechanized lifestyle created this issue. Maybe it is a manmade or natural. But we are not sure that whether men could learn from this or not. Because in this novel *The Four Winds* Kristin Hannah says that when America become prosperous after World War 1 and get economically stable, they started to forget their past. As a proof she says when wheat provided the farmers with good yield they started to forget about the 1908 drought in us.

From this what we can say is that whatever cruelties we may does the environment one day it will return back to us with double force that we cannot afford. But humans don't understand all these things that happen to us. The characters in the novel like Elsa, Loreda, Rafe, Tony, Rose and all are the representatives of all human community with different thoughts here though Elsa escaped from Texas to California for her sons health condition, there she had to face problems from nature too, like flood. So as a solution what we can do to solve environmental problem by thinking about them, as said by Cheryll Glotfelty. As she believes strong voice in the profession will enable ecocritics to bring about important changes in the canon, the curriculum and university policy. Actually the time period that Kristin Hannah chosen for her novel is correct two years back from present situation. When the pandemic hit the world seriously Kristin Hannah said that she never thought about such condition would happen in this world. Though the book was published in 2021 February Covid

was in its peak, but she started to write this novel three years back. But comparing the situation in the novel with the present condition we can say that there is a chance of repetition. So it is our duty to protect the environment and only then our existence in this world become smoother.

Chapter III

Migration and Identity Crisis

Identity is an important issue that every migrant people faces in other countries. The issue may be related to gender, class, religion, colour etc. the same identity crisis faced by the protagonist Elsa and her children when they were forced to leave from Texas to California. The Dust Bowl that came along with Great Depression hit America as a hurricane. When people lost farm land and economic destruction made people to migrate from Texas to California in search of good job and employment but when they entered to California they had to experience bitter situations. The awkward conditions they had to face because of their appearance. Not only Elsa and her children who were faced such problems. The people who migrated to California from each and every corner, where ill-treated by the natives. Those problems the migrants faced were clearly explained by Kristin Hannah in her novel *The Four Winds*.

Migration and identity are linked together in many aspects. Many historical events prove how migration associated with identity crisis. Migration is a social change process in which an individual, alone or with others, leaves one geographical location for a longer stay or permanent residence in another geographical area for one or more causes of economic betterment, political upheaval, education, or other purposes. It is important to note that migration is not simply a transnational phenomenon, but it can also be a rural –urban phenomenon. Any such procedure entails not only leaving behind social networks, but also initially feeling a sense of loss, dislocation, alienation and isolation which will lead to acculturation processes. A

combination of environment circumstances, stress levels, stress management skills and the capacity to anchor oneself according to one's personality attributes will result in either a sensation of setting down or a sense of being isolated and alienated. Rural-urban migration is more likely to be motivated by economic or educational factors, but cross-national movement can be motivated by social, educational, economic or political factors. As a result, the reasons for migration the planning for moving and social support will all help to improve and individuals coping mechanism.

Furthermore, the new nation's acceptance and welcome will have a role in the emergence of stress and how the individual deals with such stress. The situations, they experienced may be good or bitter. But in most cases the experience wouldn't be a better one.

In this novel what make the characters to migrate their land because of Great Depression and Dust Bowl. The Great Depression was a watershed moment in world history, and it was especially crucial in American history. It was a worldwide economic downturn that mostly happened in the 1930s. A recession is a word that used to describe a general economic slump marked by high unemployment and decreased consumer spending. As a result, many people struggled to find job during the Great Depression, while business fought to stay afloat due to drop in overall sales of goods and services. The stock market crash of 1929, the purchase of stock on margin, the wide income gap between the wealthy and the poor, the loss of consumer spending, the failure of banks to deal with the crisis, protectionism and the weather conditions in the American Midwest were all factors that historians have identified as contributing to the events of the Great Depression.

The stock market crash of 1929 resulted in significant levels of unemployment in the United States, which was a key element of the great depression, the jobless rate hit 25%. Life during the Great Depression was challenging for many people due to the high rate of unemployment. During the Great Depression, poverty was highly common among the working, and it had an impact on their lives in a number of ways, including housing, travel and quality of life. People, for example, could not afford basic housing due to a lack of income. The banks foreclosed many people's houses and farms. When people could not make payments, the bank forced them out of their properties. That made people to go outside in search of other jobs for their life and the Great Depression made many people homeless. At that time, in United States establishing shanty towns or Hoovervilles was a common sight. It was named after the United States president. When Great Depression came in to its peak many people were forced to live there when the life in Hoovervillies become more terrific people started to migrate within the united states in search of better life and job.

