Female consciousness is a movement to liberate woman herself from her patriarchal attitudes and stereotyped behavioral pattern and suffocating the patterns might be woman conforms to these due to fear and the feeling of enslavement. All the women of her first novel, The Thousand Faces of Night are conscious in various levels and occasions. Though they are conscious, they are unable to overcome the stamp which is practiced by the society traditionally. All her women feel comfort by remembering their past memories of the stories told by the elders especially their grandmothers. They feel solace through their ghosts of the past. The Thousand Faces of Night represents the lash about of three women of consecutives generations for their survival in their relationship with man and society. The lives of three women Mayamma, Sita, and Devi who symbolize three different generations age-old, middle, and modern. The novel pictures more than a thousand faces of women who are silent harassed for their endurance in the dark with despair and distress in the patriarchal civilization.

KEYWORDS: consciousness, patriarchal, traditionally, memories, survival, generations, civilization.

Devi, the protagonist of the novel listens to the stories, fables, and myths told by different narrators like her grandmother and the maid servant, Mayamma of the novel that include ideal woman protagonists like Parvati, Sita who follow in the footsteps of their husbands, and the stories of ferocious women like Gandhari, Ambika, Ambalika, and Amba who take their revenge. Devi in her adolescence has listened to her grandmother's stories which were drawn from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, their focus is on women's pride, destiny, and self-sacrifice. The status of her imagined heroines from the stories gives her a change in her mind.

Devi as a impractical personality likes the modern life. But her homecoming sucks her back to conventional Indian family life. Though she has lived in America for a few years she still becomes susceptible to her milieu and civilization. Devi gives us the image of a new generation who follows the footsteps of mythical characters of the stories told to neither her nor the elder women like Mayamma and Sita who sacrifice their individual interests for the happiness of the family. The mythical characters impress her and she is conscious of her Indian ethnicity.

The stories of her grandmother which are drawn from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, focus on her narration on the lead up to her womanhood, a commencement into deep possibilities. Devi understands that the stories of women she knows are more filthy than their legendary counterparts and wants to do something as a sign of remonstration equal to the heroines she grew up with. She imagines herself the very personification of the avenging goddess. This perception of Devi signifies the events that are looked for to happen and her building up of her mind to revolt against any sort of injustice to her in the course of her life. After returning from America Devi confronts some difficulties in making adjustments to day-to-day realities but soon realizes it is not very easy to change the old order of things only because she has returned from a brave new world but homecoming sucks her back to traditional family life. Yet she wants to be conscious of her life not to be trapped by the traditional values and her mother Sita is role model to her.

Devi is projected for an arranged marriage by her mother and she could not neglect her mother's arrangement and Devi with her husband Mahesh moves to Bangalore after her marriage. He works for a multinational company as a Regional Manager and he needs to travel a great deal leaving Devi alone. Being a manager he believes in managing everything in life as he does for his company and marriage is just a required milestone to him. He is unable to pull himself out from emotional filthiness and he is a poor manager of emotions; his faint nature could never make him a reliable husband.

When Mahesh is on tours Devi feels “like a child whose summer holiday had slipped away from her when she was not looking” (50). She follows the ways of life to a traditional woman from the stories of Baba, her father-in-law, a retired Sanskrit Professor who tells her a few stories of ideal mythical women, virtuously of womanhood and the path of salvation to a woman. She feels that the stories of Baba demand her to lead a traditional Indian life. Her stories of saints and their wives endorse the traditional Hindu concept of Dharma. He elaborates codes of virtuous women and the role to be played by a woman in married life.

Babha points that the women are led into bhakti only by serving their husbands but no salvation of their personal to search. Summing up all his illustrative sto-
The doctor bristles with impatience at Devi, because of her inability to get pregnancy. This shows the unfortunate social predicament inflicted even in the twentieth century. Devi undergoes the same humiliation that had Mayamma, an aged woman has earlier embraced her fate silently. Her life represents a model of self-fulfillment through masculine aspiration. A woman should remain passive, respect herself in this role. The main tragedy is; if patriarchy considers a woman inferior; the female psyche is not different from this. She considers herself inadequate in herself and thinks that a woman must seek her identity and self-esteem from her male partner. This is a kind of sadism. A woman should remain passive, content pleasing to her man.

Another major woman is Sita, the mother of Devi, a cool, confident and middle aged woman has earlier embraced her fate silently. Her life represents a model of self-fulfillment through masculine aspiration. A woman should remain passive, respect herself in this role. The main tragedy is; if patriarchy considers a woman inferior; the female psyche is not different from this. She considers herself inadequate in herself and thinks that a woman must seek her identity and self-esteem from her male partner. This is a kind of sadism. A woman should remain passive, content pleasing to her man.

