

DYSTOPIC VISIONS: A CRITICAL STUDY IN SELECTED FICTION OF ALDOUS HUXLEY, GEORGE ORWELL AND WILLIAM GOLDING

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ABSTRACT

This study in critical terms shows the vision of the future which is anti- utopian fiction or dystopia. Almost since the middle of the nineteenth century life in the western world had been undergoing a kind of rapid transformation it had never known in earlier ages. A radical change in human psyche was an essential prerequisite of man's dream of a better world coming true. This work also demonstrates how the authors optimism in the face of the tragic historical event in the post-revolutionary worlds, gradually transformed into disillusionment that characterizes the works of dystopian writers such as Orwell and Huxley. The idea of utopia has always been a response to the current and contemporary world. It is the way of dealing in the imagination with the problems of the present although it may be formulated as solutions to the fundamental perennial problems of man and society.

INTRODUCTION

Huxley, Golding and George Orwell are very different in tone and atmosphere but what draws them together is the concern the authors share for man and society and similar reactions to certain specific features of society. They are persuaded that their own individual interests are identical with the national interests. Orwell was directly using the knowledge of methods in Nazi Germany emerged after the war is obvious. Golding was one among the most popular and influential post World War - II British authors. He presents a disturbing Portrait of civilization fragility and capacity for sin and sin inherent in Man. The fiction he applies proves the inability of modern man to understand and control the problematic of this nature which ultimately results in disaster of the mankind. The disintegration of human entity, Ambition, Suffering disasters, Death are some of the themes with which the novel deals.

Huxley felt increasingly that the problems of the world's immediate future would be those of overpopulation and starvation of the environment and pollutions which are the results of tragic historical events of post-revolutionary Russia, gradually transformed into the same disillusionment that this study examines Aldous Huxley's criticism of modern progress through an analysis of his novels. Examples of Huxley, Orwell, Golding fiction demonstrate a constant concern for the power of Man and technology to progress is the degree to which it aids or hinders society in the humane development. Huxley questioned a culture obsessed with materialism and a blind belief that the advancement of technology will lead humanity to a higher

and happier existence. Huxley's three futuristic novels depict world that can result if technology is allowed to progress unchecked, ostensibly for the betterment of human.

Brave New World shows how mental conditioning and drugs can produce a mindless society devoid of human values. In Ape and Essence a nuclear war causes mankind to degenerate into ruthless animals only in Island the most idyllic of these utopian novels has humanity learned to accept those technologies that promote human advancement and to discard all others.

The critical study shows the social comment in Huxley's and Orwell's novels which guide us to an understanding of the post-war generation of the privileged classes, their frustrations their cynicism their disillusion and experimentation with different aims in life. All the writers are peopled with characters who are experiencing Post-war enchantment to whom it seems only too clear they can no longer believe in the old ways of doing things in the old social and moral structures. The old artistic conventions, who are uncertain in some cases tormented about what to put in their place. The fictional aspects make us understand that the idea of progress would lead people to cheapen present life to endure misery in the hope of future welfare. The tendency among the individuals of a planned society things that are conducive to a whole may cripple the individual. Description of the novels of George Orwell and Huxley concentrate in the vision of totalitarian powers.

Huxley speak about the morality of science about the fact that the knowledge could mean power for evil as well as power for good, which science could destroy as well as discover. Orwell is worried about the totalitarian control its methods and its effects, but not specifically about the responsibilities of science. Orwell sees the dangerous potential of science only in terms of over power, not in terms of the kind of subtle influences in life as such Huxley saw as the germs of the control of humanity in the future. The striking feature of society in the novels in terms of anti-utopian fiction is uniformity and lack of individualism. People are categorized and within the categories there is little to distinguish them. Inevitably character and personality are also determined by category.

Huxley, Golding and Orwell were concerned to demonstrate the dangers of destruction of individualism and set out to describe what the absence of individualism could actually mean. They use rebellion as a means both of exposing the society they describe and of generating characters that have an interest beyond the individualistic and with whom the reader can feel some kinds of identification. The society is highly mechanical, regimental and planned with scientific precision. Science has reached the highest point of development wherein in the Brave New World babies are generated in test tubes and nurtured mechanically.

The critical study of the novels aims at the objectives which are twofold. The stability of the society and elimination of tragedy and misery from human life. Brave New World is a world devoid of emotions and warmth of life. Reason science and technology are deities worshipped in the world. The protagonists in this world have no distinct identity apart from the huge social machinery. He is trained as matter of fact, to function as mere cog in the social mechanism. The

Brave New World offers no scope for the development of human spirit. Huxley finds this to be a disturbing factor of modern life. Supremacy of intellect is one of the basic features in Huxley's Brave New World and Goldings Lord of the Flies. In this novel we see Jack who vests the supreme power and the Mustapha Mond the resident controller for western Europe in the Brave New World.

The reader is reminded that in the real that in the real world a battle is being waged constantly between democratic societies and dictatorships. Social and Cultural Criticism in this work seeks to relate a novel to the culture from which it springs. Golding in Lord of the Flies talks about his own world and criticizing it when they cause their fictional characters to act out their make believe lives. The naval officer who looks with satisfaction at his trim-cruiser is far removed from the ragged little boys who made such a mess of the Island. He is neat and orderly, dignified and civilized. But he is in the business of killing, just like Jack and Roger. So the naval officer becomes a representative of modern man in the world and a social comment made which insists that the real world, not just in the world of the novel. Men delude themselves with outward shows of manner and custom into thinking they are a great deal more sensible and humane than they really are.

In Huxley's novel the supreme power Mustapha Mond the Resident controller for western Europe says that god and religion have no relevance to the Brave New World. It also depicts the world of material wellbeing which is represented by Mustapha Mond and there is an Ideal world represented by John. In Golding's novels the society splits into two sections. The boys who hunt become savages ruled by Jack and those who believe in rational conduct ruled by Ralph. The world depicted in terms of dystopia proves that the savage who derides this world and is opposed to its values and conventions. The world of the savage rejects the new sinless and happiness seeking order, he thinks that man ceases to be a man when he is incapable of squalor, shame, guilt and suffering. The world in which there is no family hierarchy, no dignity in birth and death. What is utopia to people is thrown among as its opposite dystopia to him. The man crucifies himself for the sinless ness of the World.

In Orwell's fiction absolute control of individuals thought and action on the state dominates. The most powerful and effective part of Orwell's 1984 is his recreation of the ghastly atmosphere of fear and torture in the extermination camps. Bruno Bethlehem writes that one major goal of the Gestapo was to break the prisoners as individuals and to change them into a docile mass from which no individual or group act of resistance could arise. The emphasis is on loneliness and exclusion on the fearful individual in an oppressed world. Orwell's characters struggles against the bondage of his threatening world toward individual freedom are responsibility. 1984 expresses man's fears of isolation and disintegration cruelty and dehumanization. In this novel, Orwell's speaks about totalitarian ideas which have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere and these ideas are brought out to the logical consequences. 1984 portrays the very real through unfamiliar political terrorism of Nazi Germany and Satirist Russia transposed into the landscape of London. It is intended to show up the perversion to which a centralised economy liable and which have already been partly realized in communism and fascism. The fictions of the three

writers forms contribution to the English utopian fiction depicting the picture of the future world, which is extremely gloomy, dismal depressing and repulsive.

This study concludes that the dystopic visions of these writers arise out of a world in which poor communication due to the current growth of information, specialization and the will to power over the nature and humane, unexpectedly produces no sense of directions. Eastern thought became an important feature of the writers response to modern materialism. The quality of the survivors will be toughness, rather than gentleness out of this surviving humanity comes the individual who is hard enough to exist in the world, and who ruthlessly takes for himself what he wants, even, at the expense of the wellbeing of others.

This study proves that there can be no happy solution to the problems of man society because the "defects of Human Nature" shape society after their own imperfections. The writer deals with various conflicts, moral, emotional, intellectual, in his individuals. The qualities of man, the division in his personality is a recurring theme in this fiction.

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