Among the many struggling working-class in United States migration has become central component. Other than Great Depression what caused people to migrate was Dust Bowl. The Dust Bowl, sometimes known as the "Dirty Thistles", impacted nearly 100 million acres of agricultural area in Canada and the United States. It was a term that given a drought that occurred in the great plain during 1930s, the same time period of great depression. It was mainly affected in the area having great amount of farms like Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. When time goes on, yearly the amount of rain decreases and thus caused increase in temperature and farming become very difficult. The area that affected with dust bowl had a thin layer of top soil that had traditionally only supported dry grasses. But when people started an untraditional kind of farming by using machines, it causes for the devastation of

many farms at that time. The farming practices used at that time led to the over farming of the region included: deep ploughing and mechanization. When rainfall decreases the winds that hit the region swept away the entire fields across the country. It made people's life very difficult and whenever the winds blows the atmosphere become black in colour. People started to refer it as 'Black blizzards' when it becomes its peak level many families were forced to leave their own land and started to migrate in another places with a kind of hope. Farmers had already been struggling due to small family farms being bought out and replaced by larger ones which relied more on mechanization. When the drought hit and farming become difficult many of them were unable to pay their debts and forced them to left everything to the banks. As a result, the dust bowl left over half a million Americans a homeless situation and caused migration over three million people out the American famously many of them relocated to the West Coast in hopes of finding employment in other agricultural work or anything. But there they often met with the harsh unemployment caused by the great depression, which was devastating all parts of country at that time. Whole people loaded all of their belongings onto their trucks that once used for farming purposes and left places. The Dust Bowl migration still remains in the history of United States as the longest migration which happened over a short period of time.

The movement of homeless young men across the United States and in Canada in search of work was another example of migration during the great depression. Some chosen train and other who were unable to afford the train ticket because of unemployment they illegally ride on freight cars or on the top of freight cars. Later it called as 'riding the rails' and while present before the onset of the recession. When that illegal journey becomes an issue the rail companies employed workers to find and remove those unwanted riders. As well the young men often found that condition

were not better in other parts of the country and their journey often did not result in a better life for themselves.

When people reached other places in hope of good life, what they were experienced was not a better welcome. They started to face much discrimination there. They neither got a better shelter nor job. They were bullied at each and every corner of the country. Whether they get any job, they were exploited by its maximum. What we can see among them was hope that they kept where shatter when the day passes. When they settled there, the discrimination towards them increase by the natives. Kristin Hannah draws the same issue in this novel's second part through her characters. Shattering of hopes and identity of the migrants were clearly explained by Hannah in her novel *The Four Winds*.

The exploitations, farmers did to the land where the basic reason for dropping their income. Because once the people get better income from the farmlands they become more and more greedy and they continued the wheat cultivation by forgetting it is not suitable such unorganized farming. When the farming continued with the machines disturbed the top soil and it started to fly away along with small winds. When it increased, many health issues started to affect people mainly small children were always used to wear mask and later children affected with lung problems such as Asthma and Pneumonia. When such situation becomes unbearable Elsa decided to move away from Texas for her children, especially for Ant. Though Tony and Rose was not ready to leave the place Elsa was forced to do it. Though Elsa and children went to California with a better hope, what they received from the natives was not satisfying. Before leaving she decided to visit for the last time her son's and Rafe's sibling tomb and she plucked the flowers that she grown near the kitchen put on

Lorenzo's tomb. When Elsa digs up her flower and it slumps over in the dirt, it's a symbol of how Elsa's hopes for this land and this land and this place have officially been dismantled.

After two days Elsa and her children said good bye to Texas and moved to California with a new hope. On her way, she is filled with a doubt about her ability to handle the challenges ahead. She wonders how she would find a job and how she would watch her children even if she has a job to done. On her way she saw many things like at Dalhart, Elsa sees a foreclosure notice on the door of the Wolcott home and the family business is boarded up. That means, her own family was once wealthy now left the place leaving everything to the bank. Elsa, Loreda and Ant also had to experience many bad situation because people who hadn't left anything started to attack for others for money and some gasoline. Many people waiting In front of the church with metal bowls in hand for food has become a common sight in most of the places. Elsa had to take care of her money too. Otherwise it will be looted. All these incidents show how that Great Depression and Dust Bowl totally changed the whole lifestyle of the people. But it is not good to put blame on other who tries to loot, because may be they have no other ways to escape from their problem when a man tried to loot Elsa's gasoline and money. Loreda saved the situation by shooting the gun to make him afraid. "In lonesome Tree they had fought against nature for survival. They'd known the dangers of the physical world. Out here, there were new dangers. Her children would learn that man could be dangerous too." (Hannah 203). Here actually our writer is giving us a hint that the real problems that Elsa and her children going to face would be very much bigger than the issues. At Lonesome Tree what they have to face only the dark face of nature and it after effects. But here what they were going to experience something dangerous to them. Here the problem is

humans. The discrimination from their part was intolerable to anyone. It is the same human who is rejecting the migrants.

When the story moves Kristin Hannah gives us a clear picture of that kind of identity crisis that the migrants were forced to face. When Elsa went to a gas pump she came across an incident where a group of people shouting for food and attacking the mayor's grocery store. It was a kind of hunger riot in America. People can't control their hunger any more. Hungry made them to attack others without thinking any consequences. Once the people who enjoyed every meal were now begging in the streets for some food. If once people put aside their greed land may provide them all the solution and never let them go. But whatever the problems comes in human's life they will never teach from that. If they remembered about the past drought they wouldn't do such cruelties to the nature. But whatever bad situation though they faced humans will never taught from it. The Dust Bowl was an example for it.

Throughout the journey they faced many obstacles and finally they reached their destination. They become very much excited while seeing greenery and flowers everywhere. To Ant it was an end point of his adventurous journey and for Loreda it was a kind of dream that came true once father told her about the place. Children mesmerized with every sights they passes through at general store Ant came to see many food stuffs and when he tried to touch it the cashier made his voice harsh upon them. Though Elsa showed money to him he never minded. What he gave more attention at that time for their appearance. He is not ready to accept such kind of 'dirty' people. When Elsa tried to make clarification, he replied. "Yeah I know your kind pours in to California every day."(216). He made a kind of contempt in his face

for them and it was intolerable to Elsa because he made her feel 'poor' for the first time in her life.

From this moment in the story, the actual problem faced by Elsa and other migrants were depicting. Elsa was in search of a shelter and she remembers in between some moments where identity and colour becomes a question. She remembers how her father contemptuously looked Italians, the Irish, the Negroes and the Mexicans and how her mother commented on her own new-born granddaughter: the wrong skin colour. Here the colour maybe mentioned the actual colour or may it meant the false identity, because the father of the child is an Italian and for the Wolcott family they are not acceptable and secondary class for them. In between her eyes cling upon a pretty house with the board 'FOR RENT'. They make-up some dreams in their mind, the moment they saw the house. But when Elsa enquires her about the rent and all, the replies that she given to her was quite breathe taking. She said they don't rent to Okies. When Elsa says she is from Texas, the ladies explanation was not good at language. Then she pointed down the road and said: "That's the direction you want to go. About fourteen miles. That's where you kind lives." (220). Elsa felt sad and she moved to the place where that lady shown to them. There they seemed collection of tents and jalopies and shacks set back from the road in a weedy field. The place was completely unhygienic and Ant and Loreda doesn't like that place and they wanted to go back. But they have no other way other than this. Elsa had never thought that this would be the condition of people who came to California who said it's a land of milk and honey. The placed completely looked like a refugee camp. In that place Elsa got a family to mingle up. The family consists of a husband, a wife and children. They were Jeb Dewy, Jean, Mary, Buster, Elroy and Lucy. Through the conversation between them, Kristin Hannah says, among those

people there live some lawyers, postman along with farmers. Whatever post they held past had no value in that place.

Next morning Elsa left the camp in search of a job. Jeb was a farmer and in California he used to pick fruits and in cotton season he will went to pick cotton. The state was not supportive to those kinds of migrants. Jean said to Elsa that, “The state cares more about linin ‘the growers’ pockets than taking care of the farm workers”.(227). In front of every farm land people waiting for work become a common scene there. There she can see both machines and animals were working equally. After wandering a long time she reached at a large house. The lady allowed Elsa to work there but the attitude towards Elsa was not bearable to her. Because the lady used to cover her nose whenever she passes Elsa and she told her daughter that, “Don’t get too close they carry diseases.”(280). Elsa never imagined in her life that she would face such an awkward situation. Here the lady want the migrants labour but not ready to accept them as a common human being. After ten hours of work what she got as a wage was forty cents only. On that night she tells Loreda that they need to stay at the camp for someday. But Loreda was not happy with that. Elsa wrote a cheery letter to Tony and Rose to let them know they made it.

Whatever bad situation may come in Elsa’s life she wanted her children to be educated. At school too her children faced discrimination by their looks. Wherever they go they were accused with that so called name ‘Okies’ and it was unbearable to Elsa to become contemptuous. At school they never found any children of Loreda’s age, because when the child become eleven they will go to work. But Elsa doesn’t want her daughter to be a worker in that age.

Elsa is initially too proud to want relief, but Jean and Jeb push her to sign up because she needs to wait a year from the date she sign up on, so chances are by the time she really needs it, it will come too late if she doesn't sign up now. Even after she does sign up, she declines to stand in the food line, since she still can't fathom the thought of herself like one of those people. Similarly both Elsa and Loreda are disgusted by the camp and the people in it until they realize they will have to be exactly one of those people. They all have to re-adjust their idea of who they are and also how they think of other people who have fallen on hard times. Others treat them like criminals, but they know that they are hard-working people in unfortunate circumstances.

At school when Elsa went to PTA, other parents mock at her and Martha Watson-the president of PTA insulted Elsa by saying like, they spread disease and all. But it was not acceptable to her and she stays there and then took all their snacks as they leave and give it to her children. In between they received letter from Tony and Rose informing the situation in Texas. Soon Elsa and her children started to cope up with the situation. Jean got pregnant again at that time. Elsa started working at a cotton field for 50 cent a day. Loreda was also ready to help her. When the season ends they moved to Northern California with other migrant workers to pick fruit. When the fruit season is over, they head elsewhere to find other work. Hannah describes here, how the newspaper talks about the concerns of the non-migrant citizens who worry about the growing migrant population. Even for the migrants toils providing cheap wages for the labour and other people, the citizens think that the migrants are a broken on the government services, and they associates them with crime and disease. While people want their labour, no one wants to see the people who do the work.