Devi imagines herself resembling mythical heroines, a relation with goddess and destiny of the other world. She removes the images of sacrificial wives like Parvathi and Mayamma. She wants to be rebellious like Durga or like Kali and she recalls Kriya whom she read in Baba's book dealing with suffering and revenge of a ferocious woman. This shows her consciousness and Devi elopes with Gopal for a life which is failed form Mahesh. But she finds her life with Gopal is also like that of a due and he is also not at all inferior to Mahesh and both are in the same track but in different way of humiliating women. She locates herself in her isolated corner and outsider forever on the fringes of a less ambivalent individual. Thus Mahesh and Gopal failed to perceive her emotions and soul. Devi realizes that in the male oriented society, it is difficult to survive and find relability for her emotions because for men, women have always been primarily an object of sex and pleasure. Now she becomes conscious about her state and plans for another step to move her life. She does not weep or worry about the blind society and alienation. And here she can take another decision without spending time as in her early life with Mahesh.

Devi leaves Gopal while he was in a deep sleep covering the mirror with the peacock feathers to prevent the image of herself from reflecting in the mirror. She notes symbolizes her wish not to carry forward her past memories into future as she plans to start a new life with her mother. She feels courageous and confident and determines to leave from confinement to a state of self-identity. She gains the strength to assert herself and survive on her own with her mother. She courageously takes a step into her mother's house, and her mother's Veena welcomes her to the house to begin her battle all over once again.

Devi represents the present-day intellectual woman, confronts loneliness and alienation. Her decision making authority shows her consciousness. Though she lacks the will to choose and her early decisions are wavering, we note the maturity in her character. Initially, she is easily influenced by collective role expectations; she quits the U.S. and leaves behind Dan because of a sense of filial piety, marries Mahesh as a good daughter should attempt to be a full-time wife and house maker as an Indian pativrata should. Gradually she shows her resolve in walking out with Mahesh and Gopal even greater determination in walking out on Gopal.

Devi relates her with all the stories she can remember and all the stories and lessons she once heard for her upbringing and in how she imagines herself resembling mythical heroines. She imagines herself resembling mythical heroines, a relation with goddess and destiny. She plans to move her life. She does not weep or worry about the blind society and alienation.

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Mayamma after ten long years of penance blessed with a son born on Diwali. After eight years of his birth Gopal leaves her without a word torn with wife. She is in her middle age with dissipated excess, disappeared, taking with him all the money in the house. Her mother-in-law says that Mayamma is responsible for her son's disappearance. Mayamma never once questions the violence, raises a voice or a finger or tries to run away from this living of hell. In spite of no happiness with her husband and son, she is able to be a bed-rock to her family. While her husband calls her a shameless hussy and kicked her after a night of whoring in the rain her mother-in-law fed her yesterday's rice she is admiring her new sari. In order to propitiate the gods so as to beget a son Mayamma tolerates all kinds of cruelty from her family and lives without raising a word and which shows the sacrificing nature of typical women of India and proves the attitude of traditional women.

In India the traditional women are socialized in believing in their own empowerment through chastity and fidelity; through sacrifice they see themselves as achieving both sublimation and strength. They have created strength out of their inferiority and weakness through a rich and imaginative mythology women are narcotized into accepting the ideology that genuine power lies in women's ability to sacrifice, in gaining spiritual strength by denying them access to power or the means to it.

To her generation of Indian women, life meant merely accepting one's fate with out as much as murmur and it symbolizes the innate strength of the woman who is able to come back to normalcy even after shocking troubles. Mayamma is a typcal Indian woman who accepts her fate, cursed it but never questioned it and lived her life exactly as was expected of her. She bears the brunt of cruelty that the society has ordained for a woman as a daughter, a wife, a daughter-in-law, a deserted woman, and a mother. She represents the generation of Indian women who were freedom fighters when she was twenty and adjusting to one's destiny without complaint by following the karma Sutra. Women of her generation are meek, submissive, and bound to the traditions of family and the institution of marriage. She makes no choice in her own life yet lives through other women like Sita and later even Devi. Though she is conscious about the injustice she does not like to raise a voice against the world.

The Thousand Faces Night webs the struggle of three women of successive generations for their survival in their relationship with men and society. The novel shows as like as a thousand faces of women who are still struggling for their survival in the dark with despair and displeaseur in the patriarchal society. As she probes deeper and deeper into the inner landscape of her women, she encounters terrible onslaughts heaped upon them. They have been subjected to awe and rick-
ety, distorted, dehumanized, injured and bleeding lots altogether. Amidst such absurdity, sickness, revulsion, and bedlam when the world becomes insufferable, they are nearly on their path of self-immolation, obliteration as a mark of protest or revolt. Thus the novel projects the three main characters, Devi, Sita, and Mayamma, who walked a tightrope and thrash about for some balance for some means of survival they could inclination for themselves.

REFERENCES: