

## **THE GAME CHANGERS**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper tends to focus on the revolutionary spirit and the investigation of the Maxim Gorky's realistic depiction of social realism. Many revolutions happened during the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Maxim Gorky had written a novel entitled as the Mother about the Russian revolution. This story is about the revolutionary spirit of a lady named as Nilvona who is the mother of an activist Pavel. Nilvona worked wonderfully when her son Pavel got imprisoned and become the mother of the whole workers during the revolution. This revolution is for the workers who worked really hard but get no reward in return and pass the whole life from hand to mouth. Mother is a Marxist- feminist novel in a true sense and shows the importance of equal share of gender not in benefits but in contributions too. The current paper not only focuses on the feminist approach of Maxim Gorky in the book Mother but also show cased the power of Proletariat.

### **Introduction:**

Gorky is one of the initiators and pioneers of Socialist proletarian literature. He wanted to represent the bitterness of the socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of his times. Gorkey's classic novel "The Mother" is the first novel written on socialist realism which have crossed millions of reads. This revolutionary writer Gorkey, born in 1868, was the believer of equality and indepedence of humanity. He went through the severe calamities of life but always come up with his sheer determination. Gorkey was never afraid to face the music over his bold moves. Mother was one of the forbidden books of his time which suffered literary as well as social backlash by capital society but then considered as a milestone in the history of soviet literature.

### **Background Information:**

"Mother" is based on a true incident of a revolutionary demonstration which took place in 1902 in the factory town Sarmovo. It gives a broad and generalized picture of life of working class in Russia and the revolution of 1905 which had failed.

Mother is Gorky's only long job in the Russian revolutionary movement. But of all his novels, it was the least successful. However, it remains the most famous work of Gorky among the author's other great novels. The novel's political agenda is clear. After the defeat of the Russian revolution in 1905, Gorky strove to raise the atmosphere of the proletarian movement, bringing to the readers the political agenda through his writings. He tried to raise the spirit of the revolutionaries against the atmosphere of defeat. Along with which feminism was seen

beautifully sewed in the novel. Gorky is personally connected with the novel, because it is based on real events, in the center of which are Anna Zalomova and her son Pyotr Zalomov. Anna Zalomova was a distant relative of Gorky, who visited the Gorky family in childhood, has a deeper relationship to this story. This happened during the protest action on May 1 in Sarmovo in 1902. The Sormovo shipyard is located near his hometown of Gorky, Nizhny Novgorod, and his mother, Anna Zalomova, took part in revolutionary activities after the arrest of Peter Zalomov by the tsarist police.

### **Literary Review:**

“Mother” is one of the most important novels of the twentieth century which was written in (1907) in America, on the historical eve of the first Russian peasant-bourgeois Revolution of 1905. It depicts the emerging class-conscious revolutionary proletariat class in Russia. It enjoyed enormous popularity and success and was considered as a model for the socialist proletarian fiction prior and after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The Russian critics hailed Gorky as a true proletarian writer and his novel “Mother” as the model of Socialist proletarian literature. Vladimir Lenin remarks that “It is a book of the utmost importance many workers who have joined the revolutionary movement impulsively without properly understanding why will begin to comprehend after reading Mother”

Mikhail Bakhtin notes that “After 1905, Gorky knows that Russia is also on the path to revolution” Francine Du Plessix Gray considers the novel as “the literary model for the Socialist Realist portrayal of women”. Eugenia Knipovich wrote an essay entitled “The Socialist Humanism of Maxim Gorky” (1937) in which he stated about Gorky’s female characters as portrayed in his fiction that similarly in women’s lives Gorky lays bare their torment. They are beaten not out for cruelty alone but because on them the men folk avenge their own sufferings the anguish and humiliation of their degraded and oppressed lives. Chrystyna Marta Hnatiw wrote a dissertation entitled “Women in Gorky’s Prose Fiction 1892 or 1911” (1967) in which she discussed Gorky’s female characters as depicted in his novels and short stories written from 1902 until 1911. Sarah Elizabeth Pickle wrote a doctoral dissertation under the title of “The Form of Learning is The Learning of Forms: Models of Socialist Aesthetic Education in Gorky, Hacks, and Muller (2014) in which she conducted a comparative study of Maxim Gorky’s “Mother” (1907). Dr Neelam Bhardwaj wrote a research paper entitled “Maxim Gorky’s Mother through the Lens of Marxist-Feminism” (2016) in which she discussed the novel from a classical Marxist Feminism focussing on Marxist paradigm presented in Fredrick Engels epoch making book “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State”. She did not mention the modern and Post-modern theories of Marxist feminists as well as Marxist belonging to second and third wave feminisms to strengthen her argument in her article. Dr. Mohammed wrote a research article entitled “The Woman as Archetypal Figure of Challenge and Fortitude in Maxim Gorky’s Mother: A Critical Appraisal”(2014), in which he focussed on characters of women as portrayed in the novel. Marxist feminism is a theory of power and its unequal distribution. For the Marxists feminists every social formation is based on class-conflicts of interests between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as well as gender discrimination between men and women. They want to

establish and defend equal socio-economic and political rights of women. They also believe that the conflicts and differences between man and woman are not sociological but naturally biological. The purpose of Marxist feminists is to overcome women's subordination, subjugation, exploitation, gender-discriminations, and the patriarchy by replacing capitalism with socialism.

**Discussion:**

The novel takes place in Russia in the early 1900s. In the workers' suburb live factory workers with families, and the whole life of these people is inextricably linked with the factory: in the morning, with a factory whistle, workers rush to the factory, in the evening it throws them out of their stone bowels; on holidays, meeting each other, they speak only about the factory, drink a lot, get drunk – they fight. However, the young worker Pavel Vlasov, unexpectedly for his mother Pelageya Nilovna, the widow of a locksmith, suddenly begins to live a different life. On holidays he goes to town, brings books, reads a lot. To the perplexed question of the mother, Paul replies: “I want to know the truth and therefore I read forbidden books, if they find me, they will put me in jail.”

After a while in the house at the Vlasovs on Saturday evenings Pavel's comrades begin to gather: Andrei Nakhodka – “Khokhol from Kanev”, as he appears to his mother, who recently arrived in the village and entered the factory; a few factory – slobodskih guys, which Nilovna knew before; people come from the city: a young girl Natasha, a teacher who left Moscow from wealthy parents; Nikolai Ivanovich, who sometimes comes to work with the workers instead of Natasha; thin and pale young lady Sashenka, too, like Natasha, left the family: her father is a landowner, zemsky boss. Pavel and Sashenka love each other, but they can not get married: they both believe that married revolutionaries are lost for the cause – one must earn a living, an apartment, raise children. Gathering in the house at Vlasovs, the members of the circle read books on history, talk about the heavy share of the workers of the whole earth, about the solidarity of all working people, often sing songs. At these meetings, the mother first heard the word “socialists”. Mother really likes Nakhodka, and he too fell in love with her, kindly calls her “not bad,” says that she looks like his late adoptive mother, but his mother does not remember him. After a while, Pavel and his mother invite Andrei to move to their house, and the Ukrainian gladly agrees. At the factory appear leaflets, which talk about strikes workers in St. Petersburg, the injustice of the order in the factory; leaflets call on workers to unite and fight for their interests. Mother understands that the appearance of these sheets is connected with the work of her son, she is proud of him, and is afraid for his fate. After a while, gendarmes come to Vlasov's house with a search. Mother is scared, but she tries to suppress her fear. The visitors do not find anything: in advance, warned of a search, Pavel and Andrei carried out forbidden books from home; nevertheless Andrei was arrested. At the factory there is an announcement that from each worker earned by the ruble, the directorate will deduct a penny – to drain the marshes surrounding the

factory. Workers are dissatisfied with this decision of the directorate, several elderly workers come to Pavel for advice. Pavel asks his mother to go to the city to take his note to the newspaper so that the story with the “marsh penny” gets to the nearest room, and he goes to the factory where, at the head of a spontaneous rally, in the presence of the director, he outlines the workers’ demands for the cancellation of the new tax. However, the director orders the workers to resume work, and everyone disagrees. Paul is distressed, he believes that the people did not believe him, did not follow his truth, because he is young and weak – he could not tell the truth. At night, the gendarmes are again, and this time they take Paul away. A few days later Yegor Ivanovich comes to Nilovna – one of those who attended meetings before Paul before his arrest. He tells his mother that besides Pavel, another 48 factory people were arrested, and it would be good to continue delivering leaflets to the factory. The mother is called to carry leaflets, for which she asks a familiar factory lunch for workers, to take her to her assistants. Everyone entering the factory is searched, but the mother successfully passes the leaflets and hands them over to the workers.

Finally, Andrew and Pavel go out of prison and begin to prepare for the celebration of the First of May. Paul is going to carry the banner in front of the column of demonstrators, although he knows that for this they will put him in jail again. In the morning of May 1, Pavel and Andrei do not go to work, but go to the square where the people have already gathered. Paul, standing under the red banner, declares that today they, members of the Social-Democratic Labor Party, are openly raising the banner of reason, truth and freedom. “Long live working people of all countries!” – With this slogan of Paul, the column he led was moving along the streets of the settlement. However, towards the demonstration there is a chain of soldiers, the column is crumpled, Pavel and Andrei, who was walking next to him, are arrested. Mechanically picking up a fragment of the shaft with a fragment of the banner torn from the hands of the gendarmes by the gendarmes, Nilovna goes home,

A few days later, his mother moved to the city to see Nikolai Ivanovich – he promised Pavel and Andrei, if they were arrested, immediately to take her to him. In the city of Nilovna, leading the simple economy of a lone Nikolai Ivanovich, begins an active underground work:

One or together with Nicholas Sophia’s sister, disguised as a nun, sometimes as a pilgrim-wanderer, or as a lace-seller, travels through the towns and villages of the province, carrying out forbidden books, newspapers, and leaflets. She likes this work, she likes to talk with people, listen to their stories about life. She sees that the people are half-starved living among the immense wealth of the earth. Returning from trips to the city, the mother goes on visits with her son to prison. In one of these visits, she manages to give him a note proposing companions to arrange for him and his friends to escape. However, Paul refuses to escape; Sashenka, who was the initiator of the escape, is most upset by this.

Finally comes the day of judgment. The relatives of the defendants are admitted to the hall. Mother was waiting for something terrible, waiting for a dispute, clarifying the truth, but everything goes quietly: the judges speak indifferently, indistinctly, unwillingly; witnesses – hastily and colorlessly. The speeches of the prosecutor and lawyers also do not touch the heart of the mother. But here begins to speak Paul. He does not defend himself – he explains why they are not rebels, although they are judged as rebels. They are socialists, their slogans-down with private property, all means of production-to the people, all power to the people, labor is indispensable for all. They are revolutionaries and will remain until all their ideas win. Everything that the son says is known to the mother, but only here, in court, she feels the strange, fascinating power of his faith. But the judge reads the verdict: all the defendants are sent to the settlement. Sasha is also waiting for the verdict and is going to say that he wants to be settled in the same locality as Pavel. Mother promises her to come to them, when they have children, to babysit grandchildren.

When the mother returns home, Nicholas informs her that it was decided to print Paul's speech at the trial. The mother is called to bring the son's speech for distribution to another city. At the station she suddenly sees a young man whose face and attentive look seem strangely familiar to her; she remembers that she met him before and in court, and near the prison – and she understands: she got caught. The young man calls the watchman and, pointing at her with his eyes, tells him something. The watchman approaches his mother and reproachfully reproaches: "The thief! The old one is already there, and there too!" "I'm not a thief!" – suffocating with resentment and indignation, the mother screams and pulls out a bundle of proclamations from the suitcase, hands them to the people around her: "This is my son's speech, yesterday he was judged by political, he was among them." Gendarmes push people away, approaching their mother; one of them grabs her by the throat, not letting her talk; she wheezes. In the crowd there are sobs.

**Conclusion:**

The lower strata of society and the female role in the development of a new point of view to make the world a better place clarifies how much power Proletariat class holds in society. The active participation of females to out grow the capitalist system and the union of lower class shows how the Marxist-Feminism swayed in that era.

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