Elsa and Loreda continued to work at cotton field when they returned and Loreda had no school. Though Elsa wouldn't need Loreda to come work, to save money for the winter she agreed. With cotton season over, Loreda will soon be returning to school, which she is reluctant to do. Trying to re-inspire her kids, Elsa taken her them in to town. Elsa brought her kids in to a salon, Betty Ane's Beauty shop, explaining to the proprietor that she doesn't want Loreda to be teased in school. When Betty Ane goes to fetch her husband Ned, Elsa thought Betty Ane is trying to kick them out, but the reaction was surprising to them because Ned given them some old clothes for the winter. They were former migrants as well. He also offered to let them take a hot shower there. From their behaviour we can see how a migrant is serving another migrant, because they were once well in position, not ready to reject the migrant because they knew the real toil of such people.

When, Loreda's appearance got changed, people's attitude towards her too changed. When Loreda went to the library the librarian never knew that she is a migrant. Even without the library card the woman still let her to check out a book. This shows people at that time valued others, especially the migrants through their appearance and all. To them it the appearance that identifies a person is good or bad. Here the librarian measured Loreda as a native not as a migrant so, the problem is only with their appearance. Soon by December Elsa's money started to get reduced. With relief only coming April, she put her pride to a side and start standing in the food line for help until then. She had to wait there for hours in the cold to pick up a small box of food, though she will have to wait another two weeks to get another,

Another incident Elsa faced later that when Jean had labour pain she drives to the hospital. But the hospital refuses to admit her, saying that migrant don't pay taxes

and she given her a pair of gloves instead. Though Elsa begged they never minded her. They used bad language to mock them. “You? Telling me to be human? Please look at yourself. You women pop out babies like champagne corks. Find one of yours to help you.”(289). These words are such humiliating words that no one dares to say. But what made them to say like that because they are migrants nobody will ask them anything if they behaved like that or not. Elsa cannot save that baby and it died. If the hospital was ready to accept Jean that baby should alive. The native never showed any kind of mercy toward such people. It was intolerable to Loreda and she became very angry and blames her mother for all that has happened to them. Later when Elsa goes to talk to Loreda, she realize that Loreda has run away, leaving just a note. From this moment changes started to happen in Elsa’s and children life.

Loreda’s meeting with Jack Valen, and his initiations totally attracted by Loreda and she completely changed her mind from that dreamy world filled by her own father. Jack Valen was also a migrant and now he is working for the migrants who were ill-treating by the society. Loreda was attracted towards his notion but not Elsa. When the story moves we can see how Elsa and children were protected from every problems by Jack Valen even though Elsa dislike it. Jack Valen was a social reformer who fought against the land lords make corrupts upon the poor working migrant classes. Though Elsa was thankful to him she was not ready to join in his group. Jack arranged Elsa and her children a better cabin at Welty camp and offered her job at Welty farm. Though Elsa got relief from money it was not enough for her to make their life safe. Gradually the federal government shows their cruel face by cutting the fund for the food line. The government never bothered about how they live or how they spent their life.

Another cruelty the land lords especially the owner of Elsa's farm land, Mr Welty had done that to the workers is that they never received any money for the groceries that they buy. He gave everything in credit. Only then he can control his works. When the day passes, he cut wages by ten percentages and he further decreased wages by ten percentage. When she becomes the part of Welty's farmland government stopped her relief money. Welty was such a cruel man who exploits his workers. He knew that if he reduces their daily wages they will never raise their voice because so many migrants were waiting outside for this job.

When the story moves Elsa become aware to react against such cruelties she made her part with Jack's communist party. In the riot between communist and Welty's people Elsa got gun shot and we see how Elsa become a martyr. Though she loved to go back to Texas when Tony's and Rose's letter arrived informing about the development in that condition she can't sacrificed her life for the poor migrants who still suffering for their daily bread. Elsa's and her children's life was not only a single family's story. Kristin Hannah through this family she representing an entire community who were forced to migrate another geographical area and the crisis, especially the identity crisis they faces in that places.

Migration and identity issue is a common thing that still happening among the nations or within the nations. Homi.K. Bhabha in his work *The Location of Culture* says, "Our existence today is marked by a tenebrous sense of survival, living on the borderlines of the 'present'" (Bhabha 1). The identity crisis faced by people is known to the present world only because they still exist today. If no survivors exist, nobody going to know about the exploitation they were faced in their life. Thousands and thousands years ago started this kind of migration due to war, disasters and now due

to climate change. Here the reason behind the migration caused for the Texas people is that Dust Bowl. The time from which the human community established migration was part of it. Still now, if any wars that occurs among any countries, it is the natives who forced to move from their own place to another. Some were forced to move within their own place to another country. But the actual problem they started to face when they find, they have no identity there. How? Our identity may be our language, our culture, gender, sex etc. But as an immigrant if we have no values in any such above things what should be the purpose of it? Migration and identity crisis is not a new issue, it is an issue that is as old as from the birth of humans'. The identity of a person is determined how he survives within that community.

An identity crisis is a developmental event that involves a person questioning their sense of self or place in the world. The concept originated in the work of developmental psychologist Erik Erikson, who believed that the formation of identity was one of the most important conflicts that the formation of identity was one of the most important conflicts that people face. When a person started to question himself that, what is the purpose of my life and who am I? There raises the question of identity. If we consider Erik Erikson's work on psychosocial development we can see that through which stages Elsa, Loreda and Ant moves. If we consider Loreda we can say that she was at the stage of Identity versus Role confusion, because at this stage Loreda came to know about her social roles, but when Elsa stopped her from many things, like joining the communist party. Loreda become very much confused because she wanted to do something for others but, because of Elsa she was facing her role confusion. On one side when Jack motivates her on other side Elsa suppresses her. So Loreda found some kind of personal identity issue there. In Elsa's case she is in the stage of Intimacy versus Isolation. Here what Elsa feels isolation because; she never

felt any intimate relationship from her husband. But Ant was not in a problem and he was in the stage of Initiative versus Guilt. It is the time to identify his interests and that is why we saw that when Elsa left the place with her children to California Ant was in a mood of adventurous trip, because he was in the mood of exploration.

If a person was passing through all these stages and any external pressure hit their life it will be like a hurricane for them. The concept is that, here Erikson talks at the light of a person's common identity crisis that he faces through his different stages of life, from birth to death. But when we came in to a society and if our identities get questioned, from that moment we can say that we are in the edge of identity crisis. Here what that made the reason for Martinelli's and others identity in California is migration. The migrants faced discrimination in California, for their appearances only. In Texas the people had to suffer only from natural disasters, but when they migrated, the sufferings they had to experience from the same community, i.e. from the human community. So, we can say that Kristin Hannah through her novel *The Four Winds* clearly pictured how migration and identity related to one another and at the same time she shows the world, about the dark face of migration. We know that US is a highly civilized country and being a civilized nation US still follows some kind of discrimination towards people, especially on their colour.. Still today the war, natural calamities are going on and migration of people is a daily scene. If some migrate for their better life, hoping much better than from their native land, some migrate from their native land to save life.

In this chapter what we discussed is that, being a migrant family Elsa and her children tried very much to cope-up with the situations. But what they had to face there was only rejection at every point. At every corner their identity got questioned.

As a writer Kristin Hannah is successful at portraying those identity problems faced by the migrants. Though they have to face many negative situations in life, when we come to Loreda's life, migration helped Loreda to find her duty in that society and also helped her to wake up from that dreamy world made by her father.

Chapter IV

Power of Motherhood

The existence of a society begins from each and every family in that society. The pillar that supports the family is definitely the mother. Other than a father, it is mother who takes much care about the family. They play an important role there, which is a powerful force for social development and integration. Even in mythology motherhood was praised to a great extent. The mother-child relationship is vital for the healthy development of children. Mothers are not only the care givers; they are also the bread winners for their families. A mother is ready to sacrifice her entire life for them. The moment a woman came to know that she is pregnant, her all concentration should be on that child. She is ready to sacrifice the entire life for that baby. Kristin Hannah *'The Four Winds'* is also a story of mother who fought in her entire life for her children. Though it is a historical fiction it recounts a survival story centred on a mother and daughter.

While we read this novel, when Elsa and her children become the centre, it remind everyone with the photography of Dorothea Lange's 'Migrant Mother' it was well renowned picture that symbolising the horror of Dust Bowl, the migration and the Great Depression. From the moment it first appeared in the pages of San Francisco newspaper in March 1936, the image known as "Migrant Mother" came to symbolize the hunger, poverty and hopelessness, endured by so many Americans during the Great Depression. The lady appeared in this picture was Florence Owens Thompson and her story is little much similar to that of our protagonist Elsa, where both experienced single mother hardship. Though Florence had partner after her

husband death, life was similar to every migrant woman. The appearance of 'Migrant Mother' and description of Elsa's appearance has very much similar. Florence died after her 80th birthday due to cancer and health problems. Till her death she suffered a lot. Her end of life marked economic hardship, maternal sacrifice and human dignity. President Ronald Reagan shows condolences on her death by writing that "Mrs Thompson passing represents the loss of American who symbolizes strength and determination in the midst of the Great Depression."(Reagan)

Though the setting of the novel take place in the time of Great Depression and Dust Bowl the story line goes through the life of a lady named Elsa. Through her character Kristin Hannah portraying the turmoil that of mothers had suffered during that time. Here we can see how much Kristin Hannah giving importance to the motherhood. In this novel we can see many female characters. Among them there are many mothers having different characters and thoughts. The mother characters that appeared in this novel are Elsa, her mother Eugene, Rafe's mother Rosalba and Jean etc.

The word 'mother' brings the unconditional love and care in everyone. Whether being an animal or human mother's love is very much valued in all aspects. Here in this novel Kristin Hannah shows how valuable are motherhood. In the beginning of the novel the writer brings in front of the reader how the protagonist Elsa was treated by her parents. Comparing Elsa with her sisters, she never got any kind of love and affections from her parents that they give it to her sisters. Though her mother had loves towards her, it was a kind of love that comes out of sympathy. Her mother always cares about others. She was conscious about what other would say if they do anything wrong. Elsa's mother always considers Elsa as a patient and never allowed

to do anything. Being concerned about other she never let Elsa be a subject for other conversations. That's why when she came to know about Elsa's pregnancy, without why reluctance she abandoned her forever.

It is very much true that, the first teacher of a child in his life, it is his mother. It is from that mother he starts to learn many lessons. In Elsa's case, her mother had never shown any kind of deep love towards her. So, from her childhood she grew up like an introvert kind of person with a thought that she is an unattractive lady. Her mother never tried to find her daughters mind. May be her mother's this attitude taught Elsa, how to become a good or a bad mother. But, when she started to live at Rafe's house Rosalba's attitude towards her was very rude because she considered her as a burden for Rafe's future. She said to Elsa that, "When you are a mother, you will know how I feel right now." (Hannah 46). But later when the story moves Rose's attitude started to change. She begins to show some kind of affection towards her. When Loreda was born, Rose said Elsa that, "Believe me Elsa, this little girl will love you and no one ever has and makes you crazy and try your soul. Often all at the same time." (57). Elsa find too much attached to Rose than her own mother. When Elsa gets pain while thinking of her parent it was Rose who consoles her and gradually she becomes Elsa's mother in every way that mattered. Rose always tried to support Elsa when she gets accused by her daughter and husband.

Elsa loved her children very much but Loreda's behaviour towards Elsa was not satisfying to her. Even though Loreda was a daddy girl she had a room in her heart for both parents. When she becomes aged her anger towards mom increased. She believed that, her father is sad because of her mother. She hates the life her mother is leading. She even doubt that whether her father loves her mother or not. She wanted

to travel around the world. Though Elsa has sadness towards Loreda's behaviour she never showed any kind of aggressions towards her. She always tried to understand her mind and never said any bad words to her. Loreda always hurt Elsa in the name of Rafe and she believed that it is her mother who ruined her father life.

When the Great Depression reached its peak Rafe was not bothered as much as his family members, how to survive the situation. On one hand where his family trying to survive in the same land Rafe was in a land of dreamy world. He wants to escape from that land to California, which was believed land of 'honey and milk'. Whenever Loreda insult Elsa in the name of Rafe, she tried to correct her by saying that: "Life is tough, Loreda. You need to be tougher or it will turn you inside out, us it has your father." (87). These lines, we can say that it is from her own experience she is talking to Loreda. But to Loreda her whole world was her father. It was her father who filled her mind with a dream and travelling thoughts. So, from Rafe attitude Loreda believes that it is because of her mother her father cannot reach his goal. If there was one person Loreda trusted to tell her the truth, it was her father. She always tried to motive him by saying "Anything is possible". But when Rafe left the family, it was intolerable to Loreda. She always thought about her mother as a serious but not a funny character. She was not suitable for her dreamy world. When Elsa tried to console Loreda by calling 'Lolo' after Rafe's escape, Loreda shouted: "DON'T YOU CALL ME THAT. Only he can call me that." (121). From this it is clear that how much aggression she had to her mother for her father's escape. She always shouts at her and never allowed her to sit her father's place. Though he left them, Loreda believed that somewhere he is waiting for them.

Whenever the storm hits its peak Elsa always tried to protect her children first. When Rafe left them she never let her hope. When Loreda scolds Elsa for her father's escape Rose always tried to correct her: "Passion has a dark edge. If your father had never grown up, he would have told you this instead of filling your head with fluff." (134). Rose was a good mother to Elsa, other than being a mother-in-law she behaved like her own mother. She always tried to give motivation to Elsa when Rafe left the family, she said Elsa that her children needs her. Thus Rose make Elsa comfort in her bad days. When Elsa says Rose that Rafe never loved her, to comfort Elsa she herself told her story about her lost three daughters and how carefully and pray fully she waited for Rafe's birth. She admits that she spoiled Rafe's life, because she wanted him to know love and prosperity and to be an American. She also admitted that, Elsa is the best thing that ever happened to her son and he is a fool to have missed that. She says it is her deep love to Rafe spoiled his life. But she love Elsa as much as Rafe that she said before: "You have the heart of lion. Don't believe anyone who tells you different. I've seen it. My son is a fool." (136).

Elsa was not understood by anyone as much Rose did. It was Rose who always gave her an external power or motivation to run her life forward. From the experiences Elsa learned how a mother should behave to her children. Though Elsa had her own mother she experienced the true love only from her mother-in-law Rose always supported Elsa in her all situations. Other than any of them in her family it was Rose who acted like a backbone of Elsa. Elsa was not an educated lady. She cannot continue her studies when she affected with Rheumatic fever. But Elsa wanted her children to be educated and find their own identity. She was ready to sacrifice her whole life for her family, especially for her children. When the Dust Storm become extremely high children were forced to wear mask and when it becomes dangerous to

Ant's health she was ready to leave the country. But at the same time she was not fully ready to move, because in Texas her died son Lorenzo's tomb and her family left. But for her children's better life she moved to California. There. Though she had to face many difficulties she never made any excuse in educating her children. When the story moves we can see how Elsa become bold day by day. Wherever she goes, her one and only aim was to give her children a better life. Whatever hardship she had to face in her life she accepted it only for her children. Loreda also accepted it, once they were in the hardship of Great Depression in Texas: "Mom and grandma were warrior women. Nothing stopped them when they'd made up their minds." (159).

At California their life was not as smooth they dreamt, but Elsa wanted her children to be educated at any cost. When Loreda refused to go school and wanted to help mom; she replied: "Education is everything, Loreda. You know that. You will be the first Martinelli to go to college. Hard times doesn't last. Education does and you all are behind the grind these days." (239-40). Here we can understand that the words she used here to Loreda are from her experience. Because she knew that in order to get success and escape from hardships education is must. She doesn't want her daughter to spoil life like her. She dreamt of like every parents who want their children to be successful. But in this novel we can also see another kind of mother and their children. Jean was also a mother of four children and also a migrant. But in hardship she is not bothered about make her children educated, even though she loves them very much. But Elsa being a single parent wanted her children to be educated other than going to work in their small age.

When Loreda hesitated to go to go to school Elsa decided to took her children to town to do an appearance change. She knew that the main reason were children

hesitate to go school, because they always insulted in the name of their appearance. She always behaved like a good mother because at each and every moment she tried to understand her children's mind. In every bad situation she always tried to teach her children, how to survive it. When Jean's child died at delivery she can't handle her pain. It was much painful than Rafe left her. The reason may be when she saw that child's breathless body remembered her own child Lorenzo who passed when he was an infant. As a mother it was unbearable to her.

Elsa always cared about her children. When Loreda left the tent without saying anything, Elsa become very much nervous, but when she returned back other than scolding she hugged her tightly. She knew that it is the right way to treat her, because she was only thirteen and it is quite natural in that age. For a mother her child is an open book .Whatever the child feels, a mother can understand it clearly and can't hide nothing from her. She is the best judge of her child's personality ad she makes sure that the child is treated and disciplined accordingly. When Loreda met Jack Valen and interested to join the communist party, Elsa rejected it. The party was against the land owners and she worried that, if they join that party they may have to face many problems like violence, riots and all.

Here, while reading this novel we can see that, what made the reason behind Jack to protest against the land lords. He said he was also a migrant and his mother died in a fir accident while working in a factory. The distance between Loreda and Elsa vanished because of Jack. The day that Loreda met with Jack and when she came to know about his notions she discovered that her mind was filled with dreams by her father. When she came out that dream she realized how truly her mother loved her. In chapter 36 Kristin Hannah clearly shows how Loreda confesses her wrong behaviour

towards mom. When she returned back to the tent, from that moment Loreda started to enjoy the real love of mother she denied for years. From that moment whatever Elsa says to Loreda she never said any bad words in reply. Though Elsa was not ready to accept her intension to join the communist party, Loreda never showed any kind of aggression towards her. Because she knew that she is afraid of such ting and believed that it may hurt them. But the real fire in her mother she realized the day when Jean was in fever and when the hospital faculties rejected treatment there, she grabs a bat and smashed the door and the desk until the woman gives her the aspirin in fear. From that moment she threw her fear away and decided to fight for their right.

Loreda believed that her mother had no fight or fire, but Elsa has shown a number of times she is a fighter when she believes it is necessary. Despite it being completely out of character for her, she is willing to cause trouble and threaten someone if it means helping someone she loves. Once she realizes that unionizing is do or die prospect for her and her family, it's clear to Elsa what need to be done. She knew that if she wouldn't do anything now, tomorrow she and her children had to face the same situation. Whenever Loreda was stopped by her mother, she remembers that, if she still continues to work there she can't fulfil her mother's dream that, Loreda to go to college. When the time passes, the bond between the mother and daughter become very strong. Elsa started to feel comfort in pouring her sadness in front of Loreda. When Elsa opened her mind towards her about her love towards Rafe and to his family Loreda started to recognize how pure her mother's heart was, Loreda comforts her mother by saying: "They were crazy, your family, I mean. And they missed out you. They never saw how special you are." (407). It was the moment Loreda opened up her mind to her mother. Whatever she started to understand her mother's purity she realized that she is a special one. Here the 'other family' means

Elsa's own family. Loreda was right that if Elsa's family tried once to understand her she wouldn't have to face such problems in her life.

When Loreda and Elsa decided to fight against Mr Welty Loreda was her mother, her strength. We can see in the last chapters when Elsa got gun shot and dies, how emotional that Loreda becomes. When Elsa was in the brim of death one thing that she always whispered to her daughter was 'be brave'. For the first time we can see Loreda praying God for her mother. She understood that it is her mother who gave them life and she knew that her life was her mother. "She wanted to tell her mother how much she loved and admired her, how she wanted to be just like her when grew up." (435).

In the last chapter Kristin Hannah shows how Loreda disguised as a boy and plundered money from the Welty's store to send her mom's body to burry in her own land- Texas. Here what inspired Loreda to do that, it is her mother. She wanted to be like her mother. In her absence she always tried to remember her mom's saying 'be brave'. She closed eyes and thought of all the things she wished she'd said to her mother. "I love you. I'm proud of you. I've never seen anyone so brave. Why was I so mean for so long? You gave me wings, mom. Did you know that? I feel you here will I always?" (444). When the story ends, in the last part- epilogue; the year is 1940 Loreda is 18 now and she is with her grandparents. Texas now blessed with rain and now she is about to head off to college in California. She recalls her mother's headstone as she leaves to become the first Martinelli to go to school.

Here in this novel, though setting was at the time of Great Depression and Dust Bowl, our writer brings in front of the reader a theme of motherhood. It is a historical fiction but she justifies how mother's love can change the whole life of their

children. In the novel we saw that Loreda was angry towards her mother because of her blind love for her father. But when she came to reality she understood her mother's value and she tried to fulfil her mother's wish, i.e. Loreda to be educated as much as possible. So, Kristin Hannah shows being a mother or motherhood is not a simple matter. Among the parents, nothing can replace a mother's love. It is the fire in a mother that drove their children forward. In this novel *The Four Winds* we met many kinds of mothers and shows mother's love is not completely a biological process, i.e. in Elsa's case other than her real mother it was Rose who gave her a mother's love, care and support in every situation. So, here Kristin Hannah proving that a mother's courage can protect her children from any worst condition and even after their death that courage will still there in this world through their children. So, we can say that Kristin Hannah, how much she valued the feeling of motherhood. Through this novel here it is agreeing that a mother is the first teacher of a child.

Chapter v

Conclusion

The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah is a historical fiction which sets in the time before and after the Great Depression. The novel discusses the condition of America when the country hit with the great disaster- Great Depression that comes along with Dust bowl. Other than Great Depression, Dust Bowl and migration we can find many other themes in this novel, mainly identity crisis of the migrants, relation between human and nature and the last one- motherhood. Kristin Hannah says all these things in this novel through the story of a family, especially a lady named Elsa and her children.

The study focused mainly on three matters; ecocriticism, migration and identity and motherhood. In the first part it discusses, how much the theory ecocriticism is applicable to this novel. In this novel there discussed what made the life of the people much difficult along with the Great Depression and it was about the Dust Bowl. After the First World War America become very powerful in every sector. Economically too they become very stable. One of the main sources for this was farming, especially wheat cultivation and when the demand for wheat increased people increased wheat production by converting the grass lands using machines and bank offered people to buy automobiles in instalments for farm purposes and that increased the production in automobiles. All these affected the balance of nature and when the grass lands destroyed, top soil started to flew away even in a small wind blows and life of people and every creatures become very tough.

The second part of the project deals with the after effects of migration and identity crisis. Great Depression and Dust Bowl caused people to migrate from their native place to California. In the novel the protagonist Elsa and her children moved to California with a hope of better life. But the situations they had to experience there was not better. The natives considered them as disease spreading creatures. They neither got any proper shelter nor proper wages for their works. They were considered as secondary people and they had to suffer a lot in California because of being migrants. Other than Elsa and her family Kristin Hannah introduced many other people who faced the same issue. In this chapter there also discussed how Erik Erikson's theory on identity crisis linked with migration.

In the last chapter, it deals with the power of motherhood and how a mother's love helps their children to survive in the worst condition. In this novel Rose, being a mother-in-law of Elsa helped her to increase her courage and support her children. Lorenda being a father's girl she later came to understand her mother's love and courage. She also understood her sacrifice she made for her children and as tribute to her mother Lorenda decided to go to college. Through her mother she learned what life is and how can survive among those people who consider them secondary.

Thus we can say that, being a historical fiction it also passes through all these matters like ecocriticism, migration and identity crisis and motherhood. Though the novel based on Great Depression and Dust Bowl we can understand that the story is beyond all these matters. Kristin Hannah shows how man and nature is related to each other through her characters like Elsa, Tony Martinelli, Rose, Lorenda, Rafe, Ant etc. and that is clearly discussed in chapter one of this project. The writer also showed that Great Depression showed the dark side of migration and how it questions the identity

of migrants. Value or power of motherhood is clearly explained in the novel through the mother characters by Kristin Hannah and she also shows how mother's love helps to overcome the obstacle in her child's life. Though it is a historical fiction the themes discussed in this project still relevant in the present society and also to the upcoming period too. Through one woman's survival during the harsh and haunting Dust Bowl, Kristin Hannah reminds us that the human heart and our Earth are as tough, yet as fragile as a change in the wind. This mother's soul, suffering the same drought as the land, attempts to cross deserts and beat starvation to save her children with a fierce inner strength called motherhood. So, we can say that it is a timely novel highlighting the worth and delicate nature of Nature itself.

We cannot say that everything discussed in this novel would end one day. The time period mentioned in the novel and the year, the novel had written exactly have hundred years gape and the matters that follows in this novel is still happening this world without any change like war between nature and man, migration and identity issue and never ending power of motherhood. So, all these matters made this novel a very relevant one.